



# NEWS RELEASE

## Premier of New South Wales

### THREE SYDNEY LANDMARKS GAIN TOP HERITAGE PROTECTION

Tuesday 16 February, 2010

Sydney landmarks – the Queen Victoria Building, Sydney Town Hall and Luna Park – were today listed on the State Heritage Register.

Premier Kristina Keneally, Planning Minister, Tony Kelly and Sydney Lord Mayor, Clover Moore made the formal announcement at Sydney's Town Hall.

"These three sites embody the history and identity of Australia's global city," Ms Keneally said.

"This will also ensure that they are protected and can be enjoyed for generations to come," she said.

"It is impossible to think about Sydney without these three landmarks."

These listings are part of our plan to protect and preserve a range of State significant heritage items that represent the unique and rich history. The listings mean:

- Any major works for the sites would be subject to decisions or advice from the Heritage Council of NSW as well as Sydney City Council;
- Will now have increased access to State Government heritage funding; and
- Require the buildings to be maintained to a certain standard.

Mr Kelly said the listing on the State Heritage Register would formally recognise the heritage significance of the buildings to the people of New South Wales.

"The Queen Victoria Building and Sydney Town Hall are grand central Sydney buildings, used by thousands of people each day, and it's impossible to imagine Sydney without them," he said.

"Luna Park is a Sydney's cultural icon which is an excellent example of amusement park and fantasy architecture in the Art Deco style of the 1930s, which provides colour and life alongside the harbour."

"Each of these landmarks are currently listed as local heritage items however today we are elevating their significance to State heritage items, given their importance to Sydneysiders and people right across NSW," he said.

Ms Keneally acknowledged the commitment of Sydney Lord Mayor, Clover Moore who have played a significant role in setting up the Inquiry and ensuring the views of the local community were heard.

"It is timely that both the QVB and Town Hall are being heritage listed, as the City just completed stage one of a five-year rescue plan for Town Hall. Sydney Town Hall, together with the QVB, represents the civic heart of Sydney. As custodians of these buildings, the city has a duty of care to preserve and protect them," Lord Mayor Clover Moore said.

"After spending \$40 million on fire safety, the essential services upgrade and associated necessary internal renovations, we are reopening the doors of Sydney Town Hall to the people of Sydney. We have completed the first comprehensive overhaul of building services since the 1930s!

“We’ve also seized the opportunity to green the building! New plant, sustainable lighting and control and automatic cut-off systems give about 30% energy efficiency, and we have installed the city’s largest array of solar panels on the northern roof supplementing 48KW of power.

“More than 360,000 people visit Town Hall for cultural, community, education, corporate and charity events each year. I invite the Sydney community to reclaim the Sydney Town Hall during our weekend of reopening celebrations from March 5 to 7, which will include open days, exhibitions and two free concerts,” Ms Moore said.

## **Background:**

The **Queen Victoria Building** (built 1893-1898) occupies a full city block with its main address on George Street, Sydney and has no known equal in Australia for its architectural style, scale, level of detailing and craftsmanship. It was originally constructed as the city’s central markets and was regarded as an ambitious civic project for its era. It was named in honour of Queen Victoria in celebration of her diamond jubilee in 1897. Saved from demolition in the early 1980s, it has been now restored to its original glory and is today a prestigious retail centre.

The **Sydney Town Hall** (1869-1889) is used for City of Sydney meetings and administration and is the venue for major civic events, cultural activities, benefit concerts and rituals and is used as a meeting place for political protests and rallies. The building with its clock tower and steps has been a highly visible symbolic Sydney landmark throughout its history. It represents the most elaborate and exuberant work of Second Empire Style architecture in Australia with its corner towers, domed pavilions, a hierarchy of decorative orders, columned and pedimented window treatment, Venetian windows and elaborate decoration. The building’s exterior and interior exhibit a quality of materials, technological advances, fine design and craftsmanship.

**Luna Park** was built on the site used during the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge to become one of Australia’s best known amusement parks. Following restoration, it was re-opened in January 1995 and remains one of Sydney Harbour’s major landmarks, a city icon, which in its ‘urban frivolity’ juxtaposes with the nearby Harbour Bridge and Opera House. Luna Park is unique as a great and rare surviving example of an amusement park and fantasy architecture in the Art Deco style of the 1930s.