

A satellite map of Sydney Harbour, Australia, showing the city's coastline, water, and surrounding land. The map is used as a background for the title text.

Seeking a permanent home for Sydney Heritage Fleet

A six decade
Sydney Harbour odyssey

A review by Alan Edenborough

© 2007 Google™

Eye alt 10.92 km

An aerial photograph of a fleet of ships on a body of water. The largest ship is a three-masted sailing ship with white sails, positioned on the right. To its left are several smaller motor vessels, including a white boat with a green roof and a white boat with a green roof. Further left is a white sailboat. In the background, there are more small boats and a larger motor vessel. The water is a deep blue-green color.

Let's set the scene . . .

SHF operational fleet – Steam, Sail & Motor

Lady Hopetoun (1902), *Boomerang* (1903), *Protex* (1908), *Harman* (1943),
Berrima (1955), *Waratah* (1902) and our oldest: *Barque James Craig* (1874)

Small Craft Collection

Wharf 7, Pymont



Small Craft Collection



Records & Research Centre



SHF docks and workshops – Rozelle Bay

Current restoration projects: *John Oxley* and *Kanangra*



April 2022

The 2022 'Swap' Project



John Oxley

Kanangra

April 2022 – John Oxley refloated, Kanangra positioned on Sea Heritage Dock

Volunteers all



A satellite map of Sydney Harbour, Australia, showing the city's coastline, waterways, and surrounding land. The harbour is a large body of water with several smaller inlets and bays. The city of Sydney is visible on the western side, with its dense urban area and the Sydney Opera House. The surrounding land is a mix of urban development and natural vegetation. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is overlaid on the map, containing white text.

Our story
is about a
home for the Fleet
in Sydney Harbour

In the beginning ...



January 1966
Lady Hopetoun
acquired

In the beginning ...

Temporary berth
Lane Cove River



Steam Tug *Waratah* – Nearing the end of her working life (1960s)

