

SUB BASE
PLATYPUS



Australian Government
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

Torpedo Factory Renewal Project Proposal Document

November 2020



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The Harbour Trust acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and Owners of the land encompassing Sub Base Platypus in North Sydney. We respectfully acknowledge the Cammeraygal People including their Elders past, present and emerging.



1. Planning application

The Harbour Trust is proposing a new approach for the Torpedo Factory that will deliver additional public parkland on the foreshore. To facilitate this the Harbour Trust has prepared a draft amendment to the *Platypus Management Plan 2016*, and a Planning Application.

The Planning Application includes the following supporting documents:

- Proposal Document
- Planning Statement
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Noise Management Guidelines
- Transport Impact Assessment
- Construction Traffic Management Guidelines

The Harbour Trust will subsequently develop detailed architectural plans for the construction phase of this project.

Detailed construction documents such as a Construction Environmental Management Plan will be prepared by the appointed contractor, when one is appointed, and relevant information will be made available on the Harbour Trust's website.

Public submissions are invited on this matter between Thursday 12 November 2020 to Friday 11 December 2020.

Following the end of the consultation period, the planning application will be assessed by the Harbour Trust in accordance with the *Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act 2001* to ensure compliance with the approved Plans, to consider potential environmental impacts and suitable measures to avoid or mitigate those impacts. The planning assessment will also consider the submissions received during the public consultation period.

The Harbour Trust is the approval authority for these two matters in accordance with the *Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act 2001*

The Harbour Trust will also refer the proposal to the Commonwealth Minister for Environment, in accordance with *the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.



Location Map

2. Introduction

Sub Base Platypus has had a diverse history as Cammeraygal country, a gas works, a Naval torpedo maintenance facility, the HMAS Platypus submarine base and now as an emerging new public park.

Sub Base Platypus formally transferred to the Harbour Trust on 23 July 2005 and is classified as Trust land under the *Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act 2001* (the SHFT Act).

The Harbour Trust has undertaken extensive community consultation in its planning for the site. The vision for Sub Base Platypus is set out in the Harbour Trust's Comprehensive Plan and Platypus Management Plan, which are available at www.harbourtrust.gov.au

The Harbour Trust's vision for Sub Base Platypus is to transform the site into a public park with buildings and facilities adapted for a range of cultural, recreational, community and commercial uses. The Harbour Trust's aims for Sub Base Platypus include:

- Create a waterfront urban park
- Protect, manage and interpret the site's heritage values
- Maximise public access to the site
- Revive the site with a mix of new uses that are compatible with the site's character and constraints
- Protect local environment and amenity

The renewal of the site and implementation of the Platypus Management Plan is being undertaken in stages.

- **Remediation** was a critical first step in the Harbour Trust's revitalisation of the site and was undertaken between 2010 and 2016.
- **Building Removal** - Since 2010 a number of structures (including Buildings 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16 and approximately half of the submarine wharf deck) have been demolished, creating public open space and improved access.
- **Renewal Project: Stage 1** – The Platypus Renewal Project (Stage 1) commenced in the second half of 2017 and was completed in 2019, providing new public open space, improved access, refurbished buildings and enabled the site to be opened to the public for the first time in 150 years.

Renewal Project: Stage 2 – Torpedo Factory Renewal Project

The Torpedo Factory (formerly known as the RANTME [Royal Australian Navy Torpedo Maintenance Establishment] Factory) was constructed in the early 1940s to house offices and facilities for Naval staff with a large factory for torpedo manufacture and maintenance. The Torpedo Factory is the largest building on site and has an imposing presence when viewed from the harbour.

In April 2019, the Australian Government announced in the 2019/2020 Budget that the Harbour Trust would receive funding over three years, including funds for Stage 2 of the Sub Base Platypus Renewal Project.

