

Lord Howe Island



Critical Infrastructure Program

Community Engagement

'What we heard' Summary
MAY 2025



“ Lord Howe Island should be leading not following... in terms of how we approach the Critical Infrastructure Program. ”

— PARTICIPANT,
COMMUNITY DROP-IN SESSION



Lord Howe Island Critical Infrastructure Program

The Lord Howe Island Critical Infrastructure Program (the Program) was established by the Lord Howe Island Board and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service to implement improvements and upgrades to essential infrastructure critical to everyday life on the Island. The Program will help to secure the Island’s long-term future as a sustainable tourism destination.

This summary provides an overview of what we heard from the community and stakeholders as part of the second phase of engagement on the Lord Howe Island Critical Infrastructure Program conducted in December 2024 / January 2025. Community feedback is presented according to the ‘North Zone’ marine infrastructure and biosecurity infrastructure, and the ‘South Zone’ waste management facility and related infrastructure. Key actions for the project team are also highlighted in response to the feedback received.

We thank all those who participated in the engagement program. Members of the community and stakeholders will have a further opportunity to provide feedback on the draft master plan as part of the public exhibition process for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It is anticipated that the EIS will be lodged in mid-2025.

You can stay up to date and get in touch with the project team via the Lord Howe Island Board webpage at www.lhib.nsw.gov.au/infrastructure/critical-infrastructure-program

Critical Infrastructure Program



Precinct Planning Services



New Waste Management Facility



New Vessel Access & Infrastructure



New Marine Vessel & Operations



New Biosecurity Infrastructure

NEXT STEPS - AT A GLANCE



We heard that...

North Zone marine infrastructure and biosecurity infrastructure

The key themes raised by the community and stakeholders in relation to the North Zone concept designs were:

- General support for marine and biosecurity infrastructure to be located in the North Zone
- Widespread recognition and understanding of the rationale for not continuing to pursue the South Zone as the location for marine infrastructure
- A desire for the concept design to be refined with a strong focus on further improving capacity, safety and efficiency, while reducing congestion, potential conflicts and visual impacts.

Key priorities for refining the concept design were:

- Retain the Ocean View shed which has historic value / co-locate Marine Parks and Maritime Services storage facilities in this location
- Remove the proposed office building and storage facility building in order to incorporate Wilson's Landing as part of the community space, and reflect its importance in cultural interpretation of the site
- Improve the boat ramp as an important community asset and ensure the plans do not negatively impact use of this area by the boating community.

Further initiatives raised as part of the engagement process were:

- Reduce the size of the staging area proposed for cargo unloading/loading and ensure the space is 'fit for purpose'
- Provide additional car/trailer/boat parking and a bunded maintenance area in proximity to the boat ramp
- Retain the recently built Marine Rescue building and facilitate shared use of this space for a coordinated marine rescue response
- Increase space for truck/forklift/car/boat/trailer movements and turning circles to support access and minimise potential conflicts
- Resolve the circulation of trucks and truck parking, to minimise the need for turning and to seamlessly connect with the surrounding road network
- Maintain public safety at all times during vessel operations through segregation of operational and public use areas; ensure that members of the general public watching the vessel during operations do so from a "safe" distance

- Consider operational elements relating to vessel operations and use of public areas
- Consider focusing the public walking path and picnic area to south of the jetty and ramp
- Remove or reduce the size of the proposed viewing platform – which was regarded as being unnecessary, visually impacting the pristine natural landscape, and potentially leading to safety issues (eg on New Year's Eve)
- Enhance the proposed new public areas with unobtrusive bench seating and appropriate landscaping
- Appropriately address environmental conditions as part of design of the jetty / infrastructure
- Progress the proposed drive-through access for forklifts (for the purposes of cargo unloading), to facilitate onboard inspections, and look to enable future innovations as part of the approach to biosecurity – while emphasising the importance of an increased focus on mainland biosecurity
- Ensure the unstuffing shed provides weather protection and explore potential for this space to accommodate Australia Post boxes (to reduce forklift movements, improve public safety, offer weather protection)
- Make the buildings / infrastructure look like they belong on the Island (ie to reflect the Island's heritage character, built form and materiality)
- Ensure all buildings have water capture capability and that appropriate access is provided to support their ongoing maintenance
- Consider a shared community space where members of the community can undertake boat maintenance.



