



# Cronulla Fisheries Site: Recommendations for Future Use

A report prepared for the NSW Department of Primary Industries

by

David Harley AM

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## 1. Introduction

The Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson MP, together with Deputy Premier, Andrew Stoner MP, announced the closure of the Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre of Excellence (Fisheries Site) on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries Director General issued terms of reference to recommend future uses of the site and contracted me (David Harley), as an independent third party to conduct the necessary consultation and communication.

I invited submissions from interested parties (see Appendix 9.1) and conducted extensive consultation with the Cronulla community and opinion leaders (see Appendix 9.2). It was clear from the outset that there were some settled opinions about what should not happen at the site, specifically that there should be no large-scale commercial development, no hotels and no high rise structures. It was also clear that most did not want the site to be sold under any circumstances. Equally it was clear that most wanted the site open to the public with year round access. A majority of people wanted the existing public walkway extended to include the site. Of major importance to nearly every submission was that the Aboriginal history of the site be preserved and protected.

All submissions and the result of all consultation were taken into consideration in making recommendations for the future use of the site. The final recommendations outlined in this paper reflect, in large, the community's views. Some worthy submitters will be disappointed at the outcome reached. Others may be content that some of their ideas are reflected positively in the conclusions reached.

The final recommendations are built upon three principles. Firstly, that the site should reflect the community and the majority of their views; secondly, that the Aboriginal and heritage aspects of the site should be protected and conserved and thirdly, that the

people and organisations invited onto the site should serve the interests of the local community in undertaking their activities.

The site is a magnificent precinct and in undertaking this task I have attempted to “touch this site with the wings of a butterfly”.

## 2. Executive Summary

The three-hectare Fisheries Site is a spectacular piece of land jutting out into Gunnamatta Bay. It boasts precious Aboriginal heritage, historic buildings and classic landscape features. It sits amongst and alongside Cronulla streetscapes and adjacent houses, although only one house abuts the site. It is part of Cronulla - geographically, emotionally and physically.

The site currently interrupts the movement of people through the nearby walkways and parks. It sits as a harsh contradiction to the ambience of the area with massive iron entrance gates emphatically stating that this site does not belong to the community of Cronulla.

The Fisheries Site has a wonderful history of excellence in marine scientific research. It was established at the beginning of the last century and has been home to the CSIRO, used as a centre for refugees during and after World War 2, but most importantly has shaped and determined some of the greatest scientific output in marine science in Australia. That role will shortly cease and the site can be utilised for the continued benefit of the broader community.

My recommendations are simple and utilitarian. They are based on the assumption that this land "belongs" to the people of Cronulla who will cherish its Aboriginal history, protect its heritage value, acknowledge the magnificence of its marine science history and protect and utilise the site for future generations.

I have made 25 recommendations for the future use of the site. The highlights of these are:

- \* the site should remain in public ownership;

- \* the existing buildings, with one possible exception, should remain intact in the short to medium term;
- \* there should be no large-scale commercial or hotel development;
- \* the site should be open to the public by continuing the walkway connecting Bass and Flinders Point and Darook Park (see map of proposed walkway Appendix 9.5);
- \* a Site Management Trust should be established to manage the site;
- \* three marine rescue groups should be invited to occupy selected buildings on the site;
- \* two educational centres should be established, featuring Aboriginal heritage, marine scientific research history and local Cronulla history and heritage;
- \* the site can be used by NSW secondary schools for excursions;
- \* a kiosk/restaurant would provide a revenue stream for the site.

### 3. History of the Site

Of the many submissions received, the most comprehensive history of the Fisheries Site was produced by Dennis Reid, retired research scientist. Information from his submission is used below.

The Hungry Point site now occupied by the Cronulla Fisheries Centre was held as a reserve for defence purposes from 1895 until 1902, when an area of 1.37 ha on the Gunnamatta Bay side of the site was transferred from the Commonwealth for use by the New South Wales Government for the purpose of fish-culture. The land title for the eastern part of the site (1.54 ha) remained with the Commonwealth Government until 1988, following an agreement in 1984 between the Federal and State governments. In the late 1800s and early 1900s the NSW Government was concerned at a serious depletion of fish stocks in estuaries as a result of illegal overfishing and gross chemical pollution of Sydney Harbour emanating from measures to combat the rat plague. The plan of the Fisheries Commissioners at the time was to employ aquaculture to supplement stocks of local species and also to improve the quality of the seafood available by importing live fish from the northern hemisphere for culture and release into local waters.

The NSW Government was determined to appoint a fisheries expert of world repute, and in 1902 selected a 31 year-old Norwegian, Harald Dannevig, who had constructed the Dunbar and Aberdeen Marine Fish Hatcheries, and supervised their operation for nine years. He also had extensive knowledge of the commercial fishing industry in the North Sea, based on his early training with his father, Gunder Dannevig, regarded as a world leader in fisheries stocking. In 1902 Harald Dannevig began duties in Sydney in the newly-created position of Superintendent of Fisheries Investigations and Marine Hatcheries. His first task was to transport adult fish from the UK to Sydney, with a view to supplementing fish stocks in depleted estuaries in NSW. He carefully selected the

Cronulla site for the new hatchery and supervised its construction and operation. All aspects of a potential fishing industry, both freshwater and marine, were investigated and extensive plans formulated by Dannevig. His plans were always based on expert practical work in the field and extensive discussions with fishers. He was called on by government commissions looking into the fishing and food industries as well as providing advice to other Australian states.

The Cronulla hatchery, experimental pool and laboratory were built in 1904, commissioned in 1905 and became fully operational in early 1906. Initial stocks of the hatchery included whiting, red bream, flathead, trevally and crayfish. Later snapper and other finfish were introduced. These all flourished in the pond but did not spawn. Dannevig had more success with flounder from Tasmania, resulting in the liberation of 20 million young fish into Port Hacking, Botany Bay, Middle Harbour and Brisbane Water.

The hatchery continued to culture finfish and shellfish species but more emphasis was being placed upon investigations into the biology of local species by staff employed at the hatchery and staff from Sydney University. The hatchery was closed in 1914, and the NSW government embarked upon other fisheries related projects including developing a commercial ocean trawl fishery.

The Commonwealth Government appointed Dannevig to the position of founding Director of Fisheries for Australia in 1908. He designed and supervised the construction of Australia's first marine research vessel, and went on to conduct the first investigations of fish resources off Australia until his death (aged 43) when the Commonwealth research ship FIV Endeavour was lost in extreme gale conditions off Macquarie Island in 1914.

With the vast disruption due to the First World War, and in the absence of the leadership and insight of Dannevig, fisheries research and development in Australia did not progress substantially until the creation of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR, later CSIRO) in 1926. The CSIR's brief included the initiation and conduct of research in connection with the promotion of primary and secondary industries, training of research workers, the making of grants for pure research and the supervision of testing of scientific apparatus and standardisation. In 1937 Dr Harold Thompson was appointed as the first Officer in Charge of the Fisheries Investigations Section of CSIR, which was renamed CSIRO Division of Fisheries & Oceanography in 1956. The NSW Government's part holding of the Hungry Point site was transferred back to the Commonwealth in 1938 to accommodate the newly established CSIR Fisheries Division, and provision was made to also house the NSW Fish Biology Branch and students from the University of Sydney. Programs were quickly developed in a wide range of research areas, initially related to tuna, whales and dolphins, coastal and estuarine hydrology, fish preservation, mullet and oysters. Subsequent decades saw the rapid expansion of research programs in physical and chemical oceanography, fish biology, population dynamics and plankton research. The CSIRO Marine Laboratories were transferred to Hobart in 1984 after 47 years of research at the Hungry Point site. These five decades of research were of enormous importance in establishing the basis for oceanographic and fisheries research in Australia.