Acquired by the Fleet in 1968

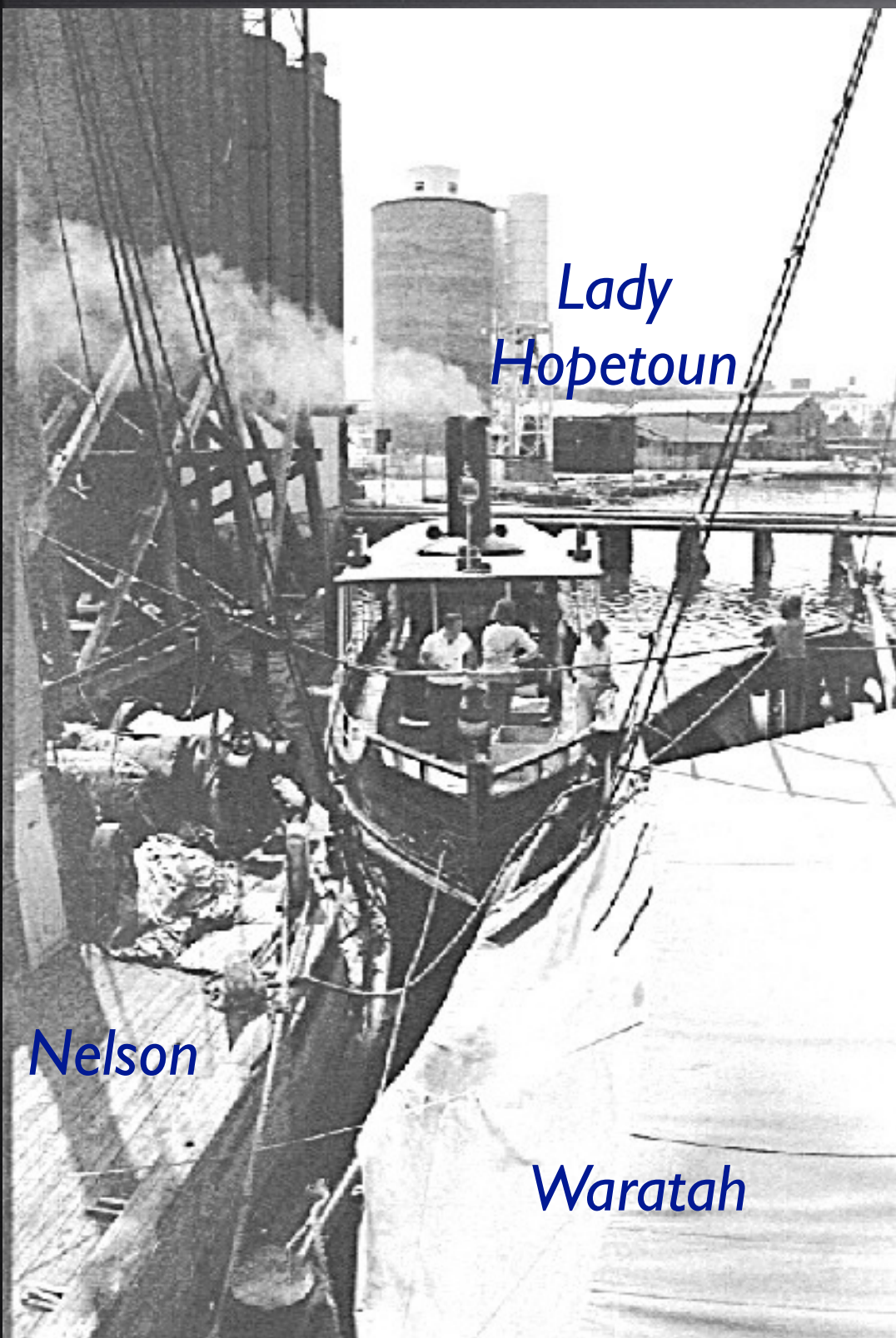
Newcastle



Our first 'home' was
far from salubrious

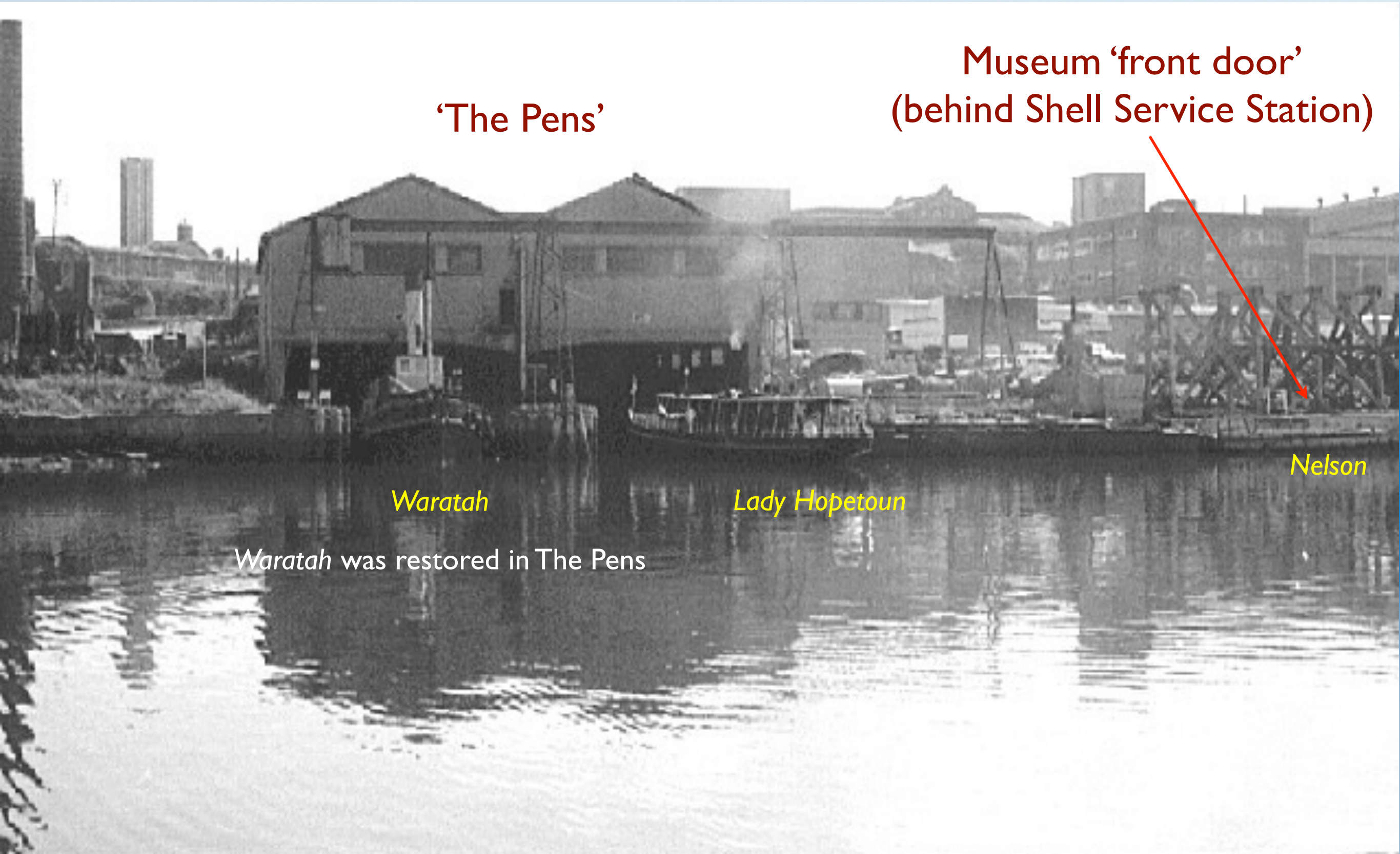


Berthing was a challenge



A step up ... 'The Pens'

Bank Street base, Pyrmont - early 1970s



'The Pens'

Museum 'front door'
(behind Shell Service Station)