What we plan to do

- Remove proposed Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (LHIB Marine Parks), Transport for NSW and LHIB office building from plan
- Progress planning and approvals for the upgrade of public boat ramp. Further work is not included in the CIP
- Update and detail new ramp proposal, with engineering and operational assessment
- Secure hard stand area during vessel operations using T-Top temporary orange moveable posts and flagging to support public awareness and safety
- Consider 'drive through' functionality for forklifts in the proposed biosecurity shed.
- Increase the space between the unstuffing shed and surrounding retaining walls by 800mm to support enhanced access
- Increase the circulation space for vehicles during marine operations, with testing to be undertaken in accordance with Australian Standards for vehicle turning circles
- Reduce the size of the proposed truck queuing area and relocate this space to the south of the private driveway
- Ensure the grassed area to the north and west of the proposed hardstand will be available for boat trailer parking
- Update the formalised parking area to the south of the jetty to provide an open area for casual and overflow parking, to double as a new picnic and viewing area (including seating and BBQ facilities)
- Remove the proposed new viewing platform, foreshore walk and picnic area from the northern side of the jetty
- Remove one row of Kentia Palms behind the unstuffing shed near Lagoon Road, remove parking near Lagoon Road to avoid conflicts with existing driveway entry, and introduce plantings/landscaping to identify the new driveway entry
- Reduce the size of the cargo holding area, with demarcation for containers consolidated on the east side of the hardstand – noting that these areas require verification by the technical team / the storage area on the west side may be widened, if required
- Connect the underground stormwater pipe from the existing culvert / overland flow with the east side of Lagoon Road – with stormwater outlet next to the public boat ramp.



We heard that...

South Zone: waste management facility and related infrastructure

Key themes raised in community and stakeholder feedback on the waste management facility and related infrastructure in the South Zone were:

- General support for the upgraded waste management facility and related infrastructure in the South Zone
- Emphasis on the importance of effectively managing site contamination as part of the construction process
- Support for the facility to promote increased sorting of waste by community members, and a strong desire for reuse of materials on Island, in the first instance, and off Island, wherever possible
- Interest in opportunities for continuous improvement in terms of waste management and communications, to support community/visitor education and behaviour
- Opportunities to further refine the concept design to enhance user experience and neighbourhood amenity, as discussed below.

Potential refinements to the concept design

Opportunities for refining the concept design raised by members of the community and stakeholders were:

- Consider use of materials and building techniques
- Extend the roof cover to provide weather protection for facility users, particularly considering the facility's exposure to strong wind / rain
- Move the front gate of the waste management facility slightly to the north – to avoid the entry conflicting with existing pedestrian access / the dog walking track
- Test moving the organics area to the north end of the waste management facility / away from the residential lease / residence
- Test using the central area of the facility as a staging area (ie closer to the materials recovery facility and drop off area for materials to be transported off Island)
- Consider moving the staff office closer to the front entry of the facility, to enable staff to keep an eye out for any potential conflicts
- Support the upgraded WMF through waste related communications and education
- Explore the potential inclusion of a small incinerator at the WMF to improve current processes for destruction of weeds on island, and further biosecurity purposes
- Continue to explore opportunities for reuse of waste on island in the first instance, and off island as a secondary measure

- Lord Howe Island Board to assist and encourage residents to do their own composting
- Include the proposed fuel bowser in the plans for the South Zone – set back from the road, appropriately screened with landscaping and not brightly lit; also consider flood risk, tsunami events in relation to its location
- Include the proposed dog kennels in the plans for the South Zone – consider animal welfare / wellbeing and acoustic treatment of the new facility to support amenity; a potential second location could also be explored (ie at the Bureau of Meteorology site)
- Retain the 'Revolve shop' as an important waste management initiative – some community members proposed that the shop be situated in a new location in the town centre for greater visibility, while others sought for it to be retained onsite to support use / convenience
- Further enhance neighbourhood amenity through design of the facility to minimise visual impacts and wind blown litter
- Consider opportunities to streamline delivery of goods from the North Zone and backloading of waste from the South Zone, to minimise vehicle movements.



What we plan to do

Reception area

- Relocate entry to the north to retain clear access to the existing path to the beach
- Progress planning and approvals of re-use shed. Further work is not included in the CIP.
- Combine areas for commercial and residential food waste and locate this area to the north
- Relocate one food waste bin to the commercial drop-off zone
- Relocate skip bins near entry for miscellaneous / smaller building waste adjacent to the chemical shed
- Show indicative line of perimeter fencing on master plan.