The facilities at Cronulla were transferred back to the NSW Government in 1985 for the purposes of fisheries research, and research staff of the Fisheries Division of NSW Department of Agriculture moved to the site in July 1985, when the facility was renamed the NSW Fisheries Research Institute. Research carried out since then includes investigations into the dynamics of trawl fish, estuarine fish and invertebrate populations. There have been research projects to investigate the effects of impounding waterways, the impact of the Deep-water Ocean Outfalls, the ecological impact of the third Sydney Airport runway, the effects of fishing over seagrass and estimation of the level of catch in

recreational fisheries. In 2004 NSW Fisheries was amalgamated with other departments to form the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

Chronology of the Hungry Point site (post European settlement):

- 1895. Reserved for defence purposes
- 1902. (August) Transferred from the Commonwealth to NSW "for pisciculture purposes"
- 1904. Hatchery, laboratory, experimental pool and holding tank completed
- 1905. Hatchery and laboratory commissioned
- 1914. Hatchery work ceased
- 1929. Saltwater pool used for experiments on the effect of electrical fields on sharks by Swedish engineer Dr E O Möller
- 1938. CSIR Fisheries main building (Building 1) completed
- 1947. Migrant hostel built on eastern half of site. (Colloquially named "Balk Camp" after the number of Balkan families that were housed there, most of their children attending South Cronulla Public School)
- 1976. CSIRO Building 16 fisheries laboratories and offices completed
- 1984. CSIRO Divisions of Fisheries and Oceanography relocated to Hobart
- 1985. (July) NSW Fisheries Research Institute commenced at Cronulla
- 2005. Centenary of aquatic research at the Cronulla marine laboratories celebrated
- 2007. HC Dannevig Laboratory upgraded and named after founder

Bruce Howell also gave me an excellent insight into the history of the site and the Cronulla precinct. He spoke and wrote on the history of the site as a fisheries research centre and its importance to the area, the historical interest of Mathew Flinders camping in Salmon Haul Bay and the "rich fabric of Aboriginal occupation of the southernmost part of the Cronulla peninsula".

George Bass and Matthew Flinders camped adjacent to the “Fisheries Site”, at (presumably) Salmon Haul Bay in 1776. They liaised with two of the local native people, a very early example of friendly relations between Europeans and members of the local native population.

Surveyor Robert Dixon visited Cronulla and surrounding areas in 1827, and secured the native names of the beaches and bays, e.g. Cronulla (Kurranulla), Burraneer, Woollooware and Gunnamatta.

Frank Cridland in his book “The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and the Sutherland Shire” (published in 1924) speaks glowingly of Darook Park, and particularly the Wahgunyah Cliffs, immediately north of the Fisheries site, and laments that the evidence of the occupation of the area by the Aboriginal people is in danger of destruction by modern development. Cridland commissioned the surveyor and recorder of engraving sites, WD Campbell, to record the engravings visible (at the time) in the Cronulla area, including the vicinity of the “Fisheries Site”.

Olive Watkins, who as a child lived above Darook Park and the Wahgunyah Cliffs, described the beauty of the caves, the evidence of the earlier occupation by the Aboriginal peoples and the importance that she placed in what she saw.

In the early 1960's, archaeologist Ian Sim recorded engravings in the Darook Park area, along Darook Park Road (adjacent to the Wahgunyah Cliffs). Some of these engravings probably still exist, but are now on private property.

The Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre was the first fisheries research facility in the southern hemisphere. Fisheries scientific research began at the centre over 110 years ago. There are heritage-listed buildings on site, including an aquarium which was the

first of its kind in the southern hemisphere and is still unique in Australia. There are also several sites of Indigenous interest and value.

The above points confirm that the Fisheries Site is important for four key reasons:

- \* The current Fisheries Site was dedicated as a fish hatchery in 1902, and given that the peninsula was first opened to public occupation from about 1895 (having been a military reserve until then), some of the Fisheries' buildings predate almost every phase of development of the Cronulla Peninsula.
- \* The site is an important historical area for the study of marine science – over a century of research has been conducted on the site.
- \* The site includes the place where Matthew Flinders camped in Salmon Haul Bay, and is of significant interest for the early contact between European and Aboriginal people.
- \* The rich fabric of Aboriginal occupation of the southernmost part of the Cronulla peninsula, evidenced in the shelters, middens and engravings around Darook Park (engravings and most shelters on private property), and very likely on the Fisheries Site itself (archaeological study would be required to determine this).

These four points demonstrate the potential that the site has as an educational centre providing opportunities for examining the early post-colonial history, the more recent history of the settlement of the peninsula, the history of the study of marine science at the Fisheries Site and the pre-colonial history of the Aboriginal people of the immediate area which could be expanded to include the integrated history of all of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Hacking (and a very rich history it is) that can be inferred from what still exists today (Bruce Howell, pers. comm., June 2012).

## 4. Assessment of Future Uses

### 4.1 *Terms of reference*

Minister Katrina Hodgkinson MP, together with Andrew Stoner MP, Deputy Premier, announced on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011 that the Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre of Excellence at Hungry Point known as the Cronulla Fisheries Site was to be closed and the roles and functions decentralised to regional coastal locations. I was contracted by the NSW Department of Primary Industries Director General to assess the future usages of the site under the terms of reference below:

1. To engage with the Sutherland Shire Council (Councillors and the Executive) to discuss and consider their aspirations for the site in the short, medium and long term.
2. To engage with all relevant community representatives including the Cronulla Chamber of Commerce, La Perouse Aboriginal Land Council and the local Member of Parliament to discuss their views on the future use of the site.
3. To meet with DPI's Crown Lands staff to gain a full understanding of the constraints and opportunities potentially available for the site.
4. To identify any "off site" issues that may need to be taken into consideration in the future use of the site.
5. To identify in consultation with Council any business studies which may be necessary to assist in the future viability of the site.
6. Based on the consultation with the local community and the NSW Government, make recommendations for the future use of the site.

## 4.2 Consultation

The art of consultation is to spread a wide net to cover interested parties and to glean the opinions and views of respondents. It becomes a very personal activity where differing views are forthcoming with passion and belief. As this exercise impacted so many former fisheries personnel and their families, emotions were justifiably high.

Appendix 9.1 details an in depth account of all written submissions and Appendix 9.2 details the individual or groups that I spoke to or met during this project.

One hundred and ten submissions were received either by email to [cronullasubmission@gmail.com](mailto:cronullasubmission@gmail.com) or received in writing at a post office box. To the best of my knowledge, every submission received an acknowledgment. There was a 5-day period when Australia Post failed to register submissions via the post office box but they rectified the situation.

Four separate advertisements appeared in "The Leader", servicing the local Cronulla and Sutherland area over a period of six weeks. The circulation of this newspaper ensured a wide readership. I met with or telephoned, on one or more occasions, over 70 Cronulla individuals, interested groups and organisations during the consultation period and read and responded to over 110 submissions.

Excluding those submissions that unambiguously opposed the closure of the Fisheries Site, most had one element in common - the call to protect and care for the Aboriginal heritage. Irrespective of the points of view of the writers and their understandable self – interest, protecting Aboriginal heritage was always their central concern in any consideration for future usage.

There was also a common theme of opposition to any large-scale commercial development of the site. This included any consideration of hotels, motels or any idea involving accommodation or high rise developments.

There were some submissions which called for the usage of the entire site for a single purpose but these most often did not reflect the nature of the site or its natural beauty.

Others, on the other hand, were too small in their application to the site and none of these offered anything remarkable or compelling to the future usage of the site.

The more persuasive submissions were respectful of the natural beauty of the site and its proximity to the water. In the most, their activities would also positively resonate with the communities of Cronulla and Sutherland.

Ultimately, the most appropriate themes for site usage were deemed to be those centred on the community: Aboriginal heritage; marine rescue; educational activities and social responsibility. The rationale and detail of how these themes combined to form my recommendations on the future use of the site form the main thrust of my report.

## 5. Additional Matters Considered

### 5.1 *Asbestos management plan and asbestos register at the site*

A paper dated August 2011 entitled "Cronulla Fisheries Centre Asbestos Management Plan and Asbestos Register" covers policy, legislation, roles and responsibilities, incident procedures, record keeping, control procedures, incident flow chart etc. and must be an integral part of the due diligence, protocols and governance of the management Trust who will manage the site in the future.

The site has 26 "assumed" asbestos presences mostly in AC sheet external cladding, lining and vinyl sheeting, all prioritised as "leave in situ and monitor condition".

The site has 5 confirmed asbestos presences mostly in broken AC sheeting, roof and ceiling sheeting all planned for removal .

The site has 5 "no asbestos identified" items.

Buildings 7, 2, and 15 have the highest presence, all "assumed" except for 2 which are confirmed.

### 5.2 *Zoning controls and considerations*

Under the Sutherland Shire LEP 2006 the Fisheries Site is included in two distinct zones. Most of the site is within zone 12 -Special Uses (Pisciculture). A portion in the north east adjacent to Nicholson Parade and 3 houses in Cowra Place are within zone 13 - Public Open Space. The current controls within SS LEP 2006 are more restrictive for the special uses zone than the public open space zone.

