



TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

**RE: PORT KEMBLA OUTER HARBOUR – MODIFICATION 5
RECONFIGURATION OF RECLAMATION AREA (MP08_0249-Mod-5)**

APPLICANT MEETING

PANEL:	RICHARD PEARSON (Chair) SHELLEY PENN AM
OFFICE OF THE IPC:	JANE ANDERSON CALLUM FIRTH
APPLICANT REPRESENTATIVES:	GREG WALLS (NSW Ports) ANJA MORGAN (NSW Ports) CHRISTOPHER SERRANO (ARUP)
LOCATION:	ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE
DATE:	1:00PM – 2:00PM FRIDAY, 29 th MAY 2026

<THE MEETING COMMENCED

MS ANJA MORGAN: Hi, everyone.

5 **MR CHRIS SERANO:** Hey, Anja, and all.

MR RICHARD PEARSON: Hello, everybody. Is that everybody from your side of the business?

10 **MR GREG WALLS:** It is. Thank you.

15 **MR PEARSON:** Okay, great. I'm just going to start with a brief introductory statement. We do need to be quite formal because this is being recorded. So, good afternoon and welcome. Before we begin, I would like to acknowledge I'm speaking to you from Gadigal land and acknowledge the traditional owners of all the lands from which we virtually meet today and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

20 Welcome to the meeting today to discuss Modification 5 of the Port Kembla Outer Harbour Reconfiguration application which is currently before the Commission for determination. The Applicant, Port Kembla Operations Pty Ltd as trustee for Port Kembla Unit Trust, proposes to modify the approval for the Port Kembla Outer Harbour which involves dredging and reclamation of land and developing additional portside and landside facilities. The project is located in the Wollongong local government area.

25 I'm Richard Pearson. I'm the Chair of this Commission Panel and joined by my fellow Commissioner, Shelley Penn. We're also joined by Jane Anderson and Callum Firth from the office of the Independent Planning Commission.

30 In the interests of openness and transparency and to ensure a full capture of information, today's meeting is being recorded, and a complete transcript will be produced and made available on the Commission's website.

35 This meeting is one part of the Commission's consideration of the matter and will form one of several sources of information upon which the Commission will base its determination. We have issued an agenda for today's meeting, which will form the basis of discussions.

40 It's important for the commissioners to ask questions of attendees and clarify issues whenever it is considered appropriate. If you're asked a question and not in a position to answer, you may take the question on notice; however, hopefully we can deal with all questions during the course of the meeting. Following the meeting, the Commission will advise you in writing of any questions that you are required to take on notice, if any. Any subsequent response or information provided to the Commission will then be published on our website.

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I request all participants here today introduce themselves before speaking for the first time, and all members ensure they do not speak over the top of each other, to ensure accuracy of the transcript.

So, with that, we will commence the meeting. We did issue, as I said, an agenda. Well, it starts with opening statement, which I've done, then we'll just get brief introductions from the Applicant's side, and then a 10-minute overview of the project that you're seeking approval for. So, over to you.

MR WALLS: Thanks, Commissioner. My name is Greg Walls. I am the General Manager of Corporate Affairs and Planning at NSW Ports. Anja?

MS MORGAN: Anja Morgan, Planning Manager at NSW Ports.

MR WALLS: And Chris?

MR SERRANO: Thanks, Greg. Yes, Chris Serrano, Principal Environmental Planner at ARUP.

MR WALLS: Thanks, Chris. I'm just - I'm just going to - no worries, thanks, Commissioner. I'll just share a short presentation which I sent through to yourselves earlier. I don't intend to dwell too much on the content but rather take some questions as we go. As I do go, it's very high level from a presentation perspective, but I'll touch on the agenda items as we move through it. Can I just confirm you can see the presentation?

MR PEARSON: No, not yet.

MR WALLS: Not yet? Okay. Just one second. There we go. Hopefully that's working now?

MR PEARSON: Yes, we've got it now. Thank you, Greg.

MR WALLS: Thank you. Just from a high level on who we are and as Applicant, we are Port Kembla Operations, but we know ourselves as NSW Ports. We are the private operators of two ports in New South Wales and two intermodal terminals - Port Botany and Port Kembla are our ports. And the reason I show this slide is I'll talk to the container trade a little bit later on, but Port Botany for the moment is the key container port for New South Wales. We have three stevedores there who operate container trade, but obviously the Mod here is, the subject Mod here is in Port Kembla.

