

Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday 25 August 2022
Time: 8:30am – 12:00pm
Chair: Dr Claire Streten, Australian Institute of Marine Science

Location: Timor Meeting Room, 1st Floor, Development House, 76 Esplanade, Darwin
Secretariat: Carmony Leso, Executive Officer – Committees (DEPWS)

Attendees: Alan Roe
Alaric Fisher
David Ciaravolo
Ian Niblock
Jamie Carle - *Teams*
Jared Sellwood - *Proxy*
Karen Gibb - *Teams*
Kirsty Howie - *Proxy, Teams*
Leighton Randell - *Teams*

Territory Natural Resource Management
Flora and Fauna Division
Amateur Fisherman's Association
Darwin Port
INPEX
Power and Water Corporation
Charles Darwin University
ECNT
Santos

Guests: Bethany Thornton
Harry Gibbs - *Teams*
Ian Baxter - *Teams*
Jane Munday
Kylie Welsh
Luke Kidd - *Teams*
Martin Budd - *Teams*
Nicole Conroy
Simon Flowers

DIPL
Royal Haskoning
Royal Haskoning
True North Strategic Communication
ECOS
Royal Haskoning
Royal Haskoning
DIPL
DIPL

Apologies Jim Smith
Sam Buchanan
Shar Molloy

Sea of Darwin
Paspaley
Environment Centre NT

| No. | Item | Action (e.g. Noting / Discussion / Decision) |
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| | Meeting opened | The Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee meeting commenced at 8:30am |
| 1 | Welcome attendance and apologies | Chairperson, Dr Claire Streten, opened the meeting and welcomed members. Apologies were noted from Jim Smith, Sam Buchanan and Shar Molloy. |
| 2 | Conflicts of Interest | No conflicts were declared. |
| 3 | Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct | The committee received a presentation on the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct Project. |

Simon Flowers, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL) reported that Middle Arm is about unlocking developable land within the Darwin Harbour Region targeting three key industries – low emissions gas processing, hydrogen production and minerals processing. Looking at an industrial ecology approach, there are three key elements of the advantages of having a co-located site available for these three industries – shared infrastructure, circular economy and common environmental protection framework. The Project is currently in the planning phase and it's expected at the end of the phase there will be an Infrastructure Masterplan, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Business Case. The referral has been lodged with the NT Environmental Protection Authority and the Federal Government. A large number of submissions have been received and the Terms of Reference is expected to be finalised in the coming weeks. DIPL is leading the engagement with communications with community and there is a strategy and a plan in place in regard to presentations in the coming months. The Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet (DCMC) are dealing directly with the proponents and liaising with DIPL around that.

Discussion: Claire asked if Simon will present to DHAC on the Strategic Environmental Assessment at the next meeting in November or early 2023. Nicole advised that early 2023 would be better as it will still be in draft form.

Claire asked how many proponents are talking about the project and wanting it to go forward. Simon advised that there are over a dozen proponents liaising with DCMC with majority of them in the hydrogen space.

Dr Martin Budd, Royal Haskoning, presented on the overview of studies relevant to marine project actions in the Middle Arm Project. Martin reported that in terms of the core focus, the key principle areas are coastal processes, marine environmental quality and marine ecosystems. The two end points that Martin and his team are working towards are the SEA and the Dredge Management Framework (DMF).

Costal Processes

An extensive suite of modelling exercises are being undertaken to understand how the harbour is performing now, and then how it will perform when dredging occurs. 34 geotechnical bore holes have been drilled and there are 34 vibrocores looking at geo chemical results.

A geo physical survey was undertaken last year which provided an idea of the material in the area. With any unusable material, an exercise has been undertaken to look at investigating a new dredge material ground (DMG) offshore, but also understanding the INPEX site in terms of using it for future maintenance dredging. A multi criteria analysis of the offshore zone has been undertaken, looking at distances from the port in terms of travel (greenhouse gases, fuel emissions etc.), and understanding the sites in terms of suitability for use. With the INPEX site, full bathymetry has been run to get an idea of what is there in terms of likely habitat which gives good scientific evidence of what a site looks like 10 years after placement.

