

Sub Base Platypus Renewal



In August 2016 lahnimmo architects and Aspect Studios were engaged by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust to prepare schematic designs and budget estimates to achieve the Outcomes proposed in the Comprehensive Plan and Draft Management Plan for Sub Base Platypus.

The site is located in North Sydney on the shores of Neutral Bay and was formerly known as HMAS Platypus. It has had a history as a gas works, a Naval Base providing torpedo maintenance facilities and ultimately as the HMAS Platypus submarine base.

The design considers the site holistically, taking into account its physical, environmental, heritage, cultural and aesthetic constraints. The general aims were:

- Open as much of the site as possible for safe public access and passive recreation as soon as possible.
- Improve connections between the site levels, the surrounding area and public transport, and maximising opportunities for public access to the foreshore.
- Conserve and interpret the site's rich history and protecting the environment and amenity of the local area.
- Create a vibrant waterfront precinct through the adaptive re-use of buildings to suit low-impact cultural, commercial and community uses; and
- Create opportunities for a complementary mix of activities to generate a sustainable return to the cost of maintaining the site.

Conceptually, all architectural injections into the site aim to be non-invasive and 'touch the site lightly', retaining both the existing industrial language and ecological ecosystems found on the site. Minor interventions to assist in the accessibility and orientation around the site such as a new lift, 'clip-on' cliff side walkways, stairs and bridge links are all imagined as a lightweight framed and clip-on family of forms – clearly modern, but taking their clue from the structural expressive of the industrial buildings.

Client: Sydney Harbour Federation Trust
Country: Kuring-gai Nation
Budget: \$13.5 Completion: 2019
Awards: 2021 The Lloyd Rees Award for Urban Design and Heritage Award NSW AIA
2021 Walter Burley Griffin Award,
National Urban Design Award AIA National Body