So, onto Port Kembla itself. It's located in Wollongong LGA completely. It's made up of two components as far as we refer to it, so the Inner Harbour and the Outer Harbour; Inner Harbour being on the northern Wollongong side and Outer Harbour being on the ocean side or Port Kembla township side.

The area that we're talking about for this Modification is located in the Outer Harbour of Port Kembla. The port itself operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and the key advantages, or one of the key advantages that the Outer Harbour holds is it is relatively close to international shipping lanes, it's a short transit time for shipping in and out of the Outer Harbour.

Currently, there's an approval in the Outer Harbour for the reclamation of land. This approval (Major Project 08_0249) was approved back in 2011 by the then Port Kembla Port Corporation, so this is prior to the long-term lease of the port. Port Kembla Port Corporation was a state-owned corporation.

The approval at that time approved it in concept and with a staged development, including the staged reclamation of land as you see on this diagram. The key component, I guess, relative to the Modification that we're talking about now is the shape of this reclamation. So, it's a U-shaped reclamation. The original intent was for multi-use and dry bulk storage in this multi-purpose terminal area, and for a container terminal to be located on what was known as the Western Facility.

So, at the time of, I guess, conceptualisation probably 20 years ago, the idea was that two separate trades or two generally separate trades would be handled at this facility. It had a rail spur going in, which is this blue line straight into the container terminal, and at the time based on shipping sizes, it was anticipated that could handle seven ships at a time. Now, those were much smaller ships than we get now, and that is part of the catalyst for this Modification.

So, here's the amended footprint that we are seeking approval for. The Modification seeks to essentially change that U-shape into one contiguous piece of reclaimed land. As you can see in this diagram, there has been works undertaken under the existing approval already, two reclamation areas. So, one is on this western side, that area facilitates the Cement Australia development. This was reclaimed very early on, again by the then Port Kembla Port Corporation, so sometime between 2011 and 2013 this was done. The reclaimed material in there is a mix of material out of local construction sites. There's slag in there, which is a byproduct of the Blue Scope terminal works nearby, and there is some dredge material in there as well. So, a mix of sources was used for that reclaimed area.

The other area that's reclaimed and this is now a contiguous area as well, it's an older area, is this what's known as the Emplacement Cell and what is referred to in the application documentation as the Emplacement Area. This reclaimed area came out of the Squadron Gas terminal which is being built back on the Inner Harbour of Port Kembla. So, to construct that facility, they had to cut back the existing wharf. They had to do some dredging to fit their two vessels, or they're normally two vessels, and that excess material was then placed in the Outer Harbour within the footprint of what was that approved U-shape. So, that's why it doesn't quite align with what we're talking about here.

Our purpose and our reason for this changed footprint is largely around the change in trade demands that we've seen over the last 15 years enquiring and looking to come to Port Kembla. As one operator, NSW Ports that looks after containers at Port Botany, we don't think a container terminal is necessary in Port Kembla until Port Botany reaches or comes near capacity. That's our investment plan. So, in the meantime, we are essentially looking for any other trade that may want to use that land. And the benefit to us, or more recently, the trade that's approached us has been the offshore wind industry; they've been looking for port facilities across the East Coast as these offshore wind zones have been declared at a Federal level.

MR PEARSON: Sorry, Greg. Port Botany, what's the timing that might get saturation from a container point of view, do you know?

5 **MR WALLS:** We're still probably decades away, to be honest, Commissioner. Our throughput at the moment is about 2.8 million TEU or 24-foot equivalent units. We think we can handle in excess of 7 million through that facility. Port Botany or New South Wales generally is an import-dominant port on the container side; we are driven by consumer demand. So, the economics mean that Botany will out-compete a
10 container terminal at Port Kembla until that time at which time it is necessary. So, that's our timing and that's why we say it's probably still at least two decades away for that sort of facility.

15 **MR PEARSON:** Thank you. And just on the reclamation area, I think your next slide talks about it being 40 hectares in total. How much has already been reclaimed with the Cement Australia and the area at the southern end – it looks as if you still obviously, the substantial part of it still needs reclamation?

20 **MR WALLS:** Yes. That's a very good question.

MR PEARSON: It's not absolutely essential. I'm just trying to get an idea of – it's probably leading towards a question about how/where you're going to source the material from reclamation, where it's going to come from, and truck movements, those sorts of questions, and we can deal with that subsequently if you like, or if you have
25 some wisdom you'd like to impart now, happy to hear it.

