

26 October 2023

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NSW Planning

Eden Breakwater Wharf Mod 3– Modification 3 to SSI 734

Dear Jonathon,

Thankyou for providing Council opportunity to review and respond to Modification 3 of SSI 7734 that proposes a number changes including for Larger class cruise ships and Non-cruise ships to dock; Overnight berthing of all ships; Non-cruise vessels over 100m to carry out operations between 7:00am to 10:00pm (the same hours that vessels less than 100m); An unrestricted number of cruise vessel visits; the construction of an additional marine dolphin to enable safe berthing, and a potential new walkway to facilitate improved passenger movements for larger cruise ships alongside the Eden Cruise Wharf.

I have sought comments from relevant areas within Council and the following comments are provided;

Water and Sewer Services

It was previously requested from Council to the Port Authority for them to identify whether water and sewer services are now being proposed as past approvals did not detail these provisions. It is noted that in Section 3.3.3 Servicing Ships provides the provision of potable water and food supplies may be required for some ships upon request and local availability of supply. It was also noted that the discharge of ship wastewater (e.g., sewage), if required and requested, will be undertaken by connecting the ship wastewater tanks to a tanker at the wharf under strict protocols. The tanker will be taken to the local sewage treatment plant under the requirements of the local council. Sewage discharge will be upon request and local availability to service.

The documents request an additional condition being;

"Operation of the extended wharf for use by non-cruise ships up to 370m LOA (excluding dry/wet bulk cargo (liquid or solid bulk materials) and dangerous goods or hazardous materials vessels) and associated land-based facilities and services for operational activities such as loading/unloading, refuelling and general vessel maintenance and Condition Existing Condition Proposed Modified Condition servicing (including sewer, waste and sillage offload)"

Council's Water and Sewer services have detailed that they don't have an issue with the proposal from a water and sewer perspective, noting that there is capacity in the water network, and the use of a truck to transport to Merimbula alleviates issues with capacity in the Eden pump stations and treatment plant.

However, it is considered that the report lacks suitable consideration of potential impacts associated with the management and safeguards needed for sewer, waste and sillage offload, especially given no detail on the expected quantities for discharge for larger cruise ships or the protocols proposed. No details have been proposed to update the Operational Environmental

Management Plans for these processes associated for the cruise ships and no details have been provided on the nearest locations for ships sullage receiving facilities. It is requested that these matters be detailed by the applicant to ensure appropriate assessment of impacts can be suitably identified to create appropriate mitigation measure to protection the environment. The impacts include potential leaks of sewerage and sullage into the marine environment, expected traffic generation associated with these services and ensure appropriate receiving points if there are none available with Council's Wastewater treatment plants like sullage where they will be transported to.

Lighting

Council supports the mitigation measure to minimise lighting of any ships utilising wharf overnight to ensure that vessels remaining at berth overnight are to turn off non-essential lighting on deck to limit potential light spill. Ongoing complaint management of potential breaches of this requirement should be enforced.

Noise

Council supports the mitigation measure to minimise noise generated by both mechanical and persons associated with any vessel utilising wharf overnight to ensure that vessels remaining at berth overnight are to be minimised, especially during the night-time hours of between 10pm and 6am. Ongoing complaint management of potential breaches of this requirement should be enforced.

Socio-economic matters

Page 42 notes, *"This impact would relate to an insufficient capacity in social and public infrastructure (including road and pedestrian networks) and local industries and services (such as retail and commercial premises and tour operations) to accommodate a significant short-term increase in visitors that could also be repeated year on year. This risk would be further heightened where there is an overlap with peak holidays periods when other tourists travel to, stay and carry out activities in the region."*

The SEIA then discusses public infrastructure capacity but does not address the capacity of industries and services or the heightened risk during peak holiday periods. It is recommended that Ports Authority of NSW give the issue further consideration, limit cruise visits during peak holiday periods and liaise with key stakeholders (Eden Tourism, BVSC, Eden Chamber of Commerce) before committing to a schedule.

Page 44 notes, *"Whilst cruise ship visits are supported, there are concerns regarding the community's ability to manage increased tourism (increased passengers and visits) with existing infrastructure and the potential impact increased numbers of cruise visitors could have on the town's character, the community's way of life and enjoyment of Eden by non-cruise tourists and other related impacts such as visitor fatigue. Further, it is noted that there is an increasing age profile in the town which could affect the ongoing ability of volunteers to service cruise operations and the ability for local businesses to have adequate staffing for local cafes and restaurants."*

Eden Tourism depends on volunteers for welcoming cruise arrivals. The SEIA mentions the challenge of an aging volunteer base, but doesn't provide mitigation for the risk of this volunteer base being unable to service increased visitation. I would suggest that Ports Authority of NSW

commit to liaising with Eden Tourism prior to confirming a schedule to ensure capacity to service that schedule.

Page 54-55 notes that, *"A Cruise Eden Coordinator is currently employed by Eden Tourism and supported by Port Authority and Council. All parties are aware of the need for this role to support increased numbers of cruise visits to Eden. Assuming the modification is approved, Port Authority would review this role, in consultation with Council and Eden Tourism to ensure adequate resourcing and funding is provided."*

The commitment to ensuring adequate resourcing and funding is provided is welcomed by Council. Currently resourcing, funding and capacity of Eden Tourism is barely sufficient to service the existing cruise schedule, and is likely insufficient to service the maximum visitation under existing approvals.

It is noted that a mitigation measure proposes for Ports Authority of NSW commits to engage with Council options for entering into a funding agreement to assist in the construction of additional toilets in Eden to help service demand relating to cruise tourism and with reference to BVSC Public Toilet Strategy. Council would seek that NSW Ports Authority also be requested to review the availability of toilets located at the Eden Breakwater and Welcome centre to cater for increased demand associated with Cruise Tourism.

It is requested that the mitigation measure be amended to detail that Port Authority commits to engage with Bega Valley Shire Council with a view to funding additional public toilets in the vicinity of the Port of Eden terminal facility if the current service provision of Council operated amenities be insufficient to reasonably cater for the demand placed upon them by Cruise related tourism.

Potential Construction impacts

During the original breakwater and dolphin construction, 32 metre long piles were required to be delivered via road. The vehicles hauling these piles were rare but very long. The information provided does not appear to have been addressed. The previous construction works undertaken, the piles were delivered via Calle Calle, Chandos, Imlay and Albert Tce. Contra-flow was required on the opposite side of the road and required special traffic control. A similar issue was experienced when a 200T crane transported in components had to be delivered to the wharf. There was an oversize load requiring contraflow and traffic management.

The relevant traffic controls are required for all oversize/over mass loads according to the NHVL legislation and NHVR processes and should be suitably conditioned for the new works. There may be some minor pavement impacts from the actual loads themselves and therefore Council requests pavements inspections prior and after delivery vehicles accessing the site along transport routes within Eden township. It is noted that if the road routes are not viable, the Oversize Overmass loads can be delivered via water.

Any construction and operational deliveries by 19m vehicles entering/exiting the Port from the local road network must be in a forward direction as per current road rules.

If you would like to discuss any of the matters above, please contact me on 0428283973 or mfowler@begavalley.nsw.gov.au

Regards
Mark Fowler
Planning Services Coordinator