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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **GOAT ISLAND - SYDNEY'S MARITIME HERITAGE SLIPPING AWAY**

The NSW Government's draft Goat Island Conservation Management Plan proposes to rip out the last significant remnants of Sydney's working harbour. It looks to relocate the Goat Island shipyard crane which is the last operating large crane on the harbour and seeks to scrap NSW's largest surviving slipway with the capacity to handle vessels up to 650 tons.

**Graham Quint, Advocacy Manager said:** "The National Trust believes in living, breathing heritage. The focus of the current plan is disproportionately focussed on the deserted sandstone gunpowder magazines. At a time when Australia is losing its industrial base, the NSW Government would remove such a significant shipyard to better present an empty room."

**Mr Quint said:** "Too often the test for heritage protection is whether it can be framed on a picture postcard. Vital, loud and perhaps ugly heritage is starved and discarded. Today's Government treats heritage like butterflies: pretty, pinned and preserved behind glass."

**Mr Quint said:** "Heritage is not about fairytale recreations by former Prime Ministers like the proposed Barangaroo Headland. It is more than clusters of sandstone structures. The crane as well as the slipways are a critical part of Sydney's industrial heritage and infrastructure."

Without these elements, Sydney Harbour will become just a playground for tourists and the elite with its interpretation reduced to plastic Opera Houses and watercolours of the coat hanger sold on sidewalks. This is a patronising plan for Goat Island where its heritage is selectively embalmed.

**Graham Quint added:** "Goat Island was never intended to be an architecturally high-quality complex. Suggesting it should become this by removing "unsightly" additions, is not sound heritage management but just a reflection of current fashion for historical recreation."

The Shipyard Crane at Goat Island was recently listed on the Trust Register for its age, historic importance, technical representativeness and rarity as an operating machine of its age. As an historic item of equipment, as a relic of Mort's Dock and as a key visual element of views to and from Goat Island, it is a highly significant item on the Island.

**Mr Quint said:** "Goat Island is a key part of Australia's history as a maritime depot in Australia's primary shipping harbour when shipping was the only means of trade and transport to the rest of the world. The Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter would never allow the removal of elements of "State" heritage significance in order to reveal elements of "National" significance, an action that is implied in the CMP."

Furthermore, the National Trust recommends that National Parks and Wildlife Service retain an active presence on the island to maintain their fleet of craft as it is central to the protection of the harbour's many National Parks. Encouraging ownership and occupation will better protect our heritage.

The Trust's comments were made following its submission in response to the exhibition of the draft Goat Island Conservation Management Plan. The Trust does not consider every structure on the island is sacrosanct but the large crane and slipways must be conserved and maintained. This is the last large part of Sydney's working harbour and should not be disposed of in favour of an aesthete's interpretation of the important.

ENDS

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