Waratah

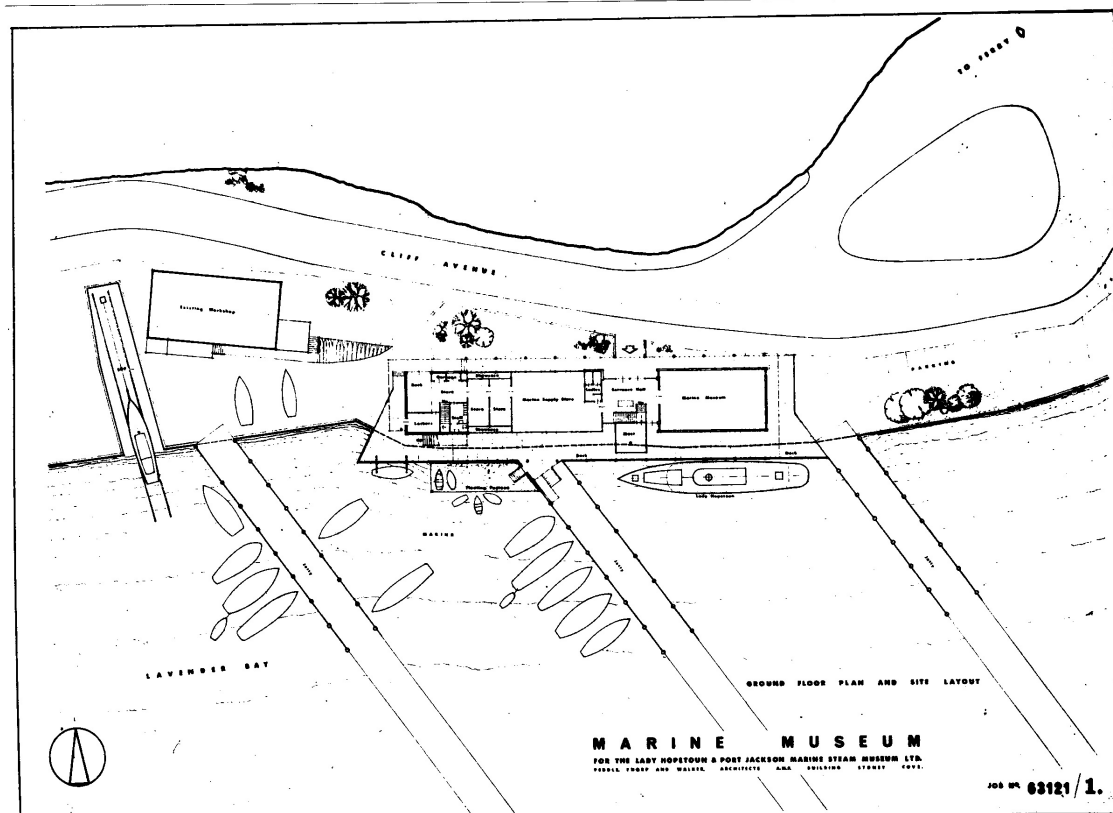
Lady Hopetoun

Nelson

Waratah was restored in The Pens

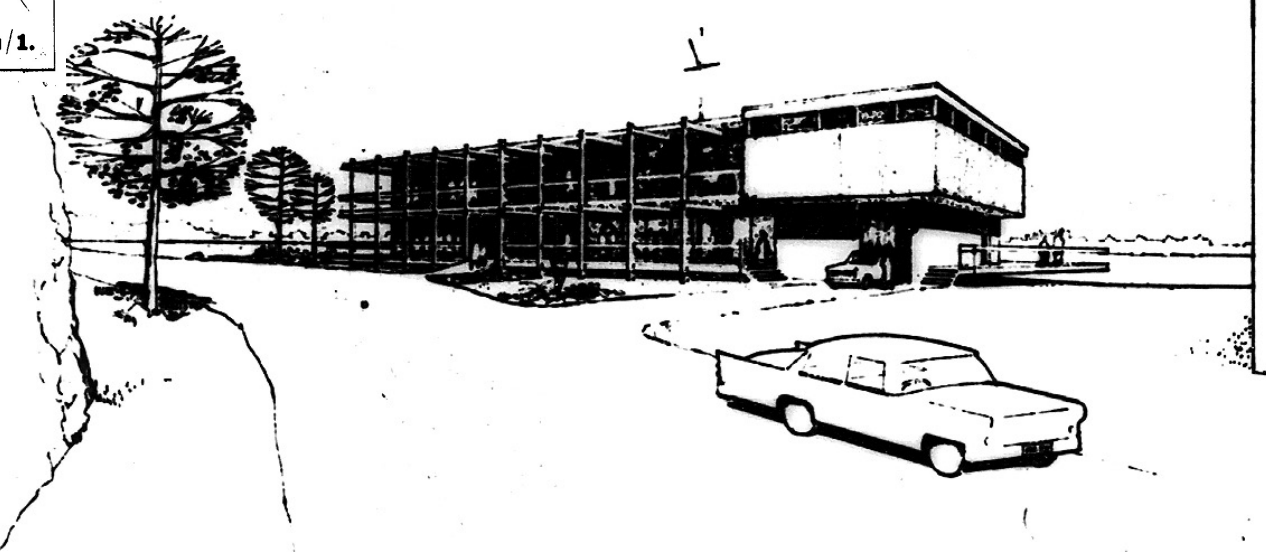
First permanent site proposal: Lavender Bay





