



Australian Government



NEW SOUTH WALES

MEDIA RELEASE

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INDIGENOUS YOUTH CENTRE FOR REDFERN

A national centre for Indigenous youth will be built in Sydney following the sale of the former Redfern Public School to the Indigenous Land Corporation.

Plans for the National Indigenous Development Centre (NIDC) were unveiled in Redfern today by NSW Minister for Redfern Waterloo, Frank Sartor, and Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) Chairperson Shirley McPherson.

Federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Mal Brough, said the Australian Government, through the ILC, had made \$14.8 million available to purchase the site from the NSW Department of Education.

“We want people from all walks of life to get the chance to excel in their chosen field and the positive experiences that the centre will offer will help young Indigenous Australians become leaders and role models in their own community,” Mr Brough said.

“Along with plans to gain private sector involvement in the redevelopment, the total commitment is expected to exceed \$34 million.”

Mr Sartor said the Redfern Waterloo Authority had helped negotiate the deal to establish a new youth precinct and showcase for Indigenous culture.

“The best way to improve the circumstances of Indigenous families in Redfern and Waterloo is by supporting a range of opportunities in education and employment,” Mr Sartor said.

“This new Centre will help young people from this area and other communities achieve their full potential through mentoring, training and learning initiatives.

“It is expected to help up to 5,000 kids a year, when fully operational.”

Ms McPherson said redevelopment of the former Redfern Public School site was expected to commence early next year and is due for completion in 2009.

“The ILC is proud to be taking a leading role in redeveloping the former Redfern Public School site for the benefit of current and future generations,” Ms McPherson said.

Plans for the NIDC include a new 25-metre heated swimming pool and sports training field.

The redevelopment includes construction of new multi-use classrooms and accommodation and dining facilities for up to 100 people.

The existing Murawina Child Care Centre and four school buildings (including two heritage-listed buildings) will be refurbished.

The Centre will accommodate a number of established programs, including:

- The Exodus Foundation, which will establish a tutorial centre for children aged 10-14;
- The National Aboriginal Sports Corporation Australia, which runs a number of sporting and life development programs for Indigenous people encouraging health lifestyles through sport and education;
- The Lloyd McDermott Rugby Development Team, which provides opportunity for Indigenous youth to become involved in rugby union, netball and golf.

NSW for Aboriginal Affairs Milton Orkopoulos welcomed the new use for the site.

"It is great to see Redfern's importance to the Aboriginal community across Australia acknowledged through the announcement of the NIDC on this site," said Mr Orkopoulos.

"This centre is another important practical step on the road to addressing Aboriginal disadvantage."

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