Discussion: David noted that what is happening in the benthic environment might not tell the whole story e.g. there is a big band out at Nightcliff and Lee Point where there isn't much going on but that in itself creates habitat for the species such as tuna that don't want there to be much happening in the

environment as they will chase bait fish into there as there isn't anywhere for the bait fish to hide, and when you put structure there, there will be an absence of those species. Martin advised that that will be an area where they will need to engage and consult as it's a harbour level discussion in terms of capital and maintenance strategy.

Jamie asked if the DMF will feed into DIPL's Dredge Management Strategy. Martin reported that the DMF is separate to the Strategy but it will feed into it, and because what they are doing is a large part of the future needs for capital and maintenance dredging they try to think beyond the precinct and more at a harbour level in terms of data collection and assessment.

Marine Environmental Quality (MEQ)

34 vibrcore samples have been taken trying to get to 6m below bed. 15 locations were sampled for geochemical analysis and all locations were sampled for geotechnical analysis.

One of the most important exercises being undertaken is the water quality monitoring of the harbour. A suite of far-field and near-field modelling techniques are being used to have a look at how the water is flowing in the harbour and what it will mean if an intake or outfalls are put in the area around the precinct. A site has yet to be selected, there are a number of options, and the first run had 72 scenarios looking at multiple siting locations trying to work out where would be best. The main focus at the moment is on temperature and salinity, so heated brine water from an industrial facility and if that were to be put into the water at a certain spot how long will that take to disburse and dilute. That information is then provided to the ecological teams to understand the level on impact (if any). Technology and ways in which water can be controlled before it gets to the end of the pipe are also being considered. This involves looking at the industry itself to ensure what comes from industry before it gets to the pipe is the best it can be.

Marine Ecosystems

Ian Baxter, Royal Haskoning, reported that work has been undertaken on mapping benthic communities and habitats and fish. A literature review and gap analysis was undertaken, baseline data has been looked at and more has been collected (where necessary), eDNA sampling has been undertaken and a benthic field survey was conducted.

A search on the Marine Protected Species was conducted to determine what protected species could potentially be present in the area. There is high level of certainty of occurrence for most species (dolphins, dugong, turtles, etc.) and appropriate impact mitigation measures will be implemented. There is a low level of certainty of occurrence for saw fish and river sharks. It will be assumed that species may be present and impact mitigation measures will be designed based on this assumption.

Mangrove mapping has been looked at to determine potential areas that could be impacted and what mitigation and measures might be required to reduce the significance of that impact.

EcOz has assessed the importance of habitats for EPBC-listed migratory and threatened shorebirds.

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| | | <p>Navigation Risk</p> <p>Mark reported that a navigation impact assessment is being undertaken, it is currently in the preliminary phase. They are trying to understand the current users and sources of navigation in the area and considering what they will be adding to the harbour in terms of those options / scenarios being considered i.e. number of vessels, size of vessels, and frequency of vessels. The risks of increasing the vessel types and numbers have been assessed as majority of them will be carrying dangerous goods but the biggest risk is collision.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Jane advised that Martin and his team would like to come to Darwin to meet with DHAC out of session to present some of the preliminary findings and hold some workshops before the studies are finalised. Martin advised that they are happy to be flexible and hold various sessions or one on one meetings. Jane advised that she will liaise with individuals and Carmony out of session.</i></p> <p>Strategic Social Impact Assessment</p> <p>Jane reported that DIPL is leading the communications and community engagement and she is focusing on the social research. A scoping paper has been distributed and an expert panel has been set up (3 DHAC members are on that panel). Jane advised that the key things that she is doing for the remainder of the year are values mapping of the harbour and survey. Jane requested that members share the survey within their organisations. Jane advised that she will also be undertaking some dedicated interviews. Jane will also be holding some focus groups with business, environment, long term-residents and young people and requested assistance recruiting to it.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Alan suggested speaking with Jared Archibald at the Museum.</i></p> <p><i>Action: Carmony to circulate the Middle Arm presentation to DHAC members.</i></p> | |
| 4 | Minutes of the previous meeting | The minutes of the previous meeting on 22 June 2022 were circulated to the Committee members prior to the meeting for comments / edits. The minutes were accepted with no amendments. | |
| Actions arising from the previous meetings | | | |
| No. | Action | Action Officer | Status / Update |
| 1 | Email Lisa Bradley about how the EPA is engaging with the Dredge Management Strategy Project and would she be willing to talk to DHAC about how the EPA is planning to implement the strategy, how it will impact on their cumulative impact assessment and how they are going to engage with industry. | Carmony Lese | Ongoing Lisa will provide an update at the DHAC meeting in August. Refer to Action no. 9. |
| 2 | Liaise with Simon Flowers to lock in a date for the workshop between DIPL and DHAC on the draft Dredge Management Strategy | Carmony Lese | Pending |
| 3 | Carmony to organise for Santos to present to the DHAC meeting on the Carbon Capture and Storage Project. | Carmony Lese | Outstanding Will arrange for Santos to present at the November meeting or out of session. |