The Torpedo Factory Renewal Project includes the demolition of the multi-level, harbour-facing portion and part of the High Street facing portion of the Torpedo Factory, to create:

- A new park on the foreshore with a series of landscaped terraces
- Interpretation of the site's multi-layered history - First Nation interpretation and recognition for the Cammeraygal people; and the defence heritage of Sub Base Platypus
- A welcoming entry forecourt at High Street
- Public and visitor access including pedestrian connections and car parking

Interpretation will be guided by the *Australian Indigenous Design Charter* launched in 2018, which aims to help facilitate accurate and respectful representation of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in design, and *Designing with Country*, by the Government Architect NSW March 2020 which talks to the elements of designing with Country. As well as First Nation interpretation and recognition, the story and history of the industrial and military heritage of Sub Base Platypus, specifically the building's use as a torpedo manufacturing and maintenance facility will also be interpreted.



Existing View from High Street



Existing View from the Harbour

3. Background

The Harbour Trust’s proposed outcomes for the Torpedo Factory have developed over time – informed by community consultation, and the Harbour Trust’s objects which include the protection and interpretation of heritage values, maximising public access, managing suitable land as a park, and enhancing the amenity of the Sydney Harbour region. The development of each of these proposals represent a progression of alternative outcomes, and the arrival at an outcome that prioritises public benefit, while retaining and interpreting significant heritage fabric, to create a significant and attractive new public park on the harbour.

2016 MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Retain, and adapt building - open up and set back the sides of the building’s top floor, but generally retain and adapt the roof structure – to reduce visual bulk and create verandah and terraces
- Harbour facing Lower level – uses such as restaurant or functions.
- Adapt Factory Floor level – cultural and community uses – such as studio/workshop/offices, with a central exhibition space, rehearsal and performance spaces, health and fitness facilities, café/restaurant, or training and hospitality; and car parking
- At High Street – Setback building and create entry forecourt
- Public access on northern, eastern and western sides



2019 DRAFT CONCEPT DESIGN

- Similar outcomes to the 2016 Management Plan, but with more of the roof removed , to create partly covered landscaped public space and to reduce visual bulk. Create incision to reveal part of cliff-face.
- Harbour facing lower level – uses such as restaurant or functions.
- Adapt Factory Floor level – Landscaped, partly-covered public space, (instead of a wide range of uses); and car parking
- At High Street – Setback building and create entry forecourt
- Public access on northern, eastern and western sides



2020 TORPEDO FACTORY RENEWAL PROJECT

- The multi-storey, harbour-facing portion of the building would be removed, east of the cliff-face, to create a new foreshore park.
- The remnant building would have its sides opened up, the remnant roof retained and adapted
- Remnant factory floor level- adapted for visitor access and car parking
- At High Street – Setback building and create more welcoming entry forecourt
- Public access on northern, eastern and western sides
- Interpret the site’s multi-layered history – natural, First Nations and defence heritage, with a focus on the ongoing connection to Country.
- Environmentally Sustainable Design - Explore opportunities to use the roof to capture solar power and rainwater



4. Access, public domain and landscaped spaces



5. Site landform

The existing vertical cut cliff face is a prominent visual feature which runs the length of the site, parallel to Neutral Bay and stands approximately 17-18 metres in height. Part of the cliff is currently concealed within the Torpedo Factory.

The cliffline was modified with the establishment of the gasworks, and excavated further as the gasworks expanded.

Some of the upper edges of the cliff have been built up with sandstone blocks and/or brick. The cliff face bears the marks of former structures and pipes that had been braced against or fixed to the cliff.



Source: Milton Kent Aerial Views, between 1935-1945, State Library of NSW

6. Key outcomes

- **Foreshore Park**

Create a new foreshore park through a series of landscaped terraces replacing the multi-level, harbour-facing portion of the Torpedo Factory.

- **Entry Forecourt facing High Street**

Create an enlarged entry forecourt through the demolition of a portion of the Torpedo Factory facing High Street.

- **Torpedo Factory Walkway**

Provide public walkways and viewing areas along the northern and eastern sides of the Torpedo Factory, offering elevated views towards Neutral Bay.