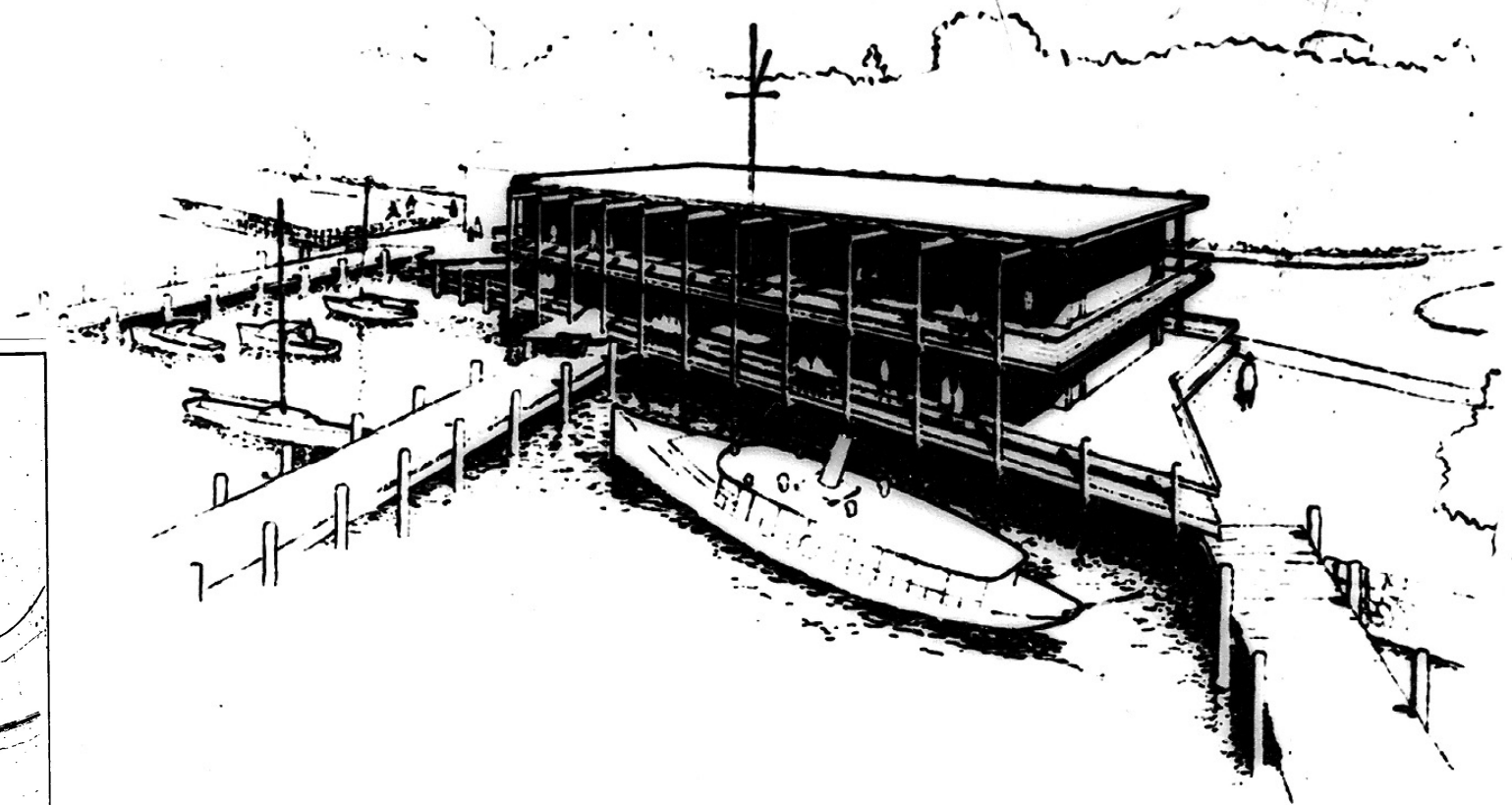
Refused by
Maritime Services Board

VIEW FROM CLIFF AVE. APPROACH.



M A R I N E M U S E U M
FOR THE LADY HOPETOUN & PORT