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| 4 | Follow up on a new Larrakia Development Corporation representative. | Claire Streten and Carmony Leso | In progress Larrakia representative is pending. |
| 5 | Report back to the committee about the expert working group to oversee the social, cultural and economic research for a Strategic Social Impact Assessment for the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct. | David Ciaravolo and Shar Molloy | Outstanding |
| 6 | Arrange an Out of Session meeting for DHAC in July to discuss the DHIRC | Carmony Leso | Complete |
| 7 | Organise an out of session workshop with DHAC and Alaric Fisher to discuss the Mangrove Retention Plan. | Carmony Leso | In progress Will be scheduled for October / November. |
| 8 | Organise an out of session workshop with DHAC and Alaric Fisher to discuss the Waste Discharge Strategy. | Carmony Leso | Pending |
| 9 | Organise an out of session presentation with Simon Flowers and Lisa Bradley to discuss the Dredge Management Strategy. | Carmony Leso | Pending |

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| 5 | | Matters arising |
| 5.1 | Darwin Harbour Integrated Reporting (DHIR) going forward | <p>A paper on the Governance of the DHIRC and the proposal and costing was tabled at the meeting for discussion. Claire reported that there won't be a report card for this year but a Water Quality Report will still be produced. Funding is still being sought for future report cards.</p> <p><i>Discussion: Karen suggested that when a decision is made about the next report card that a timeline be suggested to Simon.</i></p> <p><i>David advised that there needs to be better distribution of the DHIRC as not everyone who should have been aware of it, was aware of it or is aware of it. Claire commented that the distribution of the report card should be the responsibility of DHAC. Karen commented that with the previous DHIRC the communication was left to CDU's media team and it was a struggle to get help to get it going. Karen advised that it needs to be considered who will take carriage of the launch. Karen advised that CDU could potentially do it again if it's suitable. Alaric advised that the department's media team could assist with the launch of the next DHIRC. Karen noted that the Museum has appointed a really great science coordinator and it might be good to ask for someone in the team to connect with her early as she is good with education, outreach and visuals.</i></p> <p><i>Claire noted that in the DHIRC Governance paper it mentions an expert panel and the interaction of that group. The role of the panel is not clear and Shar suggested that the chair of the panel be a member of DHAC to ensure it stays the responsibility of DHAC. The committee agreed with this.</i></p> <p><i>Claire met with Minister Moss on 23 August. Claire reported to Minister Moss that DHAC is seeking funding to continue the DHIRC and suggested she approach Minister Lawler for some funding from the Middle Arm Project. The idea of a Cabinet Submission to seek funding was also discussed to which the</i></p> |

