Glebe Island multi-user facility

The challenge

The inner Sydney region is growing rapidly and the NSW Government is working to plan for an estimated future population in this region of over 1.3 million by 2036. While increased urban development and improved transport infrastructure will be essential, preserving and protecting our existing international freight and trade routes, retaining existing industrial and urban services land and our working port capacity is critical to ensuring the long-term economic viability of our city and State.

There is a crucial need for Sydney to import dry bulk construction materials for concrete production, due to the depletion of local sand supplies in Sydney and the need to meet the increasing demand for these materials in the inner city. This will help service the demands of the NSW Government’s $93 billion infrastructure program.

The solution

Glebe Island has played a key role in supporting Sydney’s construction supply needs since the early 1990s. Currently, Glebe Island receives shipments of cement, sugar, salt and gypsum. It can continue to support vital, transformative infrastructure projects such as Sydney Metro, WestConnex and Western Harbour Tunnel over the next decade.

For the short to medium term, Glebe Island is also able to provide a low cost, low impact and sustainable entry point for these construction materials to support the ongoing needs of the city and the current infrastructure surge. Importing materials by sea brings significant environmental and social benefits by minimising congestion, air pollution and road maintenance costs arising from truck movements on roads in the Sydney region.

The following NSW Government reports recognise the strategic importance of, and are supportive of, a working port and Glebe Island’s role in supplying material to the Sydney construction market.

1. A Metropolis of Three Cities – The Greater Sydney Region Plan (Greater Sydney Commission 2018)
2. Eastern City District Plan (Greater Sydney Commission 2018)
4. NSW Freight and Ports Plan 2018–2023
The benefits

- Glebe Island and White Bay provide the only deep-water wharves for commercial dry bulk materials shipping in Sydney Harbour. These berths provide for a low-cost, low-impact and sustainable way to bring dry bulk construction materials necessary for concrete production into the city. These materials are required for business-as-usual works and for major infrastructure projects.
- Importing materials by ship will substantially reduce the total distance required to be traveled by road – a single vessel can replace between 1,100–1,500 truck loads. Without the ability to use ships to import material via the port, the only way to transport the material into Sydney is via road.
- Removing heavy vehicles from the road network in the Sydney region would reduce road congestion, improve air quality (by reducing vehicle emissions) and reduce traffic noise.
- The multi-user facility is an interim solution to meet Inner Sydney’s ongoing demand for concrete and to service the infrastructure construction boom for at least the next 10 years. The new facility will create direct and indirect employment opportunities.

Status of the multi-user facility

The proposed multi-user facility was assessed and determined (approved) under Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. Port Authority is in the process of discussing the use of space within the multi-user facility with prospective operators. The multi-user facility is consistent with the NSW Government’s intent and strategic plans to maintain a working port at Glebe Island.

Indicative site layout of the multi-user facility

*Note: indicative multi-user facility is not to scale.*

How will concerns raised in the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) be mitigated?

The following table summarises the key mitigation measures to be implemented. The key concerns raised were noise, air quality, traffic and visual amenity.

<table>
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<th>CONCERNS</th>
<th>MITIGATION STRATEGY</th>
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| **Noise**        | • Building will be designed to mitigate operational noise.  
                    • All loading of materials into trucks will be undertaken inside the multi-user facility building.  
                    • Port Authority will develop and implement a ship noise guideline and protocol to manage ship noise (Noise Policy currently being prepared in consultation with the EPA and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment).  
                    • An onsite speed limit of 10km/h will be enforced.  
                    • Facility and access designed to eliminate reversing alarms under normal operations.  
                    • Non-tonal movement alarms and/or visual warning devices will be used on all plant and equipment on site, subject to WHS requirements.  
                    • Building entry/exit doors and gates will be provided with soft-stops to avoid metal banging.  
                    • Each commercial operator will be required to develop and implement a Noise Management Plan.  
                    • Read more at: RtS REPORT – SECTION 3.6                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| **Air quality**  | • Ships using the facility will be required to use low-sulphur fuels.  
                    • Each commercial operator will be required to develop and implement an Air Quality Management Plan.  
                    • Conveyors belts will be covered.  
                    • Handing and loading of materials into trucks will be undertaken inside building.  
                    • Building slots will enable direct receival of goods into building.  
                    • A maximum of two building slots would be open at any one time during ship unloading.  
                    • Dust control measures will be incorporated inside the building.  
                    • Visual surveillance of material loading and handling activities will be undertaken to ensure dust emissions are minimised.  
                    • Read more at: RtS REPORT – SECTION 3.7                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| **Traffic**      | • Each commercial operator will be required to develop and implement a Traffic Management Plan prepared for each user of the multi-user facility.  
                    • Vehicles will be required to enter/exit the site in a forward direction.  
                    • Queuing of trucks/vehicles outside the port area will not be permitted.  
                    • Vehicular access points will be designed to avoid conflicts between pedestrians and light vehicles, and to manage cumulative traffic impacts.  
                    • Port Authority will consult with Transport for NSW and other stakeholders to help ensure coordination between operations of the multi-user facility, other relevant projects and port users in the vicinity and to minimise truck movements during peak hours as far as practicable.  
                    • Read more at: RtS REPORT – SECTION 3.8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| **Visual amenity**| • Operational lighting will be controlled to minimise offsite light spill.  
                    • Ships will be required to turn off any non-essential lights consistent with on-board safety and security requirements.  
                    • Options to soften the visual impact of the building will be discussed with the local community.  
                    • Consideration of building materials at detail design stage will be undertaken to reduce reflectivity.  
                    • Any additional lighting required on site will be designed in accordance with Australian Standard 4282:1997 Control of the Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting.  
                    • Read more at: RtS REPORT – SECTION 3.11                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
How the will the multi-user facility work?

The site for the multi-user facility is on land owned by Port Authority. It will be located adjacent to berths 1 and 2 on the eastern side of Glebe Island (see page 2). The facility will have separated storage bays to receive, store and then distribute dry bulk construction materials to concrete batching plants and construction sites.

The facility will allow dry bulk construction materials to be unloaded from ships via the ship’s unloading equipment and radial stackers (relocatable conveyor belts) into the facility, then for materials to be loaded from the storage bays onto trucks within the building.

Indicative cross section of the Glebe Island multi-user facility

- Wharf distances to scale
- Other distances to approximate scale

Review of Environmental Factors

Port Authority voluntarily placed the Review of Environmental Factors (REF) on public exhibition between 31 January and 12 March 2018.

Around 300 submissions were received on the REF and these have been reviewed and responded to in a Response to Submissions report.