MR WALLS: Yes, I can largely address that. I think the total reclamation at the moment is something like 16 hectares, but let me confirm that at a later time. That includes that Emplacement Cell and Cement Australia. It is a small percentage
30 compared to that overall footprint. The overall footprint I think is in excess of 40 hectares that we're looking at. The 30-to-40-hectare reference on this slide is what commercially the offshore wind tenant have been telling us is the need. And so, that's why we've been able to position ourselves in that way.

35 In terms of the source of the material, the original approval that we aren't proposing to change from this perspective, allows for the reuse of dredged material that may need to be dredged out of the harbour as part of this project – or will need to be dredged out of the harbour as part of this project. As well as other sources around in the construction industry. So, I mentioned earlier there's some material in there that was from basement
40 parking of a commercial development in Wollongong. The ultimate dream sometimes, I guess, can be that there is a tunnelling project happening in Sydney at the same time, a metro project or a road project, because that material is very suitable for reclamation.

45 And the other positive or good source we have nearby is that slag that I mentioned – the byproduct out of the steel making. We can transfer that almost internally between Blue Scope and our site, and it has good properties as reclaimed material for Port Kembla.

The construction traffic, I guess, we're not proposing to change it at this point. We think that the original approval's assessment around construction related traffic still fits our needs. We still think the majority of the material would be dredge material, but there would be a balance that needs to be obtained elsewhere.

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MR PEARSON: Okay. Thank you. Shelley?

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MS SHELLEY PENN: Sorry, just a quick question too while you're on areas and so on. Thanks for that discussion so far. Just to clarify, there are quite a few references to the reduced footprint, but I think the volume of dredging and the overall area ... I'm just getting a bit confused about what the footprint refers to. Sorry. Just make sure I understand that.

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MR WALLS: Yes. The footprint isn't necessarily reduced, it is the same essential footprint, just in a different layout.

MS PENN: Okay.

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MR WALLS: What we are doing is bringing it – the previous staged approval allowed for reclamation across the three stages. We're bringing that all into the first stage, so that's why you see a Stage 1 change of a different volume. So, the footprint itself is still equivalent to what we were doing, it's just the layout has changed.

25

MS PENN: Okay, thanks. And does that mean that the volume ... I read it as being an overall increase from the concept plan, but I think you just said – I want to make sure I heard you properly – it's actually similar in volume, overall volume, it's just that it's bringing it all forward to Stage 1, so it's not actually an increase from the concept.

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MR WALLS: That's my recollection.

MS PENN: Okay.

MR WALLS: Chris, if you've got any –

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MS PENN: It's just a detail, but I just want to make sure I'm understanding it properly.

MR WALLS: Yes, yes.

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MR SERRANO: Yes, I'll just double check the numbers here, but yes, that's pretty much where we're at in terms of the overall reclamation area. Really the change there is the change in the shape of that area that's being reclaimed. The total footprint, let's say, is more or less equivalent to that of what was previously proposed. Just, yes, noting Greg's comments that it's been brought forward.

45

So, whereas we have previously, the original approval and then the concept approval, it's consolidating that total reclamation area into this now new stage, let's say, the Stage 1.

MS PENN: Thanks, Chris. A bit of – the second part of that question was around the volume of dredged material which I think is increasing overall – is that correct?

MR SERRANO: Yes, the total of the dredged material volumes, I think, are increasing.

MS MORGAN: Sorry, I have – yes, I have the number here.

MS PENN: Thanks, Anja.

MS MORGAN: It's from 5.3 cubic million metres to 6.6, I think is the increase.

MS PENN: That's the total, and we're bringing all of that forward into Stage 1 now.

MS MORGAN: Yes.

MR SERRANO: That's right.

MS PENN: Thank you. That's good clarity.

MR PEARSON: And can I just – one follow-up question on the dredging. How much of the dredged material can be used for reclamation? Because when I first started looking at this, I thought you'd probably just be using it all, but that's not the case, is it?

MR WALLS: It gets tricky there because at some point we will have a reclaimed footprint and then potentially dredging still to go to get the depths needed alongside. So, it may be that that dredged material is placed elsewhere in the harbour or we've dredged deeper somewhere else and it just gets shifted.

But the other issue is that it may be too that the dredged material isn't suitable as reclaimed land, at which point we'll have to figure out something else to do with it, subject to planning approvals. We don't propose that we need to do anything at this point though.

MR PEARSON: Okay. Okay. So, right now your assumption is you can use all of the material you dredge for reclamation, is that ...?