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| | | <p><i>Minister was supportive of. However, the amount is too small for a Cabinet Submission unless the amount covers monitoring for mission indicators in the DHIRC. Claire reported that the Minister wants industry buy in to the DHIRC and it not be just a NTG report card.</i></p> <p><i>David commented that what is being proposed with Middle Arm is going to be transformative to the Harbour and it won't be the same again. The precinct is going to change the use and values of the Harbour. There is a unique opportunity with DITT being the main proponent that it gets worked into the cost of the precinct to find the DHIRC on an ongoing basis. David noted that it would make a good mechanism to say if you are part of the precinct then there is a levy which included contributing to the DHIRC. It wouldn't be enough to fund it solely but there would also be industry and government buy in. Claire commented that it should be set up so that anyone that comes into the Harbour from now on needs to contribute to the DHIRC but the existing proponents need to be engaged in it to show there is value in it. And not just proponents from Middle Arm, but East Arm or anywhere else in the Harbour too.</i></p> <p><i>Claire suggested coming up with some funding models out of session for the Minister to consider. Claire asked Alaric what the process will be for obtaining funding from a Cabinet Submission. Alaric advised that the Minister will work with the CEO to agree on a short list of priorities that the Minister will support going up through the budget cabinet process. The key thing is the Minister supports the idea and puts it high on the list of priorities amongst the other potential things the departments need funding for. At the meeting in November, if the Minister has any questions about the DHIRC the committee can answer them.</i></p> <p>Action: <i>Claire to come up with some funding models for the DHIRC and circulate them to the committee out of session for their feedback.</i></p> |
| 6 | Other Business | |
| <p>6.1</p> | <p>Update from DEPWS on the department's priority projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mangrove Retention Plan; • Waste Discharge Strategy; and • Dredge Management Plan | <p>Alaric Fisher, Executive Director, Flora and Fauna Division, attended the DHAC meeting and provided an update about the department's priority projects.</p> <p>Mangrove Retention Plan</p> <p>Alaric reported that the project DEPWS most wants to advance is the Mangrove Retention Plan, specifically the consultation around the strategy. Alaric suggested holding an out of session workshop with DHAC in September or October. If not one is available then it can be part of the November DHAC meeting.</p> <p>Claire noted that the Minister wasn't fully across the DEPWS Priority Projects and suggested in the November meeting that Alaric provide an overview of them.</p> <p>Action: <i>All members to dedicate 2 hours in October for an OOS workshop on the Mangrove Retention Plan.</i></p> |
| <p>6.2</p> | <p>DHAC Strategy</p> | <p>Claire reported that after her meeting with Minister Moss, it was determined that it would be good if DHAC could wait until all these other strategies are developed and then undertake a gap analysis on them and see where the DH Strategy can fill in the gaps.</p> <p>Demonstrate support from stakeholders in relation to the DHIRC.</p> |

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| 6.3 | Darwin's Air Pollution – Savanna Burns | <p>Karen tabled some articles at the meeting about the Savanna Burning and their impact on Darwin's air and water quality.</p> <p><i>Discussion:</i> Karen asked the committee what they thought of the DHIRC Expert Panel saying to Simons Costanzo's team to look at the water quality monitoring. Karen reported that CSIRO has smoke monitoring and can look at sources so you can partition where it is coming from. There is also data on the ration on early to late burns.</p> <p>Kirsty noted that there may also be significant air quality impacts from the proposed Middle Arm Development and looking at air quality and human health in the harbour would be a good thing to investigate as part of the DHIRC.</p> <p>Claire noted that DHAC needs to be careful linking it to the carbon credit stuff as there is no direct relationship. The carbon credit burns are done early so they can't have fires past August.</p> <p>Alaric reported that there is good air quality data for Darwin because of the NTEPAs air quality monitoring stations but it depends how you interpret and report on the findings. Karen commented that the data should be shown in a graph with tourist numbers and other indicators such as hospital data etc. Karen noted that the relationship between parks and Police, Fire and Emergency Services in the catchment needs to be understood as well. Karen suggested inviting representatives from these areas to a meeting to discuss the data and understand the dynamics a little better. It was agreed to contain the discussion and keep it about water and air quality and not about the Savanna burning. Karen advised that she will meet with Tracy Ward from the Department of Health to discuss their data around water and air quality.</p> <p>Action: Karen to meet with Tracy Ward from the Department of Health to discuss their data around water and air quality.</p> |
| 7 | Correspondence | |
| 7.1 | Outgoing | |
| | Communique to the Minister | Noted. |
| 8 | Communique items | <p>The following items will be included in the Communique to the Minister:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle Arm Project • DHIRC and the suggestion for inclusion of a levy for users (current and future) • Mangrove Retention Plan out of session in October |
| 9 | Next meeting | The next meeting will be held on 10 November 2022 |
| | Meeting closed | The meeting concluded at 11:40am |

Actions arising from the meeting

| No. | Action | Action officer |
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| 1 | Circulate the Middle Arm presentation to DHAC members. | Carmony Leso |

| No. | Action | Action officer |
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| 2 | Come up with some funding models for the DHIRC and circulate them to the committee out of session for their feedback. | Claire Streten |
| 3 | Dedicate 2 hours in October for an OOS workshop on the Mangrove Retention Plan. | All members |
| 4 | Meet with Tracy Ward from the Department of Health to discuss their data around water and air quality. | Karen Gibb |