Material Recovery Facility (MRF)

- Rotate building slightly to the east, as suggested by the LHIB team
- Update building plan to locate glass crushing and processing on west side for improved access – and to locate source of potential noise away from residential lease
- Relocate second roller shutter to north end of WMF
- Relocate additional door towards Staging Area to the north-east, as landfill bunker requires larger footprint
- Remove door to glass bagging area, with conveyor belt leading glass from the MRF wall to the bagging area to be shown on plans
- Consider potential roofing over glass bagging and storage area
- Remove centre line of ‘road’ and assign as shared zone
- Office size and number of desk spaces has been confirmed adequate
- Show indicative line of perimeter fencing on master plan Reception Area.

Organics Shed and Staging Area

- Allocate ‘staging area’ space that is more centrally located – for storage of empty containers and skip bins between vessel arrivals
- Modify organics shed to contain dehydrator/s and existing Hotrot
- Extend roof of organics shed over adjacent septic ramp and feed
- Increase space in the organics shed for maintenance of equipment
- Relocate organics in general to the north to ensure adequate space for staging area
- Show indicative line of perimeter fencing on master plan
- Further refine the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP).

Storage Area

- Locate storage shed for equipment opposite existing concrete bunkers – with size and potential contents to be verified
- Remove proposed new curing bunkers
- Establish hardstand under bulky goods drop off and storage area
- Provide space at far north for vehicle turning or additional storage
- Relocate container and skip bin storage to central location
- Show indicative line of perimeter fencing on master plan.

We heard that...

Marine vessel

The key themes raised by the community and stakeholders in relation to the marine freight vessel were:

- Widespread support for a new freight vessel to be procured, that will offer a contemporary approach to shipping freight, albeit with some reservation to the proposed approach from a minority of stakeholders
- Strong interest relating to a number of factors including the proven sea worthiness, reliability and manoeuvrability of the new vessel, and how it will interface with on island marine infrastructure and mainland port/s. Further consideration is required for the following:
 - Adoption of a Roll-on/Roll-off (RoRo) service, required infrastructure and future cost of the service to the community
 - Adoption of a containerised cargo solution and suitability for the operator and community; while there was general support for containersation, key issues raised for further consideration included its bulk/the need for specialised equipment for container loading/unloading and the importance of easy to manage operational equipment (to avoid the need to fix complex/technical breakdowns), potential for unfilled containers, additional staff required for container handling in the context of staff shortages
 - Associated environmental impacts (such as vessel design to minimise impacts to the seabed, coral growth over time in the Northern Passage, and minimising visual impacts)
- Community members highlighted the importance of a strong focus on mainland biosecurity arrangements, with on island biosecurity arrangements playing a secondary role; design of the new vessel should meet the island's current and future biosecurity regime
- Emphasis was placed on integrating biosecurity arrangements as part of the vessel design, a streamlined approach to operations, and opportunities to address existing pain points and create efficiencies
- There was strong interest in the time horizon for procurement of the new vessel and commencement of operations, as well as continuation of service, ongoing management and maintenance, customer experience and associated freight costs
- The importance of establishing and maintaining strong relationships with suppliers was highlighted, to ensure operational consistency and efficiency

- Stakeholders emphasised the need for continued and thorough community consultation throughout design and implementation of any new vessel or operational system, with community confidence in the vessel design being critical to its acceptance and long term success
- Some concerns raised during consultation include:
 - Open main deck performance in cargo exposed to sea water
 - Containerisation and biosecurity risks
 - Ability of the vessel to handle the sea crossing
 - Ability of the vessel to turn while loaded and reverse into the ramp.

What we plan to do

- Improve the service offering with containerised cargo / test this solution with industry
- Progress design and build of the new marine vessel. Vessel shall be designed to allow for regular, intentional grounding at the berth in the Lord Howe Island lagoon. The vessel shall perform RoRo operations when grounded or floating and LoLo as contingency. Interactive workshops will be held with shipbuilders during the Design and Build process to ensure a “fit-for-purpose” new marine vessel for the island.
- Install new ‘fixed ramp’ infrastructure to improve the marine infrastructure.



Who we engaged

Almost one in four members of the Lord Howe Island community participated in the phase B engagement*





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