

29 November 2024

The Hon Chris Minns MP
Premier of New South Wales

CC:

The Hon Daniel Mookhey MLC, Treasurer
The Hon Paul Scully MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
The Hon Rose Jackson MLC, Minister for Housing
The Hon Jo Haylen MP, Minister for Transport
The Hon Penny Sharpe MLC, Minister for the Environment; Heritage
The Hon John Graham MLC, Minister for Roads

Dear Premier

Save Sydney Harbour's last working port

Sydney Harbour is the envy of Australia and the world – a breathtaking testament to our city's character and history. Central to this is its rich heritage as a working harbour, fuelling both Sydney's and the nation's growth and prosperity for centuries. Now, this legacy is under threat.

We understand the NSW Government-commissioned Michael Schur review into the future of Glebe Island includes an option to abolish vital ship access and port facilities in favour of housing. Should this recommendation be accepted by the Government it will have severe and permanent consequences that would forever change the nature and purpose of this world-famous Harbour.

This Port supplies 40 per cent of the cement and 100 per cent of the gypsum – a critical ingredient for plasterboard manufacturing – needed for Sydney's construction. Without it, building and housing costs will increase. This Port also supplies much of Sydney's sugar needs, with the closure leading to higher prices for consumers at the checkout. In a time of housing and cost of living crises, Sydney cannot afford this.

The environmental and social impact is also significant. Shutting down Glebe Island will add thousands of extra trucks to Sydney's already choked roads. The NSW Government itself has acknowledged this "would see an estimated 226,000 additional truck movements per year, travelling an additional 18.5 million kilometres per year, leading to increases in commodity costs, traffic congestion, carbon emissions [and] infrastructure costs," in a public submission by the Port Authority of NSW. This will also increase road safety issues and maintenance costs, all borne by Sydney residents.

Glebe Island also serves as a vital hub for the city's maritime economy. We are concerned that repurposing the Port for housing only will compromise marine and industrial operations in Sydney Harbour, jeopardising billions of dollars in economic contributions and thousands of jobs in NSW.

Beyond economics and the environment, this decision would permanently erase a vital part of Sydney's industrial heritage that has coexisted with urban life. It will result in a millionaires' enclave, detracting from Sydney Harbour's much celebrated amenity and our city's soul.

As a Coalition, we urge the Minns Government not to make a rushed decision and to carefully weigh up the implications of completely removing working port facilities at Glebe Island as it considers the Schur Review. We also see the clear need and value of the Government convening a working harbour roundtable in the new year so the views and concerns of stakeholders can be properly heard and addressed.

Glebe Island Port's future is hugely significant for Sydney and for our State as a whole and should be treated as such. We would welcome the opportunity to work with you to find a solution that preserves Sydney's critical industrial capability while also supporting greater housing density, like many other world-class cities globally.

Yours Sincerely



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