MR WALLS: Yes, that's correct. Yes.

MR PEARSON: Okay. Thank you. So, that would mean that you don't need to import any fill to the site.

MR WALLS: No, we're still short – we would still be short in total, is our current feeling. We think that we could almost do it just with the slag at Blue Scope but it depends on availability at the time. So, yes, there would be some import of material, we're pretty confident of that.

MR PEARSON: Okay. Do you have a feeling, you know, percentage-wise how much you're going to reclaim via dredging? Is it 80% - I don't want to make numbers up, but I guess I'm just trying to get a feel for the relativities.

5 **MR WALLS:** Yes. I guess, relatively, much more substantial amount of material will come out of the harbour as dredged fill. But I'm unable to give you a balance at the moment without us understanding fully what some of that material looks like and what some of the external sources may be.

10 **MR PEARSON:** Okay. Thank you.

15 **MR WALLS:** And although I didn't include it in the pack I sent you, I just do have one other slide which shows how that container terminal would operate. So, ultimately from a NSW Ports perspective, this is what we want to develop there – there are these interim trades we talk about. But we've done our work, I guess, commercially to understand that we will be able to facilitate container shipping in a couple of decades time. We've designed it for a 15 or 16,000 TEU vessel, which is larger, much larger than what we get at Botany at the moment, but is what we see in the medium term coming to the Australian market.

20 We still propose to use rail. We're not proposing to change existing conditions around rail percentages for that ultimate container terminal. But what you see here is ultimately a 2 million TEU facility where the shipping side works into the yard which then works into the rail in the back, so that's from our perspective a much more clean way of operating a container terminal as well. And arguably we would be doing this Modification without offshore wind anyway because we feel that this is a better layout for us from a container terminal perspective as well.

30 **MR PEARSON:** Thanks for that.

MS PENN: Can I just ask –

MR PEARSON: Oh, sorry. You go, Shelley.

35 **MS PENN:** Sorry.

MR CALLUM FIRTH: Sorry, just before we move on. Greg, thanks for that extra slide. Do you mind sending that through?

40 **MR WALLS:** Yes, of course, of course.

MR FIRTH: Sorry, Shelley.

45 **MS PENN:** Sorry, Callum. No, just a quick one. I assume associated with those much larger vessels, the consolidation of the terminal to one side and the much larger open dredged area is also about enabling those bigger ship movements and storage?

MR WALLS: Yes. It gives us a bigger turning circle, which is probably the key constraint for any container terminal that's inside a harbour. I think we get up to

570 metres worth of turning circle with this proposal, and that's up from – I can't remember the exact number, it's something like 400 metres. But this is a much safer operation from that perspective, if you don't have to run it so tight. Yes.

5 **MS PENN:** Thanks.

10 **MR PEARSON:** Just one final question on the, I guess, future uses. The offshore wind, you're speaking to proponents, is there a level of confidence that this is feasible? Because I've heard different views on the feasibility of offshore wind in New South Wales.

15 **MR WALLS:** Yes. Our initial concentration is on the Gippsland Offshore Wind Zone, so that's off Victoria. The feasibility is challenging in New South Wales because it's too deep, essentially, and you can't have fixed-bottom structures, you'll be floating wind turbines. So, our initial thoughts are that we can facilitate the Gippsland projects, the distance from Kembla to Gippsland is what they do in northern Europe anyway, so it's nothing unusual from that perspective.

20 **MR PEARSON:** Okay, that's interesting, I hadn't thought about that option. Okay.

MR WALLS: I'm happy to stop sharing maybe, so we can, so I can see everyone, because at the moment I'm flying blind a little bit.

25 **MR PEARSON:** Yes. So, thanks for that Greg, it covered a few things that we have on the agenda. But if we go back to the agenda and the key matters – future operations and use of the expanded port facilities, we've spoken about that in some length. Is there anything further – I have one further question on that, but Shelley, did you have anything?

30 **MS PENN:** No, that was really helpful. Thank you.

MR PEARSON: Yes. And a lot of this, I suppose, is kind of, you know, looking into the future and hoping you're making the right calls, but I'm sure it's informed by commercial intelligence. The elephant in the room – submarines?

35 **MR WALLS:** Thank you, Commissioner.

MR PEARSON: It had to come up.