The relevant sections under the special use zone refer to development allowed only with consent for the purpose inter alia, "of community facilities, recreational areas and educational establishments".

The relevant sections under the public open space zone refers to development with consent for the purpose of, inter alia, "buildings used in association with landscaping or gardening, recreational areas, and cycle access, and under the Local Government Act 1993, community facilities, restaurants, and places of assembly".

Within both zones it is permissible to have community facilities and recreational areas. It seems that there are vast arrays of activities that can be undertaken by Council without the need for rezoning. These may include art galleries, museums, and meeting and conference halls. A plan of management and a development application would be required. There appears no impediment for the use of the buildings and facilities for the water police or other emergency agencies. All the buildings on the site are located within the special uses zone. As such there is limited or no scope for them to be used for new commercial purposes.

### *5.3 Landscape heritage, building heritage and Aboriginal heritage and culture*

The Heritage Council describes the Fisheries Research Institute as:

"...a large research institute on a prominent rocky headland, projecting into Port Hacking. The Site conserves its natural topography and notable sandstone rock formation, along and above the water's edge. Considerable indigenous vegetation including coast mahogany, Port Jackson Figs, Smooth bark Angophora and Coast Banksia. A road runs down to a stone and

concrete landing area to the west. The Site adjoins reserve to the east and Darook Park reserve to the north east”.

The whole site is heritage listed as a site of national and state significance and there are also specific heritage listings on the site.

The 1997 NSW Fisheries Heritage and Conservation Register describes in detail the Aboriginal history on the Fisheries Site. The size of the site is 3.104 hectares and there are 5 specific listings on the NSW Heritage Register:

F0009 depicts Aboriginal middens;

F0010 depicts the hatchery building, Building 6;

F0011 depicts the boat shed, Building 11;

F0012 depicts the aquarium facility and surrounds;

F0013 depicts Hungry Point.

These five listings are detailed below:

### The Aboriginal Middens

I received a valuable submission from Pauline Curby and Kevin Curby, Pauline being a professional Historian. They wrote, inter alia, “(that) reflecting thousands of years of Dharawal occupation, three Aboriginal middens have been located on the site”.

The following description is extracted from the Heritage Council website, page 2, 5/6/2012, The first is a “rock shelter with midden deposits which extend downslope for a distance of at least five metres below the shelter.” The second is a “small area of midden down near the holding pens on the western side of the complex”. The third is a “large area of midden along the southeast edge of the flat area at the top of the complex between Building 15 and the fuel store beyond”.

The Office of Environment and Heritage updated its Statement of Significance on 31<sup>st</sup>. March 2010. It states, "Three original structures still exist on the site and are considered as a group to have State Significance. "(NSW Fisheries s. 170 Register p 81.). These three structures are the hatchery building, the boat shed and the aquarium or fish ponds.

### The Hatchery Building

The former hatchery building is described by the Heritage Council as "an L- shaped brick building with 2 wings, located on a flat (benched) area slightly above a boat shed and fish ponds at the western side of Hungry Point. Web-fired single skin brickwork walls with original single back piers and additional recent brick piers and buttresses to southern wing. New colour bond corrugated iron roof. Interior of northern wing adapted for office use; southern veranda of each wing in-filled. Original features include door and window joinery".

"The fish hatchery was established c1904. Building constructed prior to 1914, probably c 1904-1007. Originally a laboratory wing (with open veranda on both sides) and a hatchery hall comprising a single open space containing fish tanks. Thought to be vacant 1920-1930. CSIR/CSIRO operations post-1938 in this building. The hall remained open until 1950".

### The Boat Shed

The Heritage Council describes the boat shed as follows:

"... constructed between 1904 and 1914. Re-clad c1970's. Restoration work to cladding and windows replaced in 2002. Originally had wharf at western side. Engine room at east probably re-clad but original structure. Used to house boats and marine equipment. The Boat Shed has a weatherboard wall, new colour bond corrugated iron gable roof. Located on eroded sea wall at edge of Port Hacking on western side of Hungry Point. Recent roller door on east side. Doors at west provide evidence of location of former wharf."

## The Fish Pond

The Heritage Council describes the fish pond as:

“constructed as part of the hatchery complex between 1904 and 1914. Complex established by Superintendent of Fisheries Harold Dannevig. The fish pond is a concrete pool measuring 30 x 12 x 2, featuring more recent concrete sea wall. Mesh sunshades and filter units.”

## Hungry Point

The Heritage Council recommends:

“That a bush regeneration programme be provided for on this large site. A landscape plan of management should be prepared, particularly before any further building work is planned”.

### *5.4 Rationale and recommendations for the future use of the site*

Firstly, it is important to state the developments and usages that would not be acceptable on the site. There will be no large-scale commercial development, the site will not be sold, the existing buildings by and large will remain intact, there will be no height changes to any structure, there will no hotel or motel structures or any facility given over for hotel-style accommodation.

I have rejected any submission requiring storage facilities of any kind, including boats, trailers, canoes and the like. There were submissions from several organisations who wanted to use the site for boating, canoeing, power boat racing etc. but their use of the site would be somewhat haphazard, with regattas for example only several times a year and trailer dependence in some examples and storage needs for most. Noise is also a problem for some usages. Fundamentally there is no appropriate launching area for most of these activities except the ramp which is nearby to heritage facilities that need careful protection and control.

I have rejected aged care facilities and “men’s sheds”, all worthwhile endeavours but they would require an additional source of funding and are not consistent with the overall theme for the site.

Whilst it was attractive to consider artists and others “in residence”, there are no obvious arrangements or facilities which would lend themselves to this activity.

It is essential that we open the site to the public by continuing the walkway around the point to the west from Bass and Flinders Point through and around the Fisheries Site and then northward through Darook Park to link up with Gunnamatta Park. This will provide the missing link for the walkway for the community of Sutherland and Cronulla. In addition, consideration should be given to the provision of picnic tables and other seating for the community around the site.

I am persuaded that Council’s argument to improve the open space and leisure areas on the site would be assisted by removing the house adjacent to the entrance, (Building 18). However, there is a plausible and appealing submission that the house might be used by the Steven Walter Children’s Cancer Foundation. Given that the cost of converting the house to the special needs required has not been tested and that the cancer foundation will have to fund the rental plus the extensive renovations required, this decision will need to be delayed pending proper evaluation of the business case and financial guarantees concerning this proposal.

The cancer foundation requested that the house (Building 18) on the site be used as a facility for parents and their children to live at the site in the last stages of their children’s lives. The Foundation would renovate the house for the special needs they require and would fully fund their requirements. I recommend that the Steven Walter Children’s Cancer Foundation be given the opportunity to prove its case and present its findings to the new managing Trust.

I recommend that we invite Police Marine Area Command, Marine Rescue and Transport Road and Maritime Services onto the site. This not only fulfils the Government's vision to integrate disparate but related marine activities but brings to the Shire a combined dedicated marine rescue facility. This also assists Bundeena and Maianbar for any operational and rescue activity.

As a corollary I recommend that Maritime Services design additional wharf facilities allocating 12 berthing positions by extending the pontoon configuration at the existing wharf. This will fulfil the needs of the three police and marine rescue organisations.

I recommend that we invite the Historical Societies of Sutherland and Cronulla to utilise a building on site to create an educational centre for use by the community and school children. It would feature the marine science history of the site and other local historical items of interest.

It is important that we recognise the Aboriginal history of the site and the precinct. To that end I recommend that a separate building be utilised to feature Aboriginal history and culture. This will be the main education facility on the site.

I recommend that the site be utilised for school excursions to assist students to understand the marine science history of the site, the Aboriginal heritage, the buildings which are heritage listed and also the heritage landscape on the site. The syllabus for secondary schools includes History, Environment, Marine Science and Cultural Diversity. Although the site will not be used for any ongoing marine science activities this should not deter organisations such as the Marine Teachers Association of NSW which already have a well organised program for their activities. For example their submission included an invitation to a marine and environmental teaching field trip. "This is an interactive project with marine sampling and environmental evaluation" - a 3-hour cruise from

Gunnamatta Bay to Grays Point. Their students also undertake marine studies at Illawarra Senior College, Port Kembla Marine Rescue Base and the Australian Museum.

I recommend that the Royal National Park, (Deer Park), "Rathane" site be considered for accommodation for school children who might visit the site from outside the Cronulla, Sutherland and Sydney areas.

I recommend that we invite bush care management teams onto the site to eradicate noxious weeds and replant the site to return the landscape as far as possible to its original condition. These groups would prepare a plan of management for the site for approval by the new managing body.