JACKSON MARINE STEAM MUSEUM LTD.
PEBBLE, THOMP AND WALKER, ARCHITECTS A.M.A. BUILDING SYDNEY COVE.

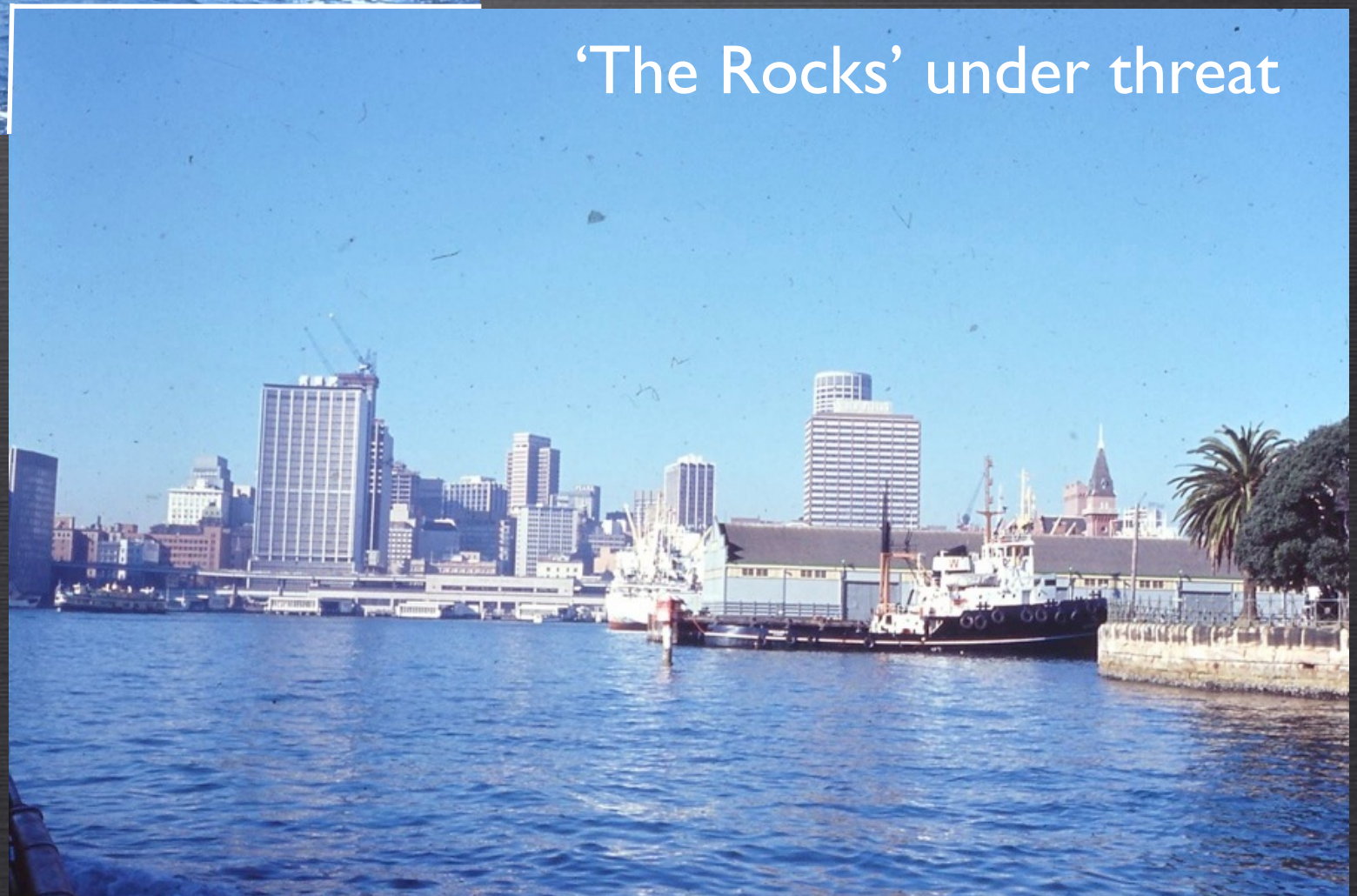
JOB NO. 63121/3.



