

PORT AUTHORITY OF NSW HERITAGE INVENTORY

State Heritage Inventory

SHI Number: 4560021		Study Number: N/A	
Item Name: Port Botany Old Government Wharf Remains			
Location: Port Botany, Banksmeadow			
Address: Port Botany		DUAP Region: Sydney South	
Suburb / Nearest Town: Banksmeadow 2019		Historic Region: Sydney	
Local Govt Area: Waterway		Parish: Botany	
State: NSW		County: Cumberland	
Other/Former Names: Long Pier; Government Pier			
Area/Group/Complex:		Group ID:	
Aboriginal Area:			
Curtilage/Boundary:			
Item Type: Archaeological-Maritime	Group: Maritime Industry	Category: Wharf	
Owner: Port Authority of New South Wales			
Current Use: Ruin			
Former Uses: Government jetty			
Assessed Significance: Local		Endorsed Significance:	
Statement of Significance: The wharf was an important structure in the early years of industrial development in the Botany area. However, the integrity of the site has been compromised by years of neglect and partial demolition. Only minimal interpretive and archaeological potential remains.			
<p>Historical Notes or Provenance: In 1880 the Government Pier or Long Pier was built at Banksmeadow as 'a considerable amount of departmental material was being landed at the wharf for the Sand, Lime and Brickworks, and it was considered desirable that such material should be free from wharfage rates' (Cooper 23/8/1920). Its principal purpose was to unload coal from Newcastle to supply the needs of the burgeoning industries established in the area. A tramway associated with the pier was opened in May 1882 (Jervis 1938:98). This tram ran along Botany Road right past the Sand, Lime and Brickworks, down Pier Road and onto the Government Pier (Jervis 1938:238).</p> <p>On 18 February 1921 the Government Pier was 'denationalised' and handed over to the Botany Municipal Council (Cooper 4/3/1921). Under Council control, nine coal bins were purchased, from Howard Smith's Wharf, Darling Harbour, and re-erected on the Government Pier. Not long after, another two bins and seven hoppers were erected on the pier. Between 1921 and 1937 the revenue from the wharf exceeded £21,000, whilst expenditure was less than £6,000.</p> <p>The pier was still in use when the Bunnerong Power Station was built by the Sydney Municipal Council (later known as the Sydney County Council) in about 1929 (the year that Bunnerong A unit was installed). Coal to supply the power station was unloaded from steamers onto the jetty and taken by train to the power station (Larcombe nd:119). At its peak, the coal trade amounted to 15,000 tons a year (MSB 1979:2).</p>			

Around the same time as Bunnerong Power Station was being commissioned, the Australian Oil Company H C Sleigh Ltd. Established a terminal on the Alexandria Canal. In 1948 Bitumen and Oil Refineries Australia Ltd (BORAL) established a refinery at Matraville on the northern side of the entrance of Botany Bay. Multi buoy tanker moorings were laid off Yarra Bay, with a submarine pipeline to Yarra Point to carry crude oil direct from ships to the refinery (MSB 1976:36). Other pipelines and moorings were established off Yarra Bay and Bumborah Point in subsequent years. Generally, the development of port facilities for industry before 1950 was on a relatively small scale when compared with modern operations. The developments carried out before 1950 were designed to utilise the naturally deeper waters of the northern foreshore (MSB 1976:36). These naturally deeper waters explain in part the occurrence of early industry in the area.

By 1961 the jetty was being used by the firm R C Bradshaw Pty Ltd. For sand-dredging operations. The coal bins were being used in the operations to store sand (SPA - Wharf Inspector 2/3/1966). By this stage the condition of the wharf was starting to deteriorate and Bradshaw had taken some measures to strengthen the piling by dumping ballast under the jetty (SPA - Harbour Master 9/8/1961). An inspection of the wharf made on 22nd February 1966 found that a substantial area at the outer end of the stone pier had been washed away. The Wharf Inspector reported:

'For the greater part of its length, this jetty is constructed in stone and it is extended at the outer end by a substantial timber wharf structure. This timber section contains large 'hopper' bins, which it is assumed were formerly used for coal storage. The bins on the eastern side are in a state of partial collapse, but some of those on the western side are presently in use for sand storage...

The timber structure at the outer end is very old and weathered and in very poor general condition. The piles, some of which are eaten off, are at 10' centres transversely and 16' centres longitudinally. These are spanned by 12" x 6" cap wales at 16' centres, which in turn support 12" x 12" girders at 5' centres. These sub-structure timbers are in poor condition. The original decking is of 9" x 4" timber and is so old and weathered as to be practically useless. In order to in some way stabilise the structure, R. C. Bradshaw Pty Ltd. Have tipped a large quantity of stone around the piles and up the underside of the girders, this treatment being confined to those sections of the structure which they use and over which their trucks pass. In addition, 9" x 4" decking has been laid at right angles to the original decking, to accommodate the wheels of the trucks' (SPA - Wharf Inspector 2/3/1966).

No repairs were carried out on the jetty and an inspection made on 24 October 1968 disclosed that the jetty was not being used. All the sand dredging equipment and shed remains were still on the end of the jetty, in a state of disrepair (SPA - Wharf Inspector 28/10/1968). By December 1969 the machinery was removed from the jetty (SPA - Wharf Inspector 28/1/1970), and in 1970 demolition of the jetty began. The contractor employed to demolish the jetty commenced by burning the pier. The council did not approve of this method and so the demolition work was stopped (Madden 8/6/1970).

