

## **Pymont Bridge: Symbolic marker in the industrial landscape of Darling Harbour**

**Ece Kaya | PhD Candidate**

**Western Sydney University / Institute for Culture and Society**

### **Abstract**

The industrial landscape has changed immensely as a result of the transformations of the inner-city waterfronts since 1960s. The problem of how to utilise the abandoned spaces occupying such vast areas in the centres of port cities with higher material values presented some new opportunities and affected the decisions of governments to transform these areas. Former working-class neighbourhoods, historic industrial sites and waterfronts were redeveloped as hotels, retail complexes, art centres or restaurants. Early in 1984 the State Government of NSW announced Darling Harbour as “The Development Area” with an intention to create a new place for people in terms of tourism, education, recreational, entertainment, cultural and commercial activities. This development had been planned with a deadline of Bicentennial Celebration in 1988. By the announcement of the New Darling Harbour Act, heritage values were not considered as a part of the development.

Industrial structures of Darling Harbour were seen as ‘post-industrial scars’ caused by an industrial activity that embodied another aspect of modern society (Storm, 2014). Although the recognition of industrial landscapes and structures is important in order to remember the significant industrial culture, “the conservation of industrial heritage is determined primarily by taste and money rather than by historical importance or cultural significance” (Spearritt, 1991). Darling Harbour has lost its industrial history and its industrial identity. This identity also connects the industrial past of the development site, the city centre and Pymont. Like proof of the industrial history in the area, the industrial structures had a greater influence on the growth of Sydney, expanding beyond its obvious border. The Pymont Bridge was one of the few items retained on the development site, because of its heritage significance.