- **New Pedestrian Connections**

Investigate opportunities to connect the upper level and the new foreshore park, and a potential new path to Kesterton Park

- **Visitor Access**

Retained portion of Torpedo Factory to include a public car park to support visitors accessing the site.

- **Improved Visual outcomes**

The removal of the multi-storey, harbour-facing section of the building, and the peeling away of walls on three of its sides, will substantially reduce the visual bulk and scale of the building, and open up views to and through the site.

- **Environmentally Sustainable Design**

Explore opportunities to use the roof to capture solar power and rainwater

- **Heritage**

Retain key significant heritage elements of the building, including the majority of the factory floor level, and the characteristic saw-tooth roof

- **Interpretation**

Interpret the site's multi-layered history – natural, First Nations and defence heritage, with a focus on the ongoing connection to Country. Interpretation will be guided by the *Australian Indigenous Design Charter* launched in 2018, and *Designing with Country*, by the Government Architect NSW March 2020. The new public domain will also present the story and history of the place's industrial and military heritage, specifically related to torpedo manufacturing and maintenance.

- **Sandstone Cliff**

Reveal the large sandstone cliff face that divides the upper and lower levels of the site. The excision of the building at this point will allow for expansive views and an opportunity to better integrate Sub Base Platypus' lower foreshore level with adjoining public land (Kesterton Park).