With regards to the three heritage-listed items on the site I recommend that the Waterfront Laboratory (Building 11) and the Hatchery Building, (Building 6), be maintained and preserved as heritage items.

The third heritage-listed item, the Aquarium or pool, poses a dilemma. It was listed as a heritage item as it was directly related to the previous use of the site as a marine science facility. That use is now redundant as there will be no marine science conducted at or on the site. I am convinced that this heritage structure, although significant and relevant in its previous life does not have the potential for adaptive re-use.

I am persuaded that the pool even in its current state constitutes a health and safety issue. There is no safety barrier around it and I believe an OH&S investigation would render it as a significant risk factor even now in its current format. Should the water be drained from the pool it further increases the risk factor. I am persuaded that the walls of the pool would collapse without the water pressure and that will constitute a structural risk that will lead to further problems.

As I understand the situation the Heritage Council has several options with respect to heritage items; listing; de-listing and amending heritage boundaries. A conservation and management plan is not mandatory for the Heritage Council, it is simply "best practice". To lodge a conservation and management plan costs in excess of \$100,000. Given the circumstances at the fisheries site with respect to the pool I would urge the Heritage Council to either delist the pool from its heritage register or alternatively amend the heritage boundary on the site to exclude the pool.

I am persuaded that that we should restore the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the site. The most effective way to achieve this is to remove the pool so that the coastline can be reclaimed to its original topological state. The Heritage Council understands that the pool was listed for its scientific value and given the change in usage at the site they may be comfortable with this solution which is sympathetic to the site's overall heritage value.

I would recommend therefore that the concrete walls around the pool be removed to allow the coastline to be reclaimed which will provide access for the community to witness the site's Aboriginal heritage, in particular the magnificent 10,000 thousand year old birthing cave.

These matters and their costings will be the responsibility for the new managing Trust and the Heritage Council.

I also recommend that the pumping station, (the pump is relatively new) be removed from the site and either used by the DPI or a sale negotiated with the local Council. Once the pump is inactive the pool water will become stagnant, therefore this recommendation is subject to the decision to demolish the concrete wall surrounding the pool.

I recommend that a suitable fence be erected to isolate all the police and maritime working offices from the sites proposed walkway (costs shared by the three marine rescue groups).

I recommend that the Fishcare groups have continued access for meetings and their equipment continue to be stored on site.

I recommend that the Asbestos Survey be made available to the new managing Trust of the site that will be charged with the responsibility of maintaining the appropriate standards of control.

I recommend that all equipment and chemicals be removed from the existing chemical shed and that the new Trust consider removing it.

I recommend that a kiosk/restaurant be constructed on site to add a revenue stream for the upkeep of the site. It needs to be sympathetic to the topography and heritage values of the site. Its location will be Building 16. Tenders would be sought for this project by the Trust.

I recommend the site remain in the ownership of the NSW Government and I recommend a Trust structure be established to manage and run the site. Trustees would consist of a Chair and eight others.

Whilst the overall management of the site would be the responsibility of the Trust, the administration of the site, under the direction of the Trust should be the responsibility of the State Properties Authority.

## 6. Overarching recommendations

1. The Cronulla Fisheries Site should remain in public ownership and, except as otherwise provided by these recommendations:
  - the existing buildings should remain intact without height changes to any structure;
  - hotel or motel development, or conversion of facilities to hotel/motel style accommodation, should not be permitted;
  - large-scale commercial development in other forms should not be permitted; and
  - the site should be opened to the public by continuing the walkway around the point to the west from Bass and Flinders Point through and around the Fisheries Site and then northward through Darook Park to link up with Gunnamatta Park.
  
2. A Fisheries Site Management Trust be established to manage the site, comprising a government appointed Chair and eight members being:
  - Councillor nominated by Sutherland Shire Council
  - General Manager, Sutherland Shire Council or his nominee
  - senior officer of La Perouse Aboriginal Land Council
  - senior officer of NSW Police
  - senior officer of Marine Rescue NSW
  - senior officer of State Property Authority
  - The President of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society
  - local community leader nominated and selected by Council.

### Occupation and use of Cronulla Fisheries Site

3. The following marine rescue groups should be invited to establish a combined marine rescue facility as tenants on the site:
  - NSW Police Marine Area Command
  - Marine Rescue NSW
  - NSW Transport Maritime.

4. The Waterfront Laboratory (Building 11) and the Hatchery Building (Building 6) should be maintained and preserved as Heritage items.
5. The Sutherland Shire Historical Society should be invited to establish an educational centre featuring Aboriginal heritage, the marine science history of the site and other local history.
6. An educational centre featuring local Aboriginal history and culture should be established in a separate building and a management plan developed by Chris Ingrey, Les Bursell, Bruce Howell and the Sutherland Shire Historical Society.
7. The site should be utilised for secondary school excursions focussing on the site's marine science history, Aboriginal heritage, and heritage buildings and landscape. The Rathane or Deer Park Conference Centres at Port Hacking could be considered where overnight accommodation is required.
8. The Fishcare educational organisation currently using the site should be allowed to remain together with its equipment.
9. The Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation should be invited to present a business case to the Trust for use of the house, (Building 18), adjacent to the entrance as a facility for temporary residence for children with cancer and their parents.
10. The Trust should conduct a public tender for construction of a kiosk/restaurant, in Building 16 to establish a revenue stream contributing to upkeep of the site and to provide an amenity to visitors to the site.

#### Development work required for implementation of recommended uses

11. A suitable fence should be erected to isolate the combined marine rescue facility from the proposed public walkway. This decision and cost will be the responsibility of the new Trust.
12. The existing wharf should be expanded to accommodate an additional 12 berths for the proposed marine rescue facility in accordance with a design to be provided by NSW Transport Maritime.

13. If the Trust does not approve establishment of the facility referred to in recommendation 9, the house should be removed to gain more open space for community use. The management Trust will pay for removal.
14. Subject to Heritage Council, the concrete walls of the Aquaria pool should be removed and the adjacent coastline restored to its original archaeological state. The pumping station should be removed from the site and either used by the Department of Primary Industries or offered for sale.
15. Bush care management volunteer groups, managed by Council, should be invited onto the site to eradicate noxious weeds and replant the site to recreate the original landscape to the greatest extent possible. These groups should also be requested to prepare a draft plan of management for the site for adoption by the Trust.

#### Public health and safety on the site

16. The 2011 Cronulla Fisheries Centre Asbestos Management Plan and Asbestos Register should be provided to the Trust for its consideration and implementation as appropriate.
17. All equipment and chemicals should be removed from the existing chemicals shed and disposed of appropriately. DPI should remove this shed prior to them leaving the site.
18. The front entrance gate to the site should remain open at all times with responsibility for security resting with the individual tenants. The current key card system for the gate may be useful for this purpose.

#### Funding the recommended uses

19. Routine maintenance and operational costs of the site (estimated at \$135,000 per annum; indexed to inflation) should be shared by the three marine rescue facility tenants on a *pro rata* basis according to staff complement.
20. NSW Transport Maritime should pay an annual rent of \$40,000 (indexed to inflation) in addition to *pro rata* sharing of costs.

21. If the Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation usage is established (see recommendation 9), the Foundation should pay an annual rent of \$50,000 (indexed to inflation).
22. The public walkway extension (see recommendation 1) should be funded by Sutherland Shire Council (estimated cost \$200,000).
23. The fence around the marine rescue facility and the wharf expansion (see recommendations 11 and 12) should be funded by the three marine rescue facility tenants on a *pro rata* basis of employees.
24. The specific costs below should be funded by the bodies or sources indicated:
- fit-out of the historical educational centre (recommendation 5) – Sutherland Shire Historical Society.
  - fit-out of the Aboriginal educational centre (recommendation 6) – by public donations, Aboriginal community funding, grants and philanthropists (see recommendation 6 for details).
  - costs associated with secondary school excursions (see recommendation 7) – by entrance fees;
  - costs associated with the access to Fishcare volunteer groups for meetings and storage of equipment (see recommendation 8) – by the Fishcare educational organisation, as determined by the Trust;
  - fit out of the Steven Walter Children's Cancer Centre (see recommendation 9) – by that Foundation;
  - pumping station closure and sale of pumps – State Property Authority.
25. All other costs should be funded by the Trust from revenue received, subject to the following:
- the NSW Government should consider providing \$150,000 in establishment and transitional funding to the Trust; and
  - the Trust should be empowered to borrow money if necessary against future anticipated revenue.

