

LORD HOWE ISLAND BOARD

Business Paper

OPEN SESSION

ITEM

Boat Retrieval System (Slipway) Update and proposal for interim and long-term boat storage arrangements

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board discuss and consider this matter to provide a response back to the NSW Roads and Maritime Services.

BACKGROUND

The planning and development of an improved boat ramp and boat retrieval system (slipway) for the Island has been under consideration for many years. In May 2014, the Board adopted the option of minor improvements to the existing boat ramp at Wilson's Landing and a separate slipway facility located at the Waste Management Facility (two site solution).

NSW Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) had already approved funding of \$680,000 from the Better Boating program for an upgraded boat ramp and development of a slipway.

After considerable investigation of options for a slipway at the WMF and taking into account cost, available funding and environmental impacts, a proposal for a slipway consisting of a wheeled cradle capable of being winched across sand was developed. A development application was considered by the Board in September 2016, and consent given:

To construct a vessel launching and retrieval facility including two concrete bunded work areas, a cradle, electric winch and pollution control system at the Waste Management Facility

This was subject to deferred commencement conditions to be satisfied prior to the consent becoming operative:

1. Detailed design

Drawings showing the detailed design of the vessel launch and retrieval system are to be provided to the Board for planning review and sign off, showing all proposed structures with dimensions, materials and colours. This is also to include:

- a) Details and location of the proposed 6,000L water tank. It is to be in a location which is hidden behind the dune by vegetation and not visible from the foreshore.
- b) Details of any piling, foundations or other structures required that were not provided on the submitted plans.
- c) Details of any excavation and piping required to transport the waste generated to the wastewater management system at the Waste Management Facility.

The acceptability of the impacts of the above final designs will be considered in the review.

2. Comments from NSW Department of Primary Industries – Lord Howe Island Marine Park

Referral comments from the NSW Department of Primary Industries in relation to the Marine Park are to be obtained and it is to be demonstrated to the Board's satisfaction that their general terms of approval will be complied with.

Subsequent to development consent, and in order to meet the deferred commencement conditions, consultants Advisian were engaged to investigate possible modification options for the existing slipway cradle, which was originally designed to operate on rails. The cradle is owned by the LHI Slipway Association.

Due to concerns regarding issues and risks identified, Advisian advised that the cradle operating on sand was not the best option for the site. As a result, alternate options for a vessel launching and retrieval facility were considered by Advisian,

After thorough analysis, construction of an elevated, piled, railed slipway for use with the existing cradle was recommended by Advisian as the preferred option.

In the meantime, larger vessels using Lord Howe Island waters have been experiencing difficulties with no access to a slipway, and interim arrangements are needed.

Slipway development

The plan is to return to the option of an elevated, piled, railed slipway for use with the existing cradle at the Waste Management Facility. In relation to the development consent, the change to a railed slipway will be dealt with under the deferred commencement conditions. A detailed design needs to be submitted to the Board for assessment in satisfying the first deferred commencement condition.

The changed design will require additional funding. It is estimated that an elevated, piled, railed slipway would cost \$1.5 million on the mainland. However freight costs to the Island could almost double that estimate to \$2.5 million. Applications have been submitted for funding in addition to that already committed by Roads and Maritime Services. To date there has been no formal response to these applications and telephone discussions with RMS Grants and Projects Manager have not provided any certainty of additional project funding.

Interim Arrangements for boat storage

The Lord Howe Island Police Officer has instructed all boat trailer owners to have the trailers registered to enable them to be used on public roads. Most trailer owners are able to comply with this direction, with the exception of a number of owners of larger vessels. The boat trailers for a number of larger vessels have been constructed on the Island and are not able to be upgraded to the point of being registrable. This means that these trailers cannot be taken on public roads limiting the ability of the owners to store their larger vessels in the long-term storage area. This limitation applies to between two and four trailers.

In the absence of a slipway, an interim solution was proposed to enable identified larger vessels to be taken out of the water and stored near the boat ramp so that they do not have to be towed on the public road network.

The short-term storage area is adjacent to the boat ramp at Wilson's Landing (see plan below). At the November 2017 meeting, the Board approved long-term storage in this designated area,

including waiving short-term storage fees on a case-by-case basis and relying on evidence that there was no alternative registrable trailer option for a particular vessel.



Longer-term arrangements for boat storage

In the longer-term, when the slipway is constructed at the Waste Management Facility (WMF) site, it is proposed that a site for long-term vessel storage be designated in a suitable area adjacent to the WMF. This will enable larger vessels without registrable trailers to be stored close to the slipway. The Board would approve transport of the larger vessels with conditions for the short distance from the long term storage area through the WMF to the slipway again on a case by case basis.

CUURENT POSITION

Correspondence has been received from the RMS Grants and Projects Manager advising that, with the significant cost variation, it would be difficult to accommodate a project of the cost proposed in the current Round 1 Boating Now funding program. As such, RMS and Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has undertaken further research to identify a solution that is more in line with the grant funds available but still achieve similar intended outcomes. As part of this approach, RMS has attempted to enhance/improve the current slipping process on the island and has identified that procuring the following items may aid with slipping activities (see photographs for similar examples):

- A 20t vessel trailer with max draft of approx. 2.5m draft which would cost approximately \$160k with modifications + Freight
- A tractor to tow the trailer to the intended destination following the slipping activities which would cost approximately \$150k + Freight (optional).



Whilst work will need to be done with the relevant vehicle registration team(s) to confirm that the above can be registered on the island, RMS would like to gauge from the Board if this would be a viable solution. If so, there may be potential savings in the current grant that RMS can be consider allocating to other value adds to further enhance boating infrastructure in Lord Howe Island depending on the Board's preference.

In consideration of this proposal by RMS, the Board must also consider the following issues:-

Current boat ramp

- In the past, the Board did not approve a development application for the slipway and boat cleaning at the current boat ramp location due to inconsistency with the LEP for a number of reasons.

Proposed trailer

- Trailer would require special registration approval for the island
- Road not really suitable for this size vehicle (width and height)
- Would require pilot vehicles when moving along the road
- Unlikely to get around tight bends along the road network
- Stress on vessels when towing along the road, really only suitable for flat, level land
- Time taken to move vessel with crane from jetty to WMF

Waste management facility

- Land area required at WMF to unload and load vessels not readily available
- Would require a number of cradles also for standing vessels in the hardstand when survey being undertaken
- Would need a bunded area and connected to the wastewater system at the WMF for boat cleaning activities

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board consider its position on this matter and provide a response to NSW Roads and Maritime Services.

Prepared: John Teague, Manager Infrastructure and Engineering Services

Endorsed: Penny Holloway, Chief Executive Officer