



NSW NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICE

Sydney Harbour National Park Draft Amendment to the Plan of Management

Middle Head/Gubbuh Gubbuh community uses



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Cover photo: Aerial view of Middle Head/Gubbuh Gubbuh buildings. Gareth Pickford/DPE

Published by:

Environment and Heritage Group
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124
Phone: +61 2 9995 5000 (switchboard)
Phone: 1300 361 967 (Environment and Heritage enquiries)
TTY users: phone 133 677, then ask for 1300 361 967
Speak and listen users: phone 1300 555 727, then ask for 1300 361 967
Email: info@environment.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.environment.nsw.gov.au

Report pollution and environmental incidents
Environment Line: 131 555 (NSW only) or info@environment.nsw.gov.au
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Summary

Sydney Harbour National Park is reserved to achieve the objects of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NPW Act). These objects are centred on conserving nature, conserving cultural heritage values, and fostering public appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of these special values.

All operations undertaken in the park must be in accordance with the *Sydney Harbour National Park plan of management* as required by the NPW Act. This draft amendment proposes changes to the plan of management to enable the establishment of an education centre within Sydney Harbour National Park's Middle Head/Gubbuh Gubbuh precinct.

It has been prepared after consideration of the objects of the NPW Act, the management principles for national parks under the NPW Act and the matters listed under section 72AA of the NPW Act.

The key matters listed under section 72AA that were considered in the preparation of this draft amendment are:

- the provision of opportunities for public understanding and appreciation of natural and cultural heritage values, including opportunities for sustainable visitor or tourist use and enjoyment of the reserved land
- the adaptive re-use of buildings and structures
- the appropriate (including culturally appropriate) and ecologically sustainable use of the reserved land, including use by lessees, licensees and occupiers of the land
- benefits to local communities.

Acknowledgement of Country

The areas now known as Sydney Harbour National Park are part of an ancient landscape that includes the Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people have a deep spiritual and cultural connection to this Country. Their ancestors have lived here and cared for the land for thousands of years, forming part of this living landscape.




Connections to Country and the significance of the park and surrounding lands and waterways to Aboriginal peoples — past, present and future — are acknowledged and respected. The role of Aboriginal people in identifying traditional connections and custodians for this place is acknowledged and supported.

National Parks and Wildlife Service commits to working in a respectful manner with the traditional custodians, the Eora, in caring for Country.

Have your say

National Parks and Wildlife Service proposes to amend the *Sydney Harbour National Park plan of management* under Section 73B of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

We want to know what you think about this draft plan amendment. To give us feedback, please send a written submission by one of the following:

-  the online submission form at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/get-involved/have-your-say
-  email to npws.parkplanning@environment.nsw.gov.au
-  post to Manager, NPWS Planning and Assessment, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta NSW 2124.

Written submissions must be received by 11 January 2023.

Our response to your submission will be based on the merits of the ideas and issues you raise, rather than the number of submissions making similar points. For this reason, a submission that clearly explains the matters it raises will be the most effective way to influence the finalisation of the plan amendment.

Submissions are most effective when we understand your ideas and the outcomes you want for park management. Some suggestions to help you write your submissions are:

- write clearly and be specific about the issues that are of concern to you
- note which part or section of the document your comments relate to
- give reasoning in support of your points – this makes it easier for us to consider your ideas and will help avoid misinterpretation
- tell us precisely what you agree or disagree with and why you agree or disagree
- suggest solutions or alternatives to managing the issue if you can.

What happens to your feedback?

- Step 1: At the close of the public exhibition period, we consider all submissions and prepare a submissions report.
- Step 2: We provide the relevant advisory bodies with the draft plan, all the submissions and the submissions report. They consider the documents, make comments on the plan or suggest changes, and provide advice to the Minister for Environment and Heritage.
- Step 3: The Minister considers the plan, submissions and advice, makes any necessary changes and decides whether to adopt the plan under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

Your privacy

Your submission will be provided to relevant advisory bodies. Your comments on the draft amendment may include personal information. The Department of Planning and Environment complies with the NSW *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, which regulates the collection, storage, quality, use and disclosure of personal information. If you indicate in your written submission that you object to your submission being made public, we will ask you before releasing your submission in response to any access applications under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

1. Background

Promoting public understanding and appreciation of the environment and national parks

To further the public's understanding and appreciation of the environment and national parks, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and the Department of Education have agreed to progress the establishment of an environmental education centre in Sydney Harbour National Park within the Middle Head/Gubbuh Gubbuh precinct (Figure 1).

The proposal will involve the adaptive re-use of the Soldier's Institute and the development of a separate covered outdoor learning area with an associated storage room and public toilets. These developments will be supported by an accessible driveway off Governors Road and mobility parking spaces.

Terms and conditions for the use and management of the buildings and structures within the precinct are subject to further negotiations between NPWS and the Department of Education and the establishment of a memorandum of understanding. The proposal is subject to the amendment of the *Sydney Harbour National Park plan of management* as well as environmental, cultural and heritage assessment.



Figure 1 Heritage buildings at Middle Head/Gubbu Gubbu

Why is an amendment to the plan of management proposed?

The *Sydney Harbour National Park plan of management* provides for the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings; however, it limits the construction of new buildings to select harbour islands and Gap Bluff precinct. This draft amendment proposes to allow the construction of new buildings within the Middle Head/Gubbu Gubbu precinct to facilitate the establishment of the proposed environmental education centre.

The NPW Act requires that the general location of any proposed buildings and the purpose of any proposed lease or licence for certain uses of those buildings (e.g. accommodation, conference, retail and restaurant facilities) is identified in the relevant plan of management. This draft amendment proposes to allow the grant of a lease or licence to support the operation of the proposed environmental education centre.

2. Proposed amendments to the Sydney Harbour National Park plan of management

The draft amendment proposes the replacement of some existing text and the insertion of some new text into the *Sydney Harbour National Park plan of management*.

These proposals should be read in conjunction with the *Sydney Harbour National Park plan of management*. Section and page numbers referred to in the draft amendment refer to the plan of management.

In all instances where a change is proposed to a policy or action in the body of the plan, corresponding changes will be considered to be made to Section 3 Implementation (pages 203–231).

Proposed amendments

The proposed amendments are outlined below.

Section 02 Precincts, All Precincts: Common Issues (Page 52)

Delete:

New buildings will only be permitted on Goat Island, Shark Island, Fort Denison and Gap Bluff precincts. Permitted locations and uses for possible new buildings are detailed in each precinct.

Replace with:

New buildings will only be permitted on Goat Island, Shark Island, Fort Denison, Middle Head and Gap Bluff precincts. Permitted locations and uses for possible new buildings are detailed in each precinct.

Section 02 Precincts, Precinct 06 – Middle Head, row 5 (Page 130)

Insert the following after row 5:

An environmental education centre may be established through the adaption of the Soldiers Institute and the construction of a covered outdoor learning area, storage room and public toilets for the purposes of education.

3. More information

- [Sydney Harbour National Park plan of management](#)