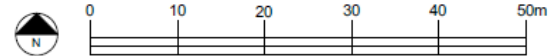
- **Amenity**

Protect local amenity by minimising potential impacts such as noise and light

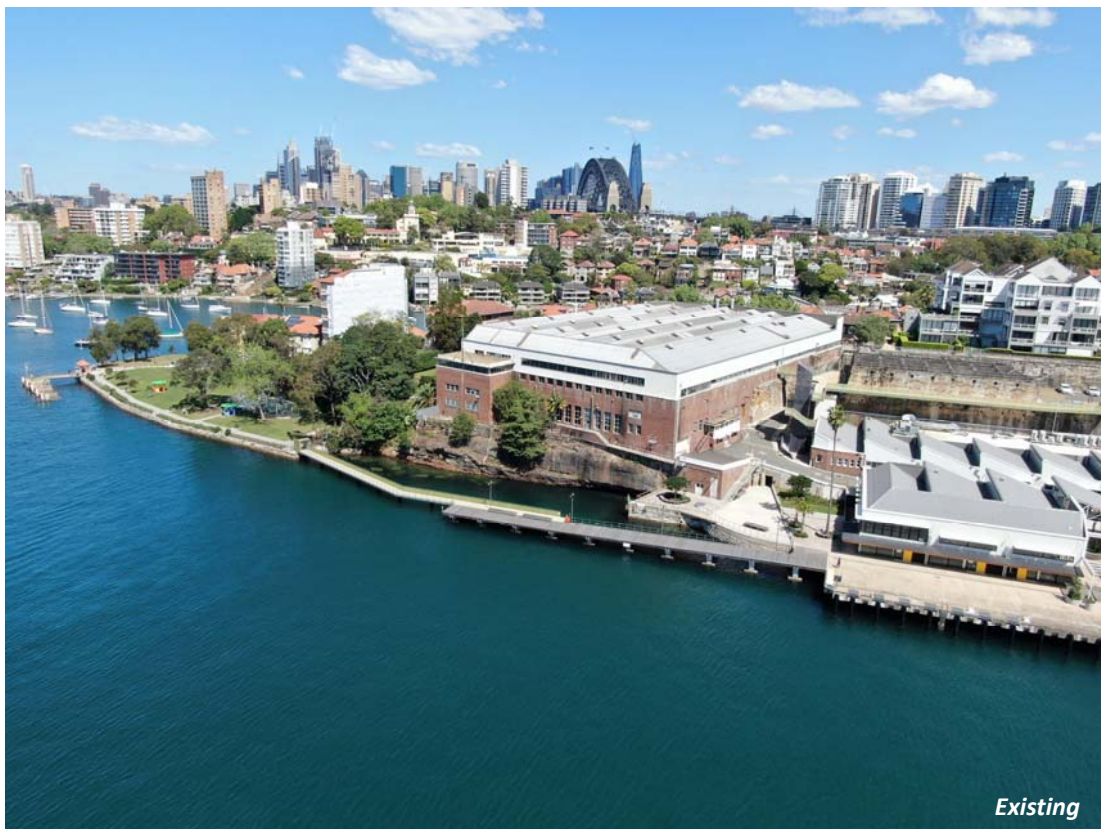
- **Possible future uses**

The covered space of the remnant Torpedo Factory provides the opportunity for a future pop-up café at the harbour-end, or a space for occasional community uses (such as a small market). Any such proposals would be subject to separate assessment and approval.

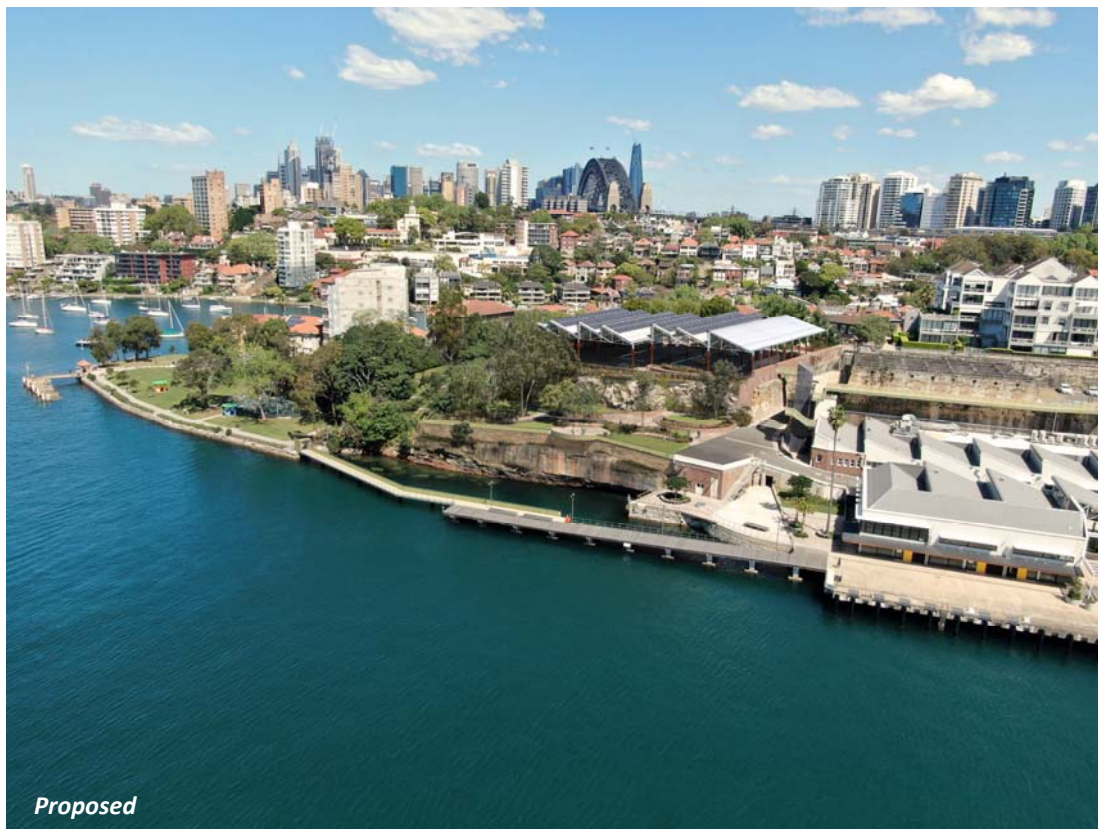
7. Concept proposal



8. Artist's impressions



Existing



Proposed



Existing



Proposed



Existing



Proposed



Existing



Proposed



Existing



Proposed



Existing



Proposed



Existing



Proposed



Proposed View from High Street