## 7. Costings

Over recent years the site has received maintenance upgrades including compliant fire services; renewed power infrastructure with an emergency generator; road resealing; re-roofing of several buildings; laboratory refurbishment; replacements of internal electrical switchboards and the wharf building refurbishment.

An asbestos survey, mentioned above, has been completed which identifies the non-critical asbestos issues on site.

The maintenance of the site has historically consisted of routine maintenance with capital funding for refurbishment projects. The proposed three marine rescue tenants will share maintenance for roads and car parks, gardens, power, water, fire services and sewer. This "sharing concept" becomes the obvious solution as there is only one meter available for all electricity and water and it is not intended to recommend a costly sub metering program.

The Fisheries Site had approximately 140 employees plus outside marine research people who often worked on weekends. Total employees approximately 146.

The approximate number of people on site if the new arrangements are approved will be approximately 60. Marine Rescue NSW, (Botany/Port Hacking) 40 - 50 full time; Transport Roads and Maritime Services 10, and NSW Police (Marine Area Command) 4-6).

Utility costs, power, water, telephone, cleaning are approximately 50 per cent of total operational costs of the site.

I will assume that routine maintenance costs will reduce (light fittings, air conditioning units etc.) by approximately 40-50 per cent.

There do not appear to be any identifiable urgent major periodic maintenance costs for the next 2- 3 years.

The security cost is mainly associated with the main gate.

It is estimated that the operational costs with the new arrangements will be:

Routine maintenance costs:	\$40,000
Utility costs, power water telephone etc.:	\$25,000
Cleaning, waste disposal:	\$35,000
Fire equipment maintenance:	\$5,500
Security:	<u>\$25,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$135,000</u>

All the above cost items including Insurances, will be shared by the three tenants on a *pro rata* staff basis.

The costs associated with:

Opening the site to the public, excluding the extension of the walkway	Nil
Wharf expansion with extra pontoons	Cost to the three marine rescue groups, with maritime services designing the activity
Fit out for the historical society building	At their cost
Fit out for the Aboriginal cultural centre in one of the buildings	A combination of donations, Aboriginal community funding and philanthropists
School children's excursions	Appropriate entrance fees
Bushcare activities	Nil
Reclaiming foreshore around aquaria	Trust responsibility
Pumping station closure and sale of pumps	State Properties Authority
Fence separating marine rescue offices	Cost to the three marine rescue groups
Fishcare	Nil
Chemical shed	Cost to the new Trust
Children's Cancer Centre	All costs to the Foundation
Management Trust	Nil

It will take 1.5-2.5 years to build and design a kiosk for the site which will assist the revenue stream for the Trust.

The extension of the walkway will be at Council's cost and estimated to be \$200,000.

The construction of the kiosk will be the responsibility of the successful tenderer. A lease arrangement will be organised by the Trust together with all other details regarding profit sharing, rental arrangements, lease terms etc.

Should the business case proposed by the Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation not be accepted and Council wishes for the removal of the house, then the costs associated with this will be met by the new Trust. Should it eventuate that the Council

wants to remove the house on the site, the decision and cost will be the decision of the new Trust.

Reclaiming the coastline by removing the concrete wall adjacent to the pool: Cost to the new Trust after revenue from Kiosk/restaurant allows.

The Trust would be entitled to borrow monies for any eventuality should there be a shortfall of initial funding or if the estimates are incorrect.

### *7.1 Revenue*

The Transport Roads and Maritime Services will be paying \$40,000 per annum rent, (indexed to inflation), in addition to sharing the costs outlined above.

The other two tenants, Police Marine Area Command and Marine Rescue will be paying a peppercorn rent only, except for the sharing of costs outlined above.

The Fishcare educational program and its two full time staff will have access to the site to store their equipment and conduct meetings with volunteers on the site. The Trust will decide on the contribution this educational program will make.

The Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation will pay \$50,000 per annum (indexed to inflation) rent.

If it is decided to maintain the pool aquaria the costs associated with maintaining this facility are approximately \$20,000 per annum and that reducing pumping rates is entirely feasible given that no animals or plants are to be kept in the pool (see details in Appendix 9.3).

## 8. Allocation of buildings on the site (see ground plan of buildings Appendix 9.4)

### Building 1

This is the “arrow shaped” building which currently houses 50 people but is capable of housing in excess of 70 people. It also includes a meeting room for 12 people.

#### Recommendation:

This building, (together with Building 3), will be the offices of NSW Police, (Marine Area Command), Marine Rescue and Transport Road and Maritime Services. Office allocation will be decided by Ken McKay, Assistant Police Commissioner and Stacey Tannos, Commissioner, Marine Rescue, NSW.

### Building 2

This is known as the Computer Room which currently houses the server and a stand-by generator. The server is redundant to the future needs of the site and DPI will remove it. The generator was used as back up for the Fisheries needs and is also redundant and will be removed by DPI. Generators need monthly maintenance to ensure their purpose is fulfilled; if the generator stays in this room after Fisheries leave the site, it will attract no maintenance attention.

#### Recommendation:

This room is closed as it serves no useful purpose.

### Building 3

This two-storey building has a conference room capable of sitting 40 people or more, 60-70 standing and has toilet and kitchen facilities as well as a first aid facility. The basement floor has an office fit- out for up to 30 people.

Recommendation:

This building is adjacent to Building 1 and will be used by the three marine rescue groups for their activities. Specifically the basement level is ideal for volunteers if and when the need arises.

#### Building 4

This small building houses records and files which will be removed. There are six work stations available.

Recommendation:

This building is also adjacent to Buildings 1 and 3 and is available to the needs of the three marine rescue organisations if required.

#### Building 5

This building is a 4-car garage.

Recommendation:

This facility may be used for trailer craft and other equipment for the three marine rescue operators and is situated in close proximity to Building 1, headquarters for the marine rescue operators.

#### Building 6

This building is known as the Hatchery Building. In fact it is the laboratory including taps, sinks and work benches and offices for fisheries research. Most importantly it is heritage-listed.

Recommendation:

This small building will remain open for student and community visits to observe the cultural and scientific history of the Fisheries Site.

### Building 7

This is a small weatherboard house which is used by 1 or 2 police rescue people.

Recommendation:

Close this building as it serves no useful purpose.

### Building 8

This building is known as the Heat Exchange building but is in fact male and female toilets with shower facilities.

Recommendation:

This facility will be left open for use by the occupants of the site, as well by the community, as it is situated near the proposed walkway around the site.

### Building 9

This building is known as the "Cool Shed". In fact it is a pump shed with a fibreglass tank of 50,000 litres.

Recommendation:

Water from the tank will be removed and the tank taken away. It was originally a boat shed or garage and may be useful to the occupants of the site.

### Building 10

This building is known as the Waterfront Laboratory. It is adjacent to the aquaria and is currently used as an educational centre. It has a kitchen and two offices and has storage facilities running parallel to the conference room.

Recommendation:

In stormy conditions this room has minor flooding occasionally but is still a useful room for gatherings and for teaching purposes. This is a useful facility for students for educational purposes.

### Building 11

This building is a boat shed.

Recommendation:

This will be allocated to the three marine rescue groups.

### Building 12

Building 12 is a garage which used to house field gear and equipment.

Recommendation:

Lock the garage.

### Building 13

This building is known as the Administration Building and is in fact the reception area for the Fisheries Site, housing eight people. In the 1940s it was used as a dormitory for the migrant hostel.

Recommendation:

This building, in conjunction with Building 15, is ideal for use as an educational venue. This building may be dedicated to the history of the site from 1904 and other historical, heritage and botanical aspects of Cronulla and Sutherland.

The Sutherland Shire Historical Society with their President together with Les Bursell, Chris Ingrey and Bruce Howell should construct a plan for Buildings 13 and 15 to accommodate the themes of Aboriginal history; 19<sup>th</sup> Century colonial times including Cook, Phillip and Flinders; early 20<sup>th</sup> century, 1904-1914 including the Fisheries Site history and contribution to marine science research; the war years; and post 1945.

#### Building 14

Building 14 is a garage housing Fishcare equipment.

Recommendation:

Continue its current use.

#### Building 15

This building is known as "offices" and presently houses 6 offices and 15 people.

Recommendation:

This building is to be used by the Sutherland Shire Historical society along with Building 13 as discussed previously. It is adjacent to Building 13 and has a grassy area in front of it with some seating atop of the cliff face near Hungry Point.

