

Waverton Precinct Minutes

Tuesday, 6 February 2018

Meeting Opened: 7.35pm

Chair: IG

Minutes: SF

Attendance: 39

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from IB and KA

The Deputy Chair advised that IB is overseas. He also advised that the regular Secretary has resigned and that there would be a call for a replacement at the March meeting. Due to the public interest in the DA 3/18 for location of a Floating Dry Dock (FDD) at Noakes Shipyard, representatives from Noakes had been contacted and had agreed to present to the meeting. Consequently the order of meeting was changed to allow this presentation to take precedence.

2. DA for Floating Dry Dock at Noakes Shipyard

Four representatives of Noakes led by SL were in attendance and presented photo montages and background explanation material on the proposal. Generally the full material is available for view on the Council DA website, although the noise impact report had not been made available at the time the meeting commenced but was reported to be up on the EPA website by the end of the meeting.

SL explained that there has been an operating shipbuilding and repair facility on the site for more than 100 years, and was operating when most of the current apartments were constructed, including some which were only approved on the proviso that the Noakes site remain in operation. He also explained that for the financial viability of the yard, the additional capability provided by the FDD improved business viability. He noted they have had bad experience recently with very large private super yachts on the slipway and that pollution is much harder to control on that structure; and noted he would rather keep the slipway for smaller craft and wooden boats once the dry dock is operational.

In essence the presentation explained that the FDD, which had been in the Bay previously when it was bought from Thales some years ago, had since been towed to Yamba and refurbished to Defence current standards, including removal of redundant overhangs which made it now 6m shorter than originally and which took off much of the small huts and fixtures on the top, so the lines are now much cleaner. The FDD is intended to be located at Noakes, parallel to shore in an area currently occupied by ferries, and would require removal of two finger wharves. To load and unload vessels, the FDD would be turned to face south-west, thus directing its entrance towards the channel. This would typically occur at high tide to give maximum available draft. The FDD would be used to refurbish vessels of the kind currently being refitted on the slipway, although it was

noted that it could handle vessels of size up to the Sydney 2000. All work would be undertaken in compliance with EPA and WHS requirements, and sound absorbing and other barriers would be erected as necessary to achieve compliance.

The state of the application is that it has been submitted to Council with all supporting documentation and has received landowner's consent from RMS. Requirements given by the Department of Planning have been complied with. Assessment by other government agencies is in progress. It was stated that neither the site nor the dry dock have heritage listing although the heritage importance of the continuity of the business was mentioned.

The meeting raised the following questions, and answers were tendered:

Q: How is the FDD and slip operated? A: The FDD is a boat and is registered, and can be moved from place to place (by tug). It works by ballasting down so a vessel can float aboard. It is then deballasted to raise the vessel clear of the water. The existing slipway will remain in operation.

Q: When will loading occur? A: This will be similar to the operation of the existing slipway where deep draught vessels are slipped at high tide during working hours.

Q: Why are there no elevations of the FDD available in the documentation? A: They can be made available. Similarly, a photo of the FDD in current configuration will be made available.

Q: What is the weight? A: The FDD weighs 1600tonnes. With a 1000 tonne (max) vessel aboard, total displacement would be 2600 tonnes.

Q: Will installation require dredging? A: No, but two jetties will be removed by normal means. The ferries normally moored there will be relocated on site.

Q: How often will the FDD leave the Noakes lease area? A: When it has work elsewhere.

Q: Given that Noakes currently exceeds noise limits, for example recently, grinding on landing craft, how can the community believe Noakes will comply with their promised modest noise loads? A: Noakes will comply with EPA rules and WHS rules or pay the fines, as at present. Efforts will be made to achieve good sound control as at other FDDs which they have observed overseas. It was noted that public DIY has already been banned on Saturdays because of their poor noise control.

Q: What about smoke, dust and smells? A: Navy has improved the engine control on their landing craft after public complaints. Dust and paint fumes will be controlled by the Noakes WHS officer.

