



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday April 29, 2009

MINISTER GRANTS REPRIEVE TO CURRAWONG

The National Trust today applauded the Minister's decision to refuse a proposed residential development at Currawong, situated in picturesque Pittwater.

The site, which has been owned by the NSW Labor Council for over 60 years, provided affordable holiday accommodation to working families.

Making the announcement at the National Trust's first Corporate Breakfast for 2009, the Minister for Planning, Kristina Keneally, declared that she had visited Currawong in addition to receiving the best expert advice about the site and detailed comments from the local community.

In 2007, the Heritage Council found that the Currawong site met five of seven heritage assessment criteria for listing under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*. Further assessment by the Ministerial Review Panel found that the site met a sixth criterion for listing.

"In line with this, I have decided that the entire Currawong site should be listed on the State Heritage Register. The listing will ensure there are minimum standards of maintenance for the buildings on the site, and that any future development application for the site will be referred to the NSW Heritage Council."

The Minister also announced that \$5.3 million of funding for heritage projects and programs would be made available across NSW for 2009-2011.

John Neish, Executive Director of the National Trust (NSW) praised the Minister's decision. "After years of heated debate about the importance of this site, the Minister has accepted that Currawong's unique heritage needs to be preserved. If development had gone ahead, the European, Indigenous and environmental heritage of the site would have been obliterated. Now, Currawong will have an ongoing role in the psyche of the people of NSW.

"I also want to acknowledge the heroic efforts of the Friends of Currawong and their president Shane Withington, who have worked tirelessly towards this result."

Mr Neish also congratulated the Minister on her foresight in providing funding for numerous heritage projects across the state. "This money will create jobs, particularly in rural and regional areas. It will also provide financial relief to those in the community who have taken on the role of maintaining our heritage assets."

Media enquiries should be directed to Victoria Walker, Director of Marketing and Communications on 02 9258 0133 or 0422 957 550 or Kathy Scott, Media & Communications Manager on 02 9258 0123.

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