#### Building 16

This is a building known as "offices" and currently caters for up to 40 people in well spread out office space. It is two storeys with a basement underneath. It has toilets and showers.

Recommendation:

This building will be offered by tender to interested parties to renovate for a kiosk/restaurant and function centre. It has magnificent views and ample car parking space. It is in close proximity to the proposed walking path and will offer a kiosk range of

goods including coffee, soft drinks and food and also will operate as a restaurant and possibly a function centre.

### Building 17

This building is known as the Chemical Store. It has four separate concrete areas or vaults for the storage of chemicals. It is situated near the cliff face and is an eyesore. It also sits near the proposed educational centres planned for the site.

Recommendation:

There is no use for this purpose-built small building. All chemicals and hazardous material will be removed and I cannot imagine a further use for this small building, about 2.5 metres high and 4 metres long. This is the only building on the site that lends itself to being removed. DPI to remove before vacating the premises.

### Building 18

This is known as the Finance Building. It is in fact a house which currently services the Fishcare volunteers.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that consideration be given to use by the Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation.

### Building 19

This is known as the Dive Store. It is in fact a walk-in cool room and freezer specifically built for Fisheries needs.

Recommendation:

This building should be shut down, (saving electricity and maintenance) and simply converted to a room which may be useful for storage for the three marine rescue

operators, storing life jackets and other equipment. It is well situated for this purpose being adjacent to the wharf.

### Building 20

This is known as the Pump Store. The pump supplies water to the pool.

Recommendation:

Sell the pump and close the building down.

### Building 21

This building is known as the Header Tank. It contains a tank with a capacity of 150,000 litres of water.

Recommendation:

This is an unsafe area with two open entrances to the tank. This needs to be fortified before the present occupants leave the site.

### Building 22

This is known as the Generator Shed. It houses a large generator that is capable of powering the western part of the site. The generator is an insurance policy against storms and power outages and is relevant to the previous use of the site by keeping freezers etc operational. It requires maintenance.

Recommendation:

The generator is redundant to the extent that the usages have changed. However as the site is prone to strong winds and storms the future occupants of the site might consider keeping the generator for use for the whole site. The new Trust can decide the future needs of this generator.

Building 23 is the fish pond / aquarium.

Recommendation:

Discussed elsewhere in this report.

## 9. Appendices

### 9.1 *Submissions received*

The submissions received may be divided into the following categories:

#### 1. Retention of the site as a scientific fisheries research centre:

Twenty-nine submissions were received clearly stating opposition to the Fisheries Site being closed. The writers were a mix of marine scientists, academics and Fisheries staff and some local residents. One submission was "a selection of over 19,000 signatures that were collected from NSW citizens to ask for reversal of the decision to relocate Fisheries away from the Cronulla site. More than half of the people that signed the petitions were from the Sutherland Shire area."

Some eminent marine scientists from universities and from the Fisheries Site itself wrote compelling and logical submissions for retaining the site in its present form and in some cases suggested university and secondary school funding to keep the site open. Some mentioned the negative features of alternative research options such as Chowder Bay and others suggested benefactors to fund the existing facility.

I also received a submission from the School of Biological Sciences detailing the work of the Lincoln Marine Science Centre in Port Lincoln, South Australia.

#### 2. An additional seven submissions mentioned their opposition to the closure but added comments for future usage including:

"It is imperative that the Aboriginal and heritage significance of the site is maintained";

“Aboriginal middens are located on the site and have an archaeological significance and potential”;

“Darook Park and the public foreshore reserve, Salmon Head Reserve, should be linked along the foreshore of Hungry Point for public recreation and access”;

“Public access to the site would allow utilisation of the natural attributes”;

“I am anxious that this valuable site does not go to developers”;

“The land could be maintained by the Government for the use of the community”;

“Historical interpretation of middens and heritage buildings with appropriate interpretation and signage, open space including a continuation of the esplanade walkway and merging of the site with neighbouring Darook Park, adaptive reuse of heritage building by community groups and non-intrusive and appropriate commercial use of a portion of the site”.

3. Twenty submissions were received with ideas on how to best utilise the site: The major thrust of these submissions was to oppose any large-scale commercial or residential development on the site:

“Under no circumstances should this site or any part of it be sold to developers for residential purposes”;

“To allow this headland to be developed to residential housing would be very short sighted”;

"The site must not be sold to private developers".

4. Other comments suggested opening up the site for the community:

"Please extend the walkway around the centre";

"Whatever use is made of this site it must result in a significant and appropriate addition to the Cronulla seascape";

"I believe the site should be open to the public with walkways providing a link between Bass and Flinders Point Reserve and Darook Park".

5. Others expressed their views on the educational advantages of the site:

"The Aboriginal heritage should be protected incorporating Aboriginal cultural rites and used for educational purposes";

"Perhaps a natural museum could be contained in one of the buildings";

"Incorporate a vitally needed Aboriginal educational experience";

"Initiate a permanent historical presentation of the history of the site",

"Retain the Aboriginal and heritage value of the site";

6. The Marine Teachers Association of NSW (MTA) made an appealing submission:

To use the facility for...

“the possible continuation of access to the educational expertise the facility has to offer”.

“In the Sutherland Shire alone eight High Schools facilitate Marine courses catering for approximately 600 students”.

They argue that the “Marine syllabi offered by the Department of Education include many topics of study that could be greatly enhanced by continued access to the Fisheries Site at Cronulla”.

This was a first class submission but was entirely dependent upon the Cronulla Fisheries site being maintained.

7. Among other submissions

“That the existing buildings could be used to display European and Aboriginal history with tours of the middens and Aboriginal sites on the property”  
and in the same submission,

“It would be a crime not to open up the missing link of the coastal walk along the esplanade past the Bass and Flinders Explorers Monument towards Oak and Shelley Parks, Shark Island and Cronulla Beaches”.

“I am very excited by this rare chance to make a real difference to our quality of life this opportunity of land use offers”

8. Some offered specific alternative uses for the site:

“Use of the site by the Water Police or MSB may be appropriate”.

“The location for marine rescue and Water Police is ideal as it provides the closest mooring facility within Port Hacking to the ocean”;

"Consider a community "men's shed" as there are many retired people in the area";

"Part of the site could be leased as a wedding reception area";

"The area left of the entrance gate is perfect for a community garden";

"The site should revert to public parkland";

"A lease arrangement for a "Peppers style resort";

"Any development of the site should be unobtrusive and enhance the natural landscape";

"A hospice for aged care or an age care facility limited to one or two storeys incorporating all three stages of care";

"There is enough room on the Fisheries Site to house adolescent children with terminal cancer";

And again,

" the site could be used as a community garden".

The Bundeena Progress Association provided a submission and their "greatest concerns" were "high rise development that would impact their line of sight from Bundeena and Maianbar and the possibility of traffic congestion or other impacts on the local residents".

The Sutherland Shire Historical Society submitted that “the site needs to remain in public use”, and its uses should include “leisure, recreation, research, historical interpretation and open space”. They oppose the site being sold.

Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation, Lucas Heights, made an approach to conduct marine and other research at the site and to liaise with them for educational purposes.

There were six separate submissions on continuing the activities of the Fishcare program on the site. This activity is run by volunteers, under the auspices of the Community Services and Education Department. Fishcare volunteers attend the Cronulla site educating young children about the mysteries and fun of fishing. Currently they have use of a building on the site and wish to continue that as well as having access to the conference room two to three times a year for larger conferences.

There are about 35 Fishcare volunteers in the Southern Sydney area and 24 in the Northern area of Sydney. This is an educational forum where volunteers together with educational staff from the department of Primary Industry attend schools with programs on environment, safe fishing, impacts of rubbish in the ocean, fish identification, first aid, and have a special dedicated course for those with disability. They have workshops, special fishing days, events, and attend local school fetes. They currently use one of the garages on site to store fishing rods, life preservers, tackle boxes and a variety of pamphlets. They house on site a trailer and a boat. They have workshops for around 30 people 8 times a year in one of the conference rooms on site. Fishcare is funded by the “recreational fishing Trust”. They have about eight full time DPI people on site all year.

Educational events run by Fishcare include, “Fishing for Sport” in Sydney high schools; “Get Hooked - it’s Fun to Fish” for Sydney primary schools; Boy Scouts fishing badge education in Sydney Scouts Groups; fishing clinics held every school holidays in Sydney;

handicapped and disadvantaged children's fishing days; Fishcare attendance at school fetes and Fishcare presence at boat shows.