40 **MR WALLS:** Yes, look, from our perspective, we're concentrating on operating a commercial port at Port Kembla. We're going to continue to do that and continue to progress with our plans. A nuclear sub base in the Outer Harbour wouldn't be compatible with what we're proposing here, but that's a decision that's out of our hands, so we're just continuing to do what we need to do.

45 **MR PEARSON:** Right. You're not involved – maybe I shouldn't even be asking this question. Any discussions

5 **MR WALLS:** To be honest, the current Federal Government has stated publicly that they're going to go back and look at all port options. So, the previous Federal Government was looking at three port options, being Brisbane, Newcastle and ourselves. There has been – the current Federal Government has said, no, they're going back to the drawing board, but they're still a decade away from making those sorts of decisions.

10 **MR PEARSON:** Yes, I won't pursue that any further. Thank you. Dredging and land reclamation, I think we've spoken about this fairly comprehensively, unless there's something further, Shelley?

15 **MS PENN:** Only curious from a nerdy kind of technical point of view, which is around the nature of fill. Because I'm assuming that what you dredge is much softer and not structurally very helpful, and hence in some ways you both need the extra volume and you're relying on some more dense material, I assume.

MR WALLS: Yes.

20 **MS PENN:** I'm just curious about that. I mean, is that right?

MR WALLS: Yes, yes, yes, that's dead right, to be honest, particularly on those upper layers, we know it is very soft sediment. So, it does come down to, I guess, what else we can source out of the harbour itself. As I mentioned, slag and sandstone are both very, very good and there's a little bit of that around, so that's helpful.

25 **MS PENN:** Yes.

MR WALLS: But yes, it's a challenge every time we do any sort of dredging development across either of our ports to understand that material and make sure we're within our settled sediment boundaries, I guess.

30 **MS PENN:** So, I assume you have to assess that material as it comes up, and obviously if it's contaminated, you deal with that as prescribed, and if it's ... You must have a certain proportion, I suppose, of more dense, structurally stable material that you need as a minimum and then so you just assess as you go and ...

MR WALLS: Yes, and there'd be more technical core drilling and more capital put into these sorts of investigations at the time.

40 **MS PENN:** Yes, thanks.

MR PEARSON: So, contamination – I presume you have a protocol for working out which dredged material needs to go where, in terms of levels of contamination?

45 **MR WALLS:** Yes, that's right. I would say the main difference between the original approval, which has broadly discussed those management measures anyway, is the existence of that containment cell from the Squadron – from the gas terminal facility that I mentioned. So, our layout here needs to cut through that cell, and so we now have, I guess, land-based contamination as well as water-based contamination. So, it

just means we need to broaden out what we do there. And we've had our auditor come through and sort of confirm the proposed methodology there. But that's the main difference in our methodology between approved development and modification application.

5

MR PEARSON: Thank you. Yes, aquatic habitat management and relocation of aquatic fauna. This interests me as to – how do you relocate aquatic fauna and stop it coming back? It's not like moving koalas to an island, for example. Can you unpack that for me?

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MR WALLS: Chris, you're our seahorse expert, I'll hand over to you.

MR SERRANO: Yes, I guess it's kind of on the basis of that, you know, from the surveys that were undertaken as part of the aquatic ecology assessment, there was deemed to be suitable habitat but obviously none of the seahorses were identified during those surveys, but couldn't absolutely sort of be discounted given their size and what not. But on that basis, from a precautionary perspective, we've recommended a management plan specifically to deal with that issue, and part of that was basically doing further pre-clearance surveys of the area and then coming up with, I guess, an option to either relocate or come up with a strategy around, depending on what's found, if they are there, if they are not there, yes, what the next steps are.

20

But yes, I mean, we've worked on projects where it's been done effectively elsewhere, and we're doing quite a lot of work up in Botany Bay actually for the Kamay Wharf project. And there's some pretty successful sort of collaborations there that we've been able to achieve with, particularly around seahorses and the like. So, yes, for in terms of our approval and the assessment, that management plan was sort of more of a let's say precautionary approach if they are found.

25

MS PENN: So, how is that done? Sorry, I'm just curious as well. I mean, if you can bear with me for a minute. Is that a bit of gentle scraping with very fine nets, or is that people going and – I mean, they're tiny, aren't they? I'm curious.

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MR SERRANO: Yes, great question. Look, I am not sure of the specifics, to be honest, I'm not a seahorse dive expert, but yes, there are divers that go in and basically collect them and there is a method for that. And yes, there's a – yes, I'm not sure of the exact mechanism but I'm sure they've got [cross-talk].