Further wharf inspections drew attention to the ballast which had been placed under the jetty, and the hazards this could cause for ships once the jetty was removed (SPA - Wharf Inspector 24/6/1970). The wharf Inspector was further concerned stating '...that a considerable amount of unsatisfactory filling has been placed at the outer end of the reclaimed area, the filling consists of top soil, grass, brickbats, broken concrete, timber, old corrugated iron etc. This filling has been used to cover demolished timber from the jetty structure and is considered most unsatisfactory due to its nature and should be removed. Heavy seas could spread the filling over a large area of the adjacent bed and the timber could become a navigational hazard in this event. The filling no doubt would be unsatisfactory to be left on the area for the future reclamation in conjunction with the port development' (SPA - Senior Wharf Inspector 27/8/1970).

During the construction of the Port Botany Expansion (PBE) 2008 – 2014, the adjacent Penrhyn Estuary underwent a rehabilitation and expansion program funded by the former Sydney Ports Corporation. The program featured several key works including the construction of a saltmarsh habitat, public lookout, bird

roosting islands and bird hide. This public lookout approximately 65 metres from the Old Government Wharf, is currently the only publicly accessible location from which to view the item.			
Themes:	National Theme: 3. Economy	State Theme: Industry	Local Theme: (none)
Designer:			
Maker / Builder:			
Year Started: 1880	Year Completed: 1880	Circa: No	
Physical Description: Originally of stone and timber with coal hopper bins for coal handling along the timber structure. The above water remains of the wharf include only partially demolished burnt-out posts of the former structure, visible from a distance at the adjacent public lookout.			
Physical Condition: Demolished only isolated jetty posts and mooring posts remain. Limited archaeological potential.			
Modification Dates: 1882 – Tramway was added. It ran along the Pier, up Pier Road past the Sand Lime and Brickworks and into Botany Road. Coal hoppers were added after 1929. Between 1950-66 large amongst of stone and debris were dumped around the base to provide a cheap solid base to support trucks as the wharf fell further into disrepair.			
Recommended Management: Retain in situ and conserve			
Management: Statutory Instrument			
Further Comments:			
Criteria a) The government wharf was a significant structure in the early history of the Port of Botany. It is associated with coal loading operations in relation to the nearby (but now demolished) Bunnerong Station. However little of the pier structure remains.			
Criteria b)			
Criteria c)			
Criteria d)			
Criteria e)			
Criteria f)			
Criteria g)			
Integrity / Intactness: The wharf was in a state of disrepair for many years leading to orders for its removal. Unsympathetic works were undertaken to prolong its commercial operation such as the dumping of mass bulk rock and building debris fill to support truck traffic. The wharf was partially burnt down and destroyed. The minimal physical fabric remaining consists of demolition debris at the landward end of the wharf and several posts located in the water itself.			
References:	Author:	Title: Botany Bay - An expanding oil port with a vast potential for expansion and development	Year: 1961

	Cooper, J.B	Botany Municipal Council - re Long Pier Wharf Botany'			1920
	Cooper, J.B	Botany Bay- Long Pier Wharf- Denationalisation'			1921
	Jervis, J	A Jubilee History of the Municipality of Botany			1938
	Larcombe, F.A	The History of Botany 1788-1963.			
	Madden, R. (Town Clerk)	Fire -Botany Bay Pier			1970
	Wharf Inspector	Long Pier Wharf- Botany Bay- Proposed Transfer			1970
Studies:	Author:	Title:	Number:	Year:	
	Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Heritage Consultants	Sydney Ports Corporation Heritage and Conservation Register		2004	
	Navin Officer Heritage Consultants	Cultural Heritage Assessment of the proposed Port Botany Expansion		2002	
Parcels:	Parcel Code:	Lot Number: 1	Section:	Plan Code: DP	Plan Number: 1165618
Latitude:			Longitude:		
Listings:	Name:	Title:	Number:	Date:	
	Heritage Act – S.170 NSW State agency heritage register	Port Botany Old Government Wharf Remains	4560021	1/07/2004	
Data Entry:	Date First Entered:	Date Updated:	Status:		
	30/06/2004	10/01/2023	Basic		

Image: 1



Caption: Location Plan

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Image By: Port Authority of New South Wales

Image Date: 14/03/2023

Image File: BFBP039A_Final

Image: 2



Caption: Port Botany Old Government Wharf Remains

Copyright: Port Authority of New South Wales

Image By: Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Heritage Consultants

Image Date:

Image File: 4560021b1.jpg

Image: 3



Caption: Port Botany Old Government Wharf Remains

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Image Date: 07.12.2022

Image File: 4560021b2.jpg

Image: 4



Caption: Port Botany Old Government Wharf Remains - Closeup

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Image By: Zach Nix - NBRS

Image Date: 07.12.2022

Image File: 4560021b3.jpg

Image: 5



Caption: Port Botany Old Government Wharf Remains – Distance from public lookout

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Image By: Zach Nix - NBRS

Image Date: 07.12.2022

Image File: 4560021b4.jpg

Image: 6



Caption: Viewing platform providing public visual access to Port Botany Old Government Wharf Remains and Penrhyn Estuary

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Image By: Zach Nix - NBRS

Image Date: 07.12.2022

Image File: 4560021b5.jpg