Other comments about the success of the Fishcare operation include:

"I find this activity inspirational and worthwhile".

"Fishcare volunteering is rewarding and educational";

"It provides self-worth and improved self-esteem";

"It provides a productive contribution to society where pride in the local area is enhanced";

"A large part of maintaining an extensive and motivated network of volunteers is based around personal interaction".

We received a laudable submission wanting to dedicate the entire site for an "Aboriginal Coastal Experience". It included ideas "for an indigenous interactive educational purpose built facility to offer employment and educational outcomes for indigenous and non - indigenous children and adults."

We received several submissions from local historical societies who wanted "to register an interest in having a presence on the site in whatever future use it may have".

We received several submissions with people expecting that the site may have use for a restaurant or kiosk:

"I am very interested in setting up a function centre and the beautiful setting on the lands of the Fisheries Site would be ideal".

And another from a "leading Sydney hospitality group" who have been "responsible for the transformation of a number of Sydney's historic buildings revitalising them into contemporary venues whilst maintaining the original character of each site".

I received three submissions that were also submissions made to the Upper House Inquiry into the closure of the Cronulla Fisheries Site. I have added these to the total opposing the closure.

We received one written submission and several verbal submissions on utilising part of the site for “artists in residence”:

“The Fisheries Site already contains a number of residences which would be suitable to offer a varied program of artist accommodation”;

“The site also has potential for use for artists as studios for rent”;

“The Fisheries Site also contains office accommodation that could be adapted for student groups working with artists”.

9. We received a detailed submission from the Sutherland Shire Council:

The Council proposed some general principles regarding land use; open space linking Salmon Bay/The Esplanade with Darook Park; education; occupation by Government agencies; demolishing the cottage; car parking to be maximised but not to the detriment of open space; demolish unwanted buildings; Council does not support being appointed Trustee of the site; notes that most of the site is within zone 12 Special Uses (pisciculture); notes the security issues of the site and recommends a revenue stream from a “low key” café/kiosk.

They argued that we should preserve the site’s Aboriginal, natural and heritage values; that the land should be transferred to Council or managed by a special Trust and that should the vehicle for management be a Trust that it should be “properly resourced from handover”.

With regard to finance they argued that “all costs associated with decommissioning/ demolishing unwanted structures to be met by the State Government”; Site works around “enjoyment and safety of public to be met by the State Government”; and parties allocated accommodation on the site, associated costs and maintenance to be met by them.

Council also wants an open area which at the moment includes the house. They argue that the removal of the house would make that particular area a substantial open area for the public.

#### 10. Transport Roads and Maritime Services:

Representatives of Roads and Maritime Services met with Ken McKay, Assistant Commissioner NSW Police. They say that, “Mr McKay supports the establishment of a joint government marine centre that would accommodate Water Police, Roads and Maritime Services and Marine Rescue as part of plans to enhance cross jurisdictional resources in delivering off and on water safety and compliance”.

RMS requires accommodation for 10 staff plus two water vessels and storage for trailer vessels, navigation markers, signs and equipment.” One of the staff members will be the river keeper for Port Hacking.

“Maritime Division is responsible for marine safety, regulation of commercial and recreational boating and for property management of submerged lands.”

Maritime Division is also responsible for the protection of the marine environment from pollution from vessels. RMS is one of the numbers of agencies tasked with on water compliance”. “The Botany Bay Branch currently keep an in water vessel at Hungry Point and would be interested in berthing 2 in water vessels at the site.”

Maritime Division is seeking consideration to using parts of the existing site that could be shared with NSW Police Marine Area Command.

#### 11. Sutherland Shire State Emergency Services:

This organisation has over 135 volunteers and “would be able to use most of the site”. They are currently in Heathcote using shared facilities with the Rural Fire Service of NSW. Their site has some disadvantages to the SES; it is too far for potential members to travel from other areas of Sutherland; training and meetings conflict with the Rural Fire Service; geography of the present site, and have “have outgrown our current site”. The Site” will also have many benefits such as storing our flood response boats” and another benefit is the area available for training and storage of SES equipment.

Activities resulting from this submission would be mostly on weekends and would not be fully utilised during the week with the exception of training and other meetings.

#### 12. Marine Rescue NSW:

This proposal “envisages locating the Marine Rescue NSW Headquarters on the Gunnamatta Bay site, in conjunction with a new Marine Rescue unit to be created by merging two of our southern Sydney units - Marine Rescue Botany Bay and Marine Rescue Port Hacking, which currently does not have suitable accommodation. It also presents a unique opportunity to co-locate a number of marine focussed organisations, such as the NSW Police Force Marine Area Command and NSW Roads and Maritime Services, providing synergies in service delivery and emergency response.”

Marine Rescue NSW provides rapid, coordinated marine search and rescue, monitors marine radio traffic along the coastline around the clock and conducts boating license and other boating safety courses. Marine Rescue’s proposal outlines two key uses for

the Gunnamatta bay site: the relocation of the organisation's headquarters and the amalgamation and relocation of two Marine Rescue units, Botany Bay and Port Hacking.

Currently the Headquarters of Marine Rescue comprises, 15 head office staff, six regional controllers and three regional training officers. Ideally the new headquarters of the organisation would provide a range of functions and capabilities to support its operational activities including; a State Search and Rescue Coordination and Communication Centre, a minimum of two training rooms, a State Communication Training Centre; a skipper/crew simulator and training centre and berthing for up to two replacement vessels, 8-12 metres in length.

Combining the two rescue units, Marine Rescue Botany Bay, who currently operate a berth at the St George Motor Boat Club, and Marine Rescue Port Hacking, who currently operate from a swing mooring at Dolan's Bay, is seen as advantageous.

Should this proposal be successful it is planned to merge these two units and accommodate the resulting new unit at Gunnamatta Bay. A berthing facility would be retained at the St. George Motor Boat Club for operational purposes, including support to Sydney Airport or a major emergency involving Kurnell or Botany Bay Container Terminal. This new unit would have a Unit Commander, a deputy Unit Commander, an administrative officer, treasurer and training officer. Activities of this unit would be unit conferences; unit monthly meetings; first aid courses; marine Radio Operators Certificate of Proficiency courses, navigational courses, radar courses, public educational courses, coxswain and boat crew courses and emergency management meetings. Some storage is also required at the site including life boat equipment, life vests and general maintenance needs.

This submission also noted that, "one of the benefits of locating a state wide radio backbone at the site would be the on-site presence of radio operators 24 hours a day which would act as a deterrent to vandalism or other anti- social behaviour."

13. Cronulla Sailing Club:

This organisation wants to utilise the site for its club's activities. They would require a site to use part of the foreshore to launch its boats at regatta time and have storage needs. This club organises regattas where up to 100 dinghies are launched from trailers and would want to use the pathway to the water's edge adjacent to the aquaria for this purpose.

14. Port Hacking Outriggers Club:

This club submitted that it "wanted to occupy one of the sheds which are situated on this (fisheries) property". The club has an extensive and proud history and offers "a family friendly environment". It currently has 36 members. The club owns five six--person canoes, one two-person canoe and a number of one-person canoes. During last summer they had a number of open days "attended by over 40 youths, and members of the NSW Police Miranda Local Area Command, PCYC and Shire Wide". The club has plans to involve both children and adults who have disabilities.

They would use the facility at the site "as a meeting place for both members and potential members. It would also be used for instructional, coaching and safety briefings".

Several submissions were received from eminent scholars who were opposed to the closure of the site. It would be churlish not to note their objections, notwithstanding the purpose of this report is to find alternative uses for the site.

15. Scholarly submissions:

Professor Jason Middleton PhD, FRAeS, was among several scholars, including Professor Steve Kennelly and David Barker, the latter two, DPI employees based at the Fisheries Site, and others, who wrote dignified, impassioned submissions.

Jason Middleton's speciality is regional physical oceanography. He is a member of the Integrated Marine Observing System, was involved in the establishment of the Sydney Institute of Marine Science but wrote his submission as a local resident and individual scientist not as a representative of the UNSW, SIMS or IMOS.

He writes that "Chowder Bay is deficient in that direct wharf access is not available by vehicle with equipment transfer from vehicle to wharf" inadequate making the SIMS equivalent facilities "practically impossible to use for those who wish to go to sea to undertake marine observations".

He argues that "continued use of the Cronulla Fisheries site "could solve some of the key issues for Sydney based scientists who are seagoing". " Such projects include three of the IMOS facilities; The NSW moorings sub facility (ANMN), the acoustic tagging program (AATAMS) and the autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV)".

