



Newsletter

28 August 2023



WHATS NEXT – Tomaree Lodge

Next Member Meeting

- You are invited – put it in your diary
- **Next Member meeting Monday 18th September 5.30pm Salamander Library complex Waratah Room**
- Suggestion - Establishment of a working committee and have your say as The Tomaree Lodge has now been vacant for well over two years

What Next

- We have made numerous approaches to the minister seeking a meeting to identify the way forward / establishment of a Master Plan

Ministerial Commitment

- Commitment from the minister that there will be no housing (short or long term) on the site

Help Desks

- Continuing to have Help Desks at Salamander Shopping Centre

Security and Safety

- Concern about Security (Graffiti incident) particularly Fires/Vandalism/Squatters and costs well above \$600,000pa

Coastal Walk Opening

- The opening of the Tomaree Coastal Walk is on 1st September 2023 with potential increased numbers

Financial Sustainability

- As reflected in the attached article on Middle Head Sydney, the eventual occupant will need to demonstrate financial sustainability

Way Forward

- Our proposal to use the **Concept Plan** as a framework for the way forward

Military History Book

- We have applied for two (2) grants (DVA and RAHS) to print 500 copies
- Have received \$5000 from PS Historical Society donation
- Images

Site Interests

- We have had approaches from the following to occupy portion of a future Tomaree Lodge
 - University of Newcastle (Marine Science and Hospitality)
 - Ecology Centre
 - Marine Discovery Centre

Sydney Morning Herald – 24 August 2023

Sites ponder path of compromise

Michael Koziol
Sydney editor

Nine historic defence sites around Sydney Harbour must raise revenue and attract more tourists, Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek has declared, even as the agency managing the sites scales back redevelopment plans in the face of community pressure.

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust will release today a revised master plan for Middle Head in Mosman which abandons parts of the draft proposal following a backlash but proceeds with the demolition of three 1950s timber barracks – to the alarm of heritage advocates.

It no longer proposes to reconfigure Middle Head Oval or move the change facilities, retains the former military guardhouse and its currently tenanted cafe, and rules out frequent large-scale events on the headland.

Instead, the Trust is proposing to use the headland for no more than two events a year – such as heritage open days, temporary exhibitions or community festivals –



The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust's portfolio includes North Head Sanctuary.

and cap visitors at 500 a day. The brick buildings of the 10 Terminal will still be redeveloped.

"We've listened carefully to people's concerns and taken those on," the Trust's executive director Janet Carding said.

Mosman Council, sporting clubs and federal MP Zali Steggall raised concerns about planned changes to the oval that have been scrapped.

"There will be no reduction in its playing space, nor any reorientation of playing fields," a summary of the new master plan states.

However, Plibersek's new statement of expectations, quietly published online last week, makes it clear she wants the Trust to protect heritage at the same time as opening up the sites to more visitors. The portfolio also includes Cockatoo Island, North Head Sanctuary and Sub Base Platypus.

Plibersek says the agency "should be considering revenue-raising opportunities in everything they do, to ensure long-term financial sustainability of its sites, particularly through tourism and reimagining the adaptive use of

space across the Harbour sites".

The sites, many of which require extensive capital investment and repairs, need to attract more domestic and foreign tourists, and offer a broader range of experiences which appeal to diverse audiences, Plibersek instructed.

The government invested \$45 million for site repairs in the May budget. Plibersek told the Herald: "I have made clear to the Trust my expectations for them to preserve the environmental and heritage values of sites for our kids and grandkids.

"That includes looking at opportunities to ensure they are on a sustainable funding path, consistent with the protection and conservation of the sites, and in line with other priorities of protecting nature, working with local and First Nations communities, and keeping sites open to the public."

While heritage advocates praised the statement of expectations as thoughtful and balanced, the imperatives to preserve the past and make money through adaptive reuse can create conflict.

Plibersek's predecessor, Susan

Ley, met resistance to her own statement of expectations, which flagged the development of "commercial strategies for Trust sites to maximise revenue".

Carding said the Trust had always been tasked with raising revenue as it did not receive a yearly appropriation from government, but it did not seek to turn a profit. "It's an interesting business model," she said.

"Whilst we always need to consider the views of the local community, we also need to look at how we can make the site[s] more accessible and give it more profile."

Headland Preservation Group president Jill L'Estrange said Plibersek's approach seemed balanced. "It's a big task to make them financially sustainable," she said. "We must never lose sight of the important colonial and military heritage, Indigenous and environmental values of the lands."

The revised plan for Middle Head is on public exhibition until September 21. The Trust is due to release draft master plans for Cockatoo Island and North Head Sanctuary later this year.