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MS PENN: Thanks, Chris.

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MR PEARSON: Biodiversity offsets. I think this perhaps was one area where you saw the change to the conditions that the Department didn't agree with. Did you want to talk to that?

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MR WALLS: Yes, I guess from an offset perspective, we had a range of offsets that were required under the original approval. We've entered into at least agreement and commenced and done some works under those offset agreements. I guess our position was, given that those had been completed, we could remove the condition. But to be honest, we're fine with it remaining there as long as, you know, there is recognition in

the Department and there does tend to be, that we are already on that journey with councils and the like.

5 **MR PEARSON:** Yes, and so that related to the green and golden bell frog as well? There was the biodiversity offsets more broadly, and the Green and Golden Bell Frog Management Plan, or an Offset Plan?

10 **MR WALLS:** Yes, so two different issues. So, the offsets were around mainly what was Red Beach, which was more about the species there. The Green and Gold Bell Frog Management Plan is kind of behind the reclamation area, it's on the land side obviously, but in and around the rail corridors. That was based on – and that discussion, I guess, with the Department was based on the fact that we hadn't yet seen any green and gold bell frogs in that location. There is a contiguous management area with Blue Scope lands.

15 Again, we're comfortable with them maintaining that condition; it's not anything that concerns us too much, but it was worth us having a discussion, I think, with the Department around the intent of that condition and whether it was achieving anything at all, and that's kind of where we had that discussion with them.

20 **MR PEARSON:** Okay. Thank you. Anything else, Shelley or team on biodiversity issues? Okay. Traffic and transport. So, much of the infrastructure upgrades appear to be defaulted to future stages, so just to get it clear in my head, you're really largely seeking approval for dredging and reclamation as part of this Stage 1 application. And Stage 2 and Stage 3 will be when there are impacts on rail and road infrastructure.

25 So, do you have in your mind or on a piece of paper what you're envisaging those future commitments are likely to be, or is it predicated on future activities and operations?

30 **MR WALLS:** Yes, probably a little from both columns, to be honest. The original approval did do some operational traffic impact assessments. We're still comfortable that those numbers are workable from our perspective. The original approval also talked about the need for any container terminal to have 90% of its container movements by rail. So, there's a lot of work still to be done by ourselves and by rail owners around how that could actually operate. So, for the moment, without knowing when or where that looks like, yes, we've got no change to what's already been approved from an operational traffic perspective or a rail perspective.

35 On the offshore wind side, very little land-side movement when we get to that point, and if we get to that point, those components are largely imported, constructed on site and then towed out to the offshore wind zones. We think any locally manufactured material will come out of Blue Scope anyway, so we can internalise that movement. So, it's still to be determined, but we're comfortable that the existing limits that have already been put on the approval from that perspective are workable.

40 **MR PEARSON:** Okay. Thank you. Shelley, anything on this?

45 **MS PENN:** No, not traffic and transport, that's good, thank you.

MR PEARSON: Yes. I think I'm pretty okay on that.

5 **MS PENN:** Sorry, just maritime; I think that's addressed adequately, the maritime traffic side. Obviously, that is potentially – well, I assume that's potentially increased as the counterpoint to the one about, you know, minimal kind of if offshore wind does, you know, transpire as the most suitable or actually viable use, whether there is an increase in maritime traffic that's adequately accommodated, I suppose we'll need to ... But I think that is addressed in your report.

10 **MR WALLS:** Yes, we work closely with the Port Authority who are the water-side authority, I guess.

15 **MS PENN:** Yes.

20 **MR WALLS:** State Government authority. So, we've done simulation with them. We've done an understanding on traffic movements and ... To be honest, the biggest issues are around some of the services that come alongside the movement, so where you need tug operations, and just making sure that they're available.

25 The offshore wind facilities may come with their own tugs, so there wasn't putting that much of a demand on that need. Pilotage is the other one, but we can only move one commercial vessel in and out at a time anyway, so there's generally always a pilot available who is a Port Authority representative and is the Harbour Master's representative on that vessel.

30 **MS PENN:** Right. And you need the Harbour Master's approval for the detailed maritime, don't you? I live [REDACTED]; I see the tugs shepherding these kinds of ships in and out. It's quite constrained, obviously, so it's kind of more a question of the impacts on other harbour vessels and movements. If you're moving one great big ship in and around, so I'm understanding that that's adequately accommodated, I guess.