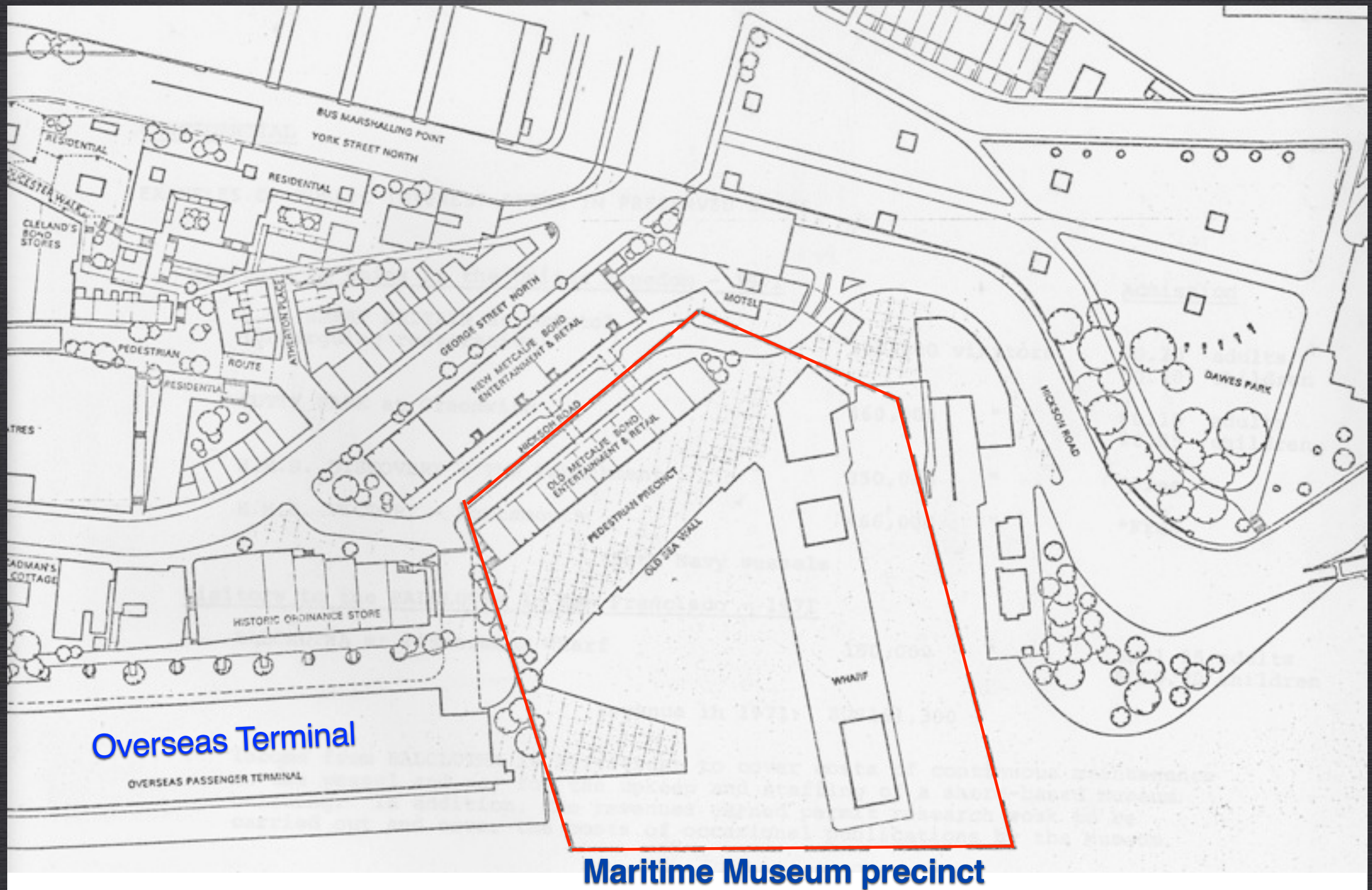
The next attempt



Campbells Cove - 1971



'The Rocks' under threat



Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority (SCRA)