Jason Middleton suggests three considerations; firstly, "retaining the Western side of the Cronulla Site", secondly "identify a range of sources of funding" and thirdly, " appoint a Cronulla Marine Research Institute Development Board" to establish a longer term plan for the site to become," a permanent joint user marine research facility".

16. Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation:

This Foundation is closely associated with Sydney Children's Hospital and Children's Cancer Institute of Australia. One of the founders of the organisation has been a Cronulla Shire resident her whole life. The offices of the Foundation are situated at Kirrawee. They would like to utilise the house on the site as a "children's respite and hospice facility". "A children's hospice is desperately needed in the south eastern area and the Cronulla site suits the criteria".

Their plan is to "provide high quality palliative care to children with life threatening and life limiting illnesses and their families". "For children whose death is imminent, final days would be made more comfortable, encouraging families to be together during the end of the life phase."

The house at the site and "the services provided by the hospice would aim to support families at a devastating time, enabling them to spend quality time together, assist with minimising end of life regrets, encouraging happy times and fond memories of their very special child." The Foundation states that they "will be self-sufficient and would not rely on Government for funding" and that they will raise the funds for the renovation of the house through donations. They plan to have four self-sufficient "rooms" and facilities should they acquire the house on site.

17. NSW Police (Marine Area Command):

This group currently occupies a small office space at the site. There is "one vessel permanently moored at the wharf area with other MAC vessels utilising the wharf during specific operations". "Demographic data indicates that the Port Hacking and surrounds is a high growth area in terms of recreational and commercial marine activities. With this growth come expectations of an increase policing presence."

In line with government policy they wish to develop a “multijurisdictional Marine Enforcement Agency comprising of other government and volunteer agencies charged with marine enforcement and rescue”. They will require office space for six full time MAC police with up to eight during peak periods.

18. Australasian Offshore Power Boat Club:

This submission calls for the development of a licensed club on the site, together with accommodation dedicated to offshore power boat racing. “Not only would it attract weddings, functions etc. it would be a perfect location for conferences”. It would attract overseas interest especially from the power boat movement”.

19. Sutherland Shire Historical Society:

Bruce Watt wrote:

“The Sutherland Shire Historical Society would like to register its interest in having a presence on the site in whatever future use it may have.

Members of the Society’s Executive have had conducted tours of the site to view potential areas that could be used to establish a museum. The Director of the site, Steve Kennelly would welcome our presence if the site were to be retained. If, as has been strongly suggested the site is decommissioned, we would be interested in establishing a museum and educational centre on site. This would include displays of local history. The focus would be on themes such as Aboriginal occupation, Cook, 19<sup>th</sup> century isolation, surfing history, Fortress Shire (WW2) and post war development.

Building 1 is a suitable building in terms of access. It also has historical significance, having been built for the reopening of the site for the CSIR in

1936. The top floor which currently houses the library and administrative functions would be a suitable site for displays and conferencing with some other facilities on site that could be used for warehousing and restoration. We do not preclude the notion that other Shire interest groups may also wish to use facilities within the complex. Keeping the site in use for the public would help to minimise vandalism and neglect.

In the longer term, the Society would welcome a role as part of a management committee for the site”.

## 9.2 *Direct contacts in the consultation*

Together with the written submissions I have spoken to, on one or more than one occasion, and or met with, on one or more occasions, or attempted to contact the following individuals or groups:

Trevor Williams, AGM, Maritime Operations;  
Commissioner Stacey Tannos, Marine Rescue NSW;  
Mark Aprilovic, President Cronulla Chamber of Commerce;  
Chris Ingrey, Chairman Ia Perouse Land Council;  
Deanne Schreiber, Chairperson Kurrnulla Aboriginal Land Corporation;  
Byron Hurst, resident;  
Denis Reid, historian;  
Chris Frederick, Aboriginal educational and tourism submission;  
Steven Kennelly, Director Fisheries Research, NSW DPI;  
Ian Sinclair, President North Cronulla Precinct Association;  
Bill Sinclair, President Bundeena Progress Association;  
Joan Sinclair, Bundeena Progress Association;  
Peter Turbett, Darook Park Bushcare Association;  
John Olivich, the Esplanade Cronulla Bushcare Association;  
Greg Holland, President, Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club;  
Barry Ezzy, Patron, Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club;  
Brooke Jones, President P & C (?) South Cronulla School;  
Brad Whittaker, Manager Active Communities;  
Carol Provan, Former Mayor Sutherland Shire;  
John Raynor General Manager, Sutherland Shire Council;  
Debbie Highton, Fisheries Site manager, NSW DPI;  
Mark Speakman, SC, MP, State Member for Cronulla;  
Sue Moss, PA to Mayor and GM, Sutherland Shire Council;  
Mark Aarons, resident ,Maianbar;  
Petula Samios, Director Heritage, OEH;  
Cameron White, Manager Listings Team, Heritage Council;  
Ken McKay, Assistant Police Commissioner;  
Tim Powys, Business Manager, NSW DPI;  
Brain Fergusson, Secretary, District Surf Clubs;  
Ron Smith, Chair District Surf Clubs;  
Les Bursill, anthropologist;  
David Barker, Fisheries Technician, NSW DPI;  
Greg McNeil, Marine Science teacher,  
Bruce Howell, Aboriginal representative;  
Staff of Scott Morrison, Federal Member for Cook;

Staff of Rathane Conference Centre;  
Gerard Volk, resident;  
Jason Middleton, UNSW, Advisory Board, IMOS.  
Graham Hunt, resident;  
Pauline Curby, historian, resident;  
Derril Greenway, Director Property, Sutherland Shire Council..  
Sutherland Shire Councillors, (now Mayor), Kent Johns, Melannie Gibbons, Peter  
Towell, George Capsis, , Bruce Walton, Craig McCallum, Phil Blight, Steve Simpson,  
Mark Buttigieg, Kevin Shreiber, Jan Forshaw, Howard Boorman, and Derril Greenway,  
Director Property, Sutherland Shire Council;  
John Keniry, Chairman Sydney Institute of Marine Science;  
Peter Turnell, Director Recreation & Indigenous Fisheries, NSW DPI;  
Andrew Dean, NSW DPI;  
Adi Patterson, ANSTO Lucas Heights;  
Nadia Levine, ANSTO, Lucas Heights;  
Gary Turner. President, Anglers Club;  
Allan McGuirk, Steven Walter Children's Cancer Foundation  
Deena Murray, Fishcare volunteer program coordinator, NSW DPI;  
Byron Hurst, resident;  
Lynda Harcher, Hazlehurst Art Gallery;  
Geoff Allan, Executive Director Fisheries NSW, NSW DPI.

### 9.3 Indicative costs for the retention of the pool/aquaria

#### Example Pool Size and Water Exchange Rate

Pool/Aquaria size 20m x 10m x 1.8m = 360,000L

Assume full water exchange three times per day = 1.08mgL (12.5L/sec x 24 hrs.)

#### Pump

A pump such as Southern Cross MFF48C-F pumps, approx. \$3,000 fitted, 35L/sec at 11m head consuming 5.5kWh = 132kWh per 24 hours. (Pump is oversized and could provide greater exchange or run on cycle) Pumps can last approx. 18 months at PSFI. Budget one pump per year.

#### Electricity

Electricity cost 23.86c/kWh @ 132kWh per day = \$31.50

Annual electricity cost 132kWh x 365days x 23.86c/kWh = \$11,495.74

(50% switch to off peak supply would reduce cost to estimate \$8,622 or run on a cycle to only allow 3 times exchange per day to reduce the cost from 24/7 running)

#### Weekly maintenance cleaning

3 hours @ \$50 hr. = \$150

\$1,500 cleaning gear, chemicals, small parts per year. As a salt water full exchange pool, filter and chlorine not included.

Plumbing emergency - should not occur with proper maintenance, costs unknown and not included.

#### Annual Costs

Pump	\$3,000
Electricity	\$11,496 (based on peak rate. If 50 per cent off peak reduced to \$8,622 approx.)
Labour	\$7,800
Cleaning chemicals/minor parts	\$1,500

Total Estimate p.a. \$23,796 per year. (With 50 per cent off peak electricity p.a. reduced to \$20,922)

A lower cost might also be possible by reducing pump running time/a smaller pump/extended pump life/labour \$ or hours/use of off peak power.

9.4 Line drawing of site



9.5 Proposed walkway around the perimeter of the site