35 **MR WALLS:** Yes, and we can only – as I said, we can only move one vessel at a time, which is not unusual for any port, Melbourne included. The tug situation is that there's currently three tugs down in Port Kembla. They're looking to ramp that up to four with the bringing on of the gas terminal. But four would be adequate for a 15,000 TEU vessel if and when that's needed, if and when that's needed.

40 **MS PENN:** Thanks.

45 **MR PEARSON:** Yes, just one final point on traffic and transport. I notice Transport for NSW did at one point want you to do more detailed assessment as part of this stage, and I think it particularly related to not offshore wind but onshore wind, you know, transport routes etc. Have you had recent discussions with Transport for NSW? From what I can tell from the Department's Assessment Report, they've accepted that the future stages are going to be the time for that issue to be brought into focus. Is that your understanding?

5 **MR WALLS:** Yes. If anything, if onshore wind was going to be handled here, we'd have to do ... Each wind project, as you probably know, Commissioner, has to do its own traffic assessment anyway. Strategically, we're having those conversations with Transport and Energy Co. around how the port can facilitate renewable energy zones, particularly the South West REZ. So, yes, those conversations are ongoing but not necessarily related to this proposal itself.

10 **MR PEARSON:** Okay, thank you. Noise and vibration. I knew there was a question on dredging that I hadn't asked, and that was the 24/7 operation. Over what time period are we talking, and the triggers for stopping activities from a noise affectation point of view, I know residences are probably 500 metres plus away, but can you just talk about that issue?

15 **MR WALLS:** Yes. Chris, could you just jump in quickly? I would just say that our shipping movements are generally 24/7 anyway and so we do have tugs already making those movements, but appreciate this is a noisier activity than just an operational movement.

20 **MR SERRANO:** Yes. So, the existing approval and conditions permit the 24/7 activities, that includes dredging. So, from that perspective, that's covered. I guess, from a duration perspective, yes, it's kind of dependent on the formal sort of let's say dredging program and what's sort of recovered there, that side. But noting that it would be done sort of in a phased approach anyway. So, yes.

25 **MR WALLS:** Yeah - sorry, Commissioner.

30 **MR PEARSON:** I was just going to say, it's not like you start and you go continuously. I think the word "phased" was what Chris used. So, there will be, like, campaigns, is that the way it works?

35 **MR WALLS:** Yes, generally. It depends on the methodology of the reclamation as to how/what those campaigns look like. But yes, generally that is how it works. Again, we were comfortable with the existing conditions in and around the noise power levels that have already been assessed. We think that technology has come a long way in 15 years on dredging as well, so even the breaking up of rocky material is a lot easier and can be done underwater and things like that. So, we're comfortable with the existing mitigations and noise limits, that they can be met.

40 **MR PEARSON:** Because there are some elements of dredging that involve blasting, I think. Am I correct?

45 **MR WALLS:** Yes, blasting is restricted in hours. So, blasting was 9 till 5. But that, again, over the last 15 years isn't what it used to be in terms of, you know, it looking like a – you know, something blowing up out of the water; it's very controlled these days. But there is a condition still around blasting and its hours of operation that isn't 24/7.

MR PEARSON: Okay, thank you. Shelley, anything more on that?

MS PENN: No. That's what I was thinking too, and duration, even noting that there's quite a bit of unknown, so you can't pin down exactly how much that is, I understand that. But just, is it 6 months or is it 12 months or is it two – I'm just curious about what you expect, just to give me a sense, it's not asking you to commit to that.

MR WALLS: It took us about 18 months to build the Port Botany, to reclaim for the Port Botany expansion back in 2010. So, if we were to do it all in one hit, like that's possibly what it takes.

MS PENN: Sure.

MR WALLS: It may need to be staged due to that external material issue that I was talking about. But that wouldn't be unusual, if were to do the 40 hectares, yes.

MS PENN: That's helpful. Thanks, Greg. That's all, Richard, thanks.

MR PEARSON: Yes, great, thank you. The last item on our agenda under key matters was hydrodynamics. Now, I didn't have anything specific on this point, unless you did Shelley? Was there anything you wanted to talk to us about there, Greg and team?

MR WALLS: Just that our modelling shows an actual improvement in our harbour hydrodynamics. We generally have processes when storm surges become too great to operate at a berth anyway, so there would be mitigation such as moving a vessel off berth if it did get that dramatic. But we're comfortable with what the modelling has shown us from – you know, we have a whole port to operate, not just this one part of the development, so it's key for us as well.