plan for Campbells Cove

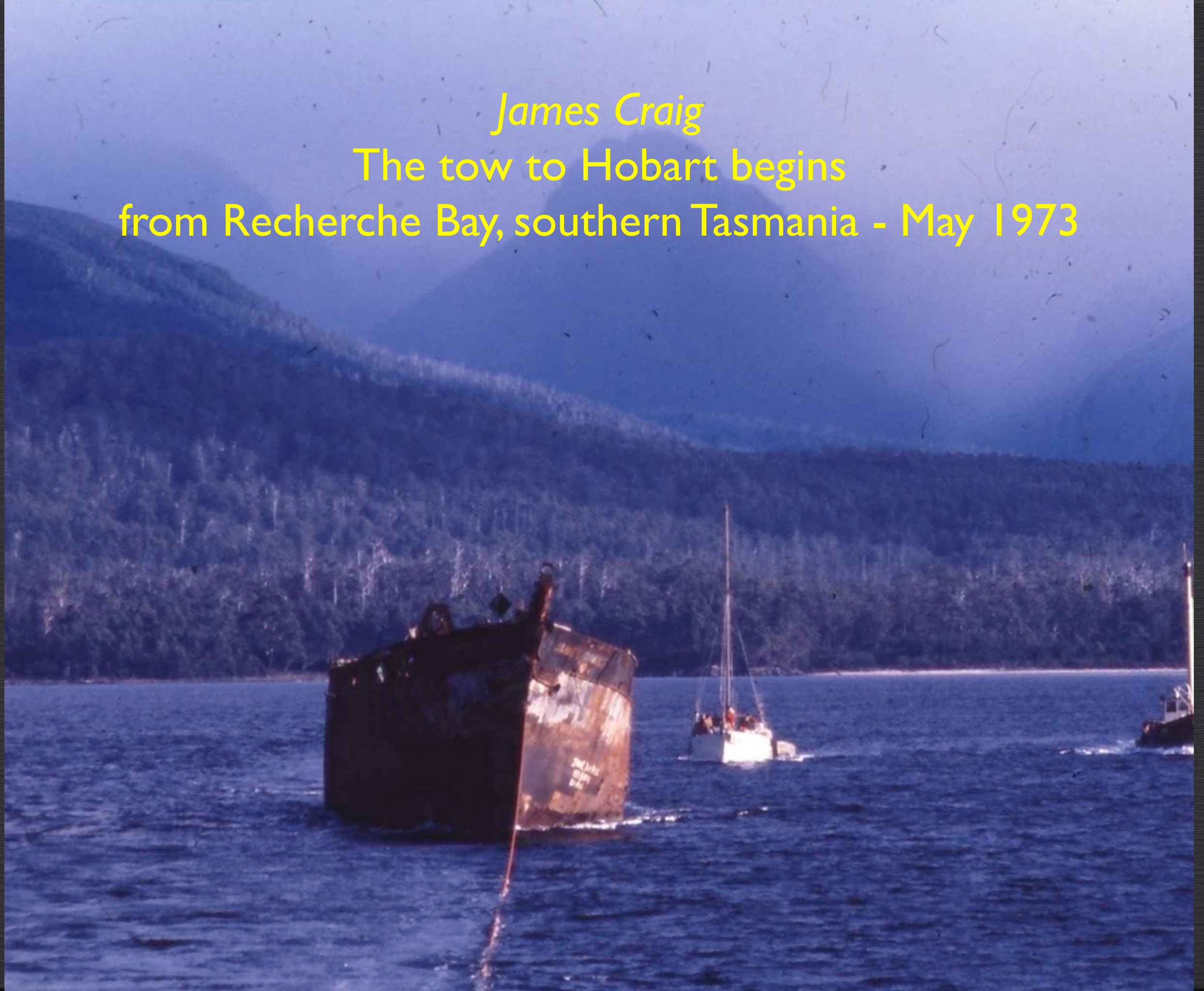
SCRA was supportive of a move
to Campbells Cove,
but there was a condition ...