Q: There were many related queries about Height. The visual impact report shows the height of the FDD at low tide and hence minimises its visual effect, particularly on those living in John Street. It was suggested that poles should be used to indicate obstruction

height as is done for buildings. A: Noakes offered to mark the height on boat masts. Noakes also offered to allow visitors onto the site after 4pm by arrangement to view the height effects. They also offered to include the FDD on an existing model of the Bay and make this available, which will take around a fortnight to prepare.

Q: Is the new EPA licence more relaxed than the old one? A: No. there are checks done on the full property.

Q: Will the FDD be at minimum draft when not in use? A: Typically no as corrosion would be worse in the tanks if it remains submerged.

Timing: Noakes agreed that they would be prepared for the deadlines to be slipped by 2 or 3 weeks if required to allow proper consideration of and responses to the extra material they make available, including the model and mast markings.

The Noakes representatives were thanked for their input and left the meeting.

Following further discussion it was agreed that a list be circulated for volunteers to nominate to assist in preparing a submission on behalf of Precinct. This should generally address:

- Precinct's ongoing support for the principle of a viable working waterfront (Working Harbour), but one which keeps the balance in proportion amongst the various interests. One opinion was presented that Berrys Bay should follow the rest of the harbour and be de-industrialised.
- Concern that the FDD is overscale for the Bay and the existing business.
- Concern over visual obstruction by the FDD to some residents and to walkers.
- Concerns over noise and whether it would/could be compliant given the amphitheatre nature of the locality. Also related issues of noise effects, measurement etc,
- Boat numbers and general usage at the shipyard has grown significantly since the last DA approved modifications in the 1990s. This level of utilisation should be reviewed and used as appropriate in any approval relating to the dry dock.
- Re-commitment to the agreed walkway in the 1990s should also be included in any settlement - and actioned.

The drafted submission should be given to the Chair for consideration by the core Precinct representatives for endorsement prior to closing date.

3. Replies from Council and Existing Business

Council had provided just prior to the meeting an update on all matters raised in 2017 and also a specific update on several known important matters, which were both used to update the meeting. Specific high interest items are as follows:

1. **Waverton Park Lighting:** Should be complete by April.
2. **Waterhen Drive lighting:** Should be complete by end February.

3. **Coal Loader Opening:** There will be a picnic on March 24 linking in to Earth Hour activities.
4. **Coal Loader heritage listing:** To be considered in April.
5. **Quarantine Station acquisition.** No progress.
6. **Waverton Peninsula Steering Committee:** To meet 28 March.

4. New Business

Ross Street upgrade

There are problems with unfriendly footpath topography, poles in the footpath etc and also dangers of speeding vehicles and lack of visibility for drivers from garages and driveways were mentioned. It was agreed that Precinct request that Council's Traffic Engineer prepare a proper traffic and pedestrian plan and not simply do a street resurfacing.

Brennan Park upgrade

Council is currently asking for ideas on this upgrade. As there are people with limited mobility who use the park, it was requested that Council consider providing a set of fitness equipment which is accessible on the upper level.

North Sydney CBD Upgrade

It was reported that KA had arranged for JH, the Director of Strategy, to present to the March meeting.

5. Development Applications

a. **4-6 Mckye Street:** It was reported that despite the DAs not yet being approved, the developer is advertising to sell apartments off the plan. Council is requested to stop this disrespectful behaviour.

6. Other Business

Bushcare and Streets Alive are both meeting regularly and would welcome new members.

IG called for attendees to consider what issues should be the priorities for Precinct to address during 2018 and foreshadowed a discussion around this at the next meeting.

7. Correspondence

The correspondence was accepted: Moved VY, seconded PK, unanimous

8. Previous Minutes

The minutes from the November and December 2017 meetings were accepted: Moved PK seconded BB, unanimous.

Next meeting Tuesday 6 March 2018.