And as I mentioned, we've done some ship simulation studies down in Tassie which is, you know, you can model all sorts of things and weather conditions, and we're comfortable with where all that's at.

MR PEARSON: Good, thank you. Shelley, you okay?

MS PENN: Yes. All good.

MR PEARSON: Thank you. So, that was the key matters that we did want to talk to you about. Was there anything further that you wanted to add in relation to any of those items?

MR WALLS: No, I don't think so, I think we're okay, thank you.

MR PEARSON: Thank you. The Department's recommended conditions of consent, was there any commentary you wanted to provide on any of that? I assume you've discussed with them previously.

MR WALLS: Yes, and I think we've already talked about the only one dis-alignment or misalignment we had with them, which was on the offsets, and we're comfortable with where it's landed, yes.

5 **MR PEARSON:** Okay, thank you. Anything that we want to raise with the Applicant on conditions? We obviously need to review them ourselves, it doesn't necessarily follow that we'll just, you know, get the rubber stamp out, we do run a careful eye over them ourselves and if there's any significant changes, we will likely consult you in relation to that.

MR WALLS: Yes, of course.

10 **MR PEARSON:** But right now, I don't think there's any in particular I wanted to talk to you about in relation to the conditions. Shelley?

MS PENN: No, nothing, no, nothing from me at this stage.

15 **MR PEARSON:** Anything you wanted to raise, Jane and Callum?

MS JANE ANDERSON: Nothing from me, Richard.

MR PEARSON: Thank you.

20 **MR FIRTH:** No thanks, Richard.

MR PEARSON: Thank you. So, any other matters that you would like to talk about. I think we've probably covered the range of things we wanted to. Shelley, unless I'm speaking for your – maybe there was something else you wanted ...

25 **MS PENN:** No. Not at all, thanks Richard. No, very helpful, thanks very much, and I think even just the overview and the context is incredibly useful, so thanks for that.

30 **MR PEARSON:** Yes. Look, unfortunately, normally we would try to get down and do a site inspection on this, but I think it's probably not going to be possible. If we decide to, we'll certainly come back to you. But I don't think there's anything sufficiently unanswered that we need to do it, it's always nice to do it to get a good appraisal on the ground. But I think we've got a very good idea of the project now, and I thank you for your presentation.

35 As there anything, Greg or team, that you wanted to raise in concluding?

40 **MR WALLS:** No, no thank you, commissioners, I appreciate your time. Just checking, Chris and Anja are okay as well? I think they are.

MR PEARSON: Yes.

MR WALLS: No thank you, commissioners.

45 **MR PEARSON:** Did we end up taking anything on notice, Jane or Callum?

MS ANDERSON: There was just the question about the volume of reclamation that may have already been reclaimed in percentage terms.

MR WALLS: Oh, yes.

MR PEARSON: Yes, if you're able to give us a quick response on that. I mean, would we seek a formal response on that, Jane, or just rely on Greg and his team to come back to us?

MS ANDERSON: Our process would be to just send you a letter, likely this afternoon, to respond to that question, if the commissioners do choose to pursue it. So, you would either hear from us if they do, or not if they choose not to.

MR PEARSON: We'll have a further chat about that. If we do need anything further from you, then we'll come back in the way that Jane's proposed.

MS PENN: You having said that, I do have one little query that would be useful, if possible. I'm just referring to the presentation you had, you don't need to re-open it, Chris, but you've got the current approval and the need for modification and the two plans or aerial marked-up photos. It would be really helpful, where you've got in the current approval, the development footprint marked in that sort of brown-y colour, and then in the need for the Mod and the proposed Mod reclamation area, is it possible to put a square metreage on those two areas?

MR WALLS: Yes, we can do that. Yes.

MS PENN: That'll be just helpful as a – I realise there's other factors at play and the dredging is probably the main thing here, but it'd just be helpful to understand it a bit better.

MR WALLS: Yes, I'm confident we have that somewhere, we'll just mark it up on the presso and give you an updated one.

MS PENN: Perfect. Thank you very much.

MR PEARSON: All right. Well, thank you very much, Greg and team, for answering our questions and presenting to us. I don't think any further for now, but we'll come back to you via letter if we need – it probably sounds like we're going to come back to you for a couple of things, but you know what they are and it should be quite quickly that you're able to respond, so keen to keep the process moving. So, thank you, everyone, for attending, and have a great weekend.

[Multiple people say thank you]

>THE MEETING CONCLUDED