‘Just one tall ship’
for Campbells Cove

We found a ship . . .

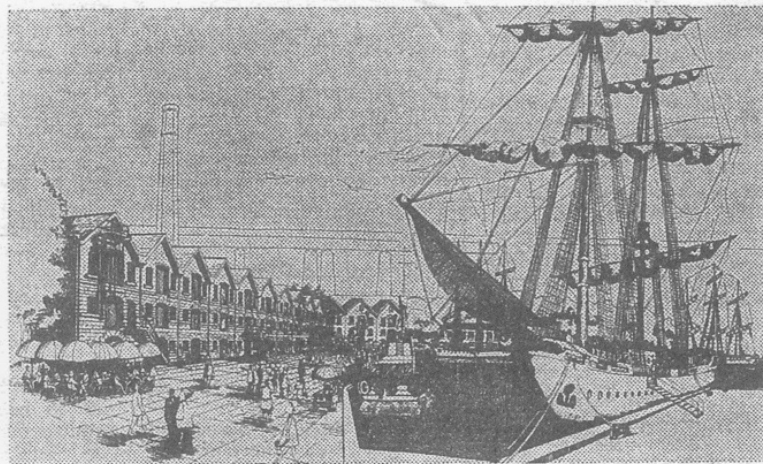


James Craig
The tow to Hobart begins
from Recherche Bay, southern Tasmania - May 1973



A month after the salvage ...

SMH 14-6-73



The proposed floating museum, with the James Craig at left and the Metcalfe Bond in the background.

The Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority will proceed with plans for a floating marine museum at Campbell's Cove in Circular Quay, despite opposition from the Maritime Services Board.

The museum, a long-term proposal, will provide berths for vessels owned by the Lady Hopetoun and Port Jackson Maritime Museum.

These include the 98-year-old barque James Craig, now being refitted in Tasmania and eventually to be towed to Sydney.

Intended as a focal point of the museum, the

Cove plan for marine museum

180-ton vessel was beached for 30 years in Recherche Bay, southern Tasmania.

The floating museum will complement an "on-shore" maritime museum which the Federal Government may establish in the Customs House at Circular Quay.

On Tuesday the Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, said the Federal Government was negotiating for a suitable site in the Rocks area for a new Customs House.

The Minister for Urban and Regional Development, Mr Uren, said later that he believed the present Customs House would be used as a museum.

This is in line with a proposal originally put forward by Mr Gorton, when he was Prime Minister, that the Customs House become a maritime museum.

A spokesman for the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority said yesterday that Campbell's Cove was an ideal location for a floating museum.

Although, technically,

the Maritime Services Board had jurisdiction over the cove, the area was included in the authority's territory, the spokesman said.

"I do not think the board will try to prevent us from using the cove," he said.

"Ours is a long-term proposal but we are determined to have a floating maritime museum as part of the redevelopment scheme."

The Minister for Transport, Mr Morris, has expressed support for the scheme, and said it had the backing of the State Government.

But a Maritime Services Board spokesman said he hoped the authority would "not cause any embarrassment" by seeking to use Campbell's Cove for a floating museum.

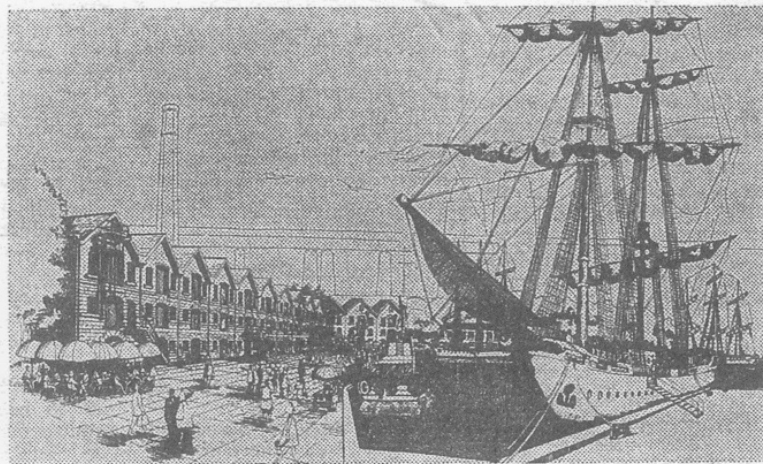
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"We will be embarrassed if the authority pushes too hard for this scheme."

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