



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

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CULTURAL AND NATURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF KAMAY BOTANY BAY AND TOWRA POINT RECOGNISED

Kamay Botany Bay National Park – one of the most remarkable cultural and natural landscapes in Australia – has been listed on the NSW State Heritage Register, Heritage Minister Robyn Parker announced today.

Ms Parker said the meeting of Indigenous Australians and European settlers at this site, and the events which followed, shaped the history of our nation.

“This is the site where Captain James Cook first made contact with Indigenous Australians - the Gweagal people,” Ms Parker said.

“Traditional custodians for the land and the current Aboriginal community have strong associations with the site.

“For the Dharawal on the south side of Botany Bay and the Darug on the northern shores the area includes important ceremonial places, while Kurnell was a semi-permanent home for the Gweagal.

“In 1788, Captain Arthur Phillip and the first fleet stopped here before going on to Port Jackson to set up a new colony.

“Also that year, French explorers also arrived and spent several weeks in the area and remarkable botanical “discoveries” were made by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander.

“This heritage listing includes Towra Point Nature Reserve which is home to an abundance of native vegetation and a variety of local and migrating shorebirds.

“The site is of outstanding heritage significance as a rare place demonstrating the continuous history of occupation of the east coast of Australia.

“There are two important burial repatriation sites within the boundaries of the listing which are designated Aboriginal Places and have high social significance for the Aboriginal community.

“The site is also valued for its associations with European explorers and scientists and their life’s work including: James Cook, Joseph Banks, Daniel Solander, Comte de Laperouse, Pere Receveur and Joseph Lepaute Dgelet.

“Kamay Botany Bay National park is a critical link in the network of parks and reserves that conserve the biodiversity of our state.

“The coastline is characterised by rocky sandstone cliffs and large gorges.

“The sandy soils are covered with diverse vegetation comprising more than 350 species once common in the eastern suburbs of Sydney, including rare species and communities.

“The Towra Point wetlands, which were RAMSAR listed in 1984, are home to a large variety of local and migrating shorebirds; it is the second-most important breeding site for the little tern and the species’ only breeding place in the Sydney region.

“The NSW Government is committed to conserving, revitalising and caring for places of heritage significance.”

Cronulla MP Mark Speakman welcomed the announcement.

“This is a great recognition of the birthplace of modern Australia, as we approach the 250th anniversary in 2020 of James Cook’s landing and the meeting of European and Indigenous cultures,” Mr Speakman said.

State heritage listing means that Kamay Botany Bay National park and Towra Point Nature Reserve are protected under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* for future generations, and that any major works on the site would be subject to decisions or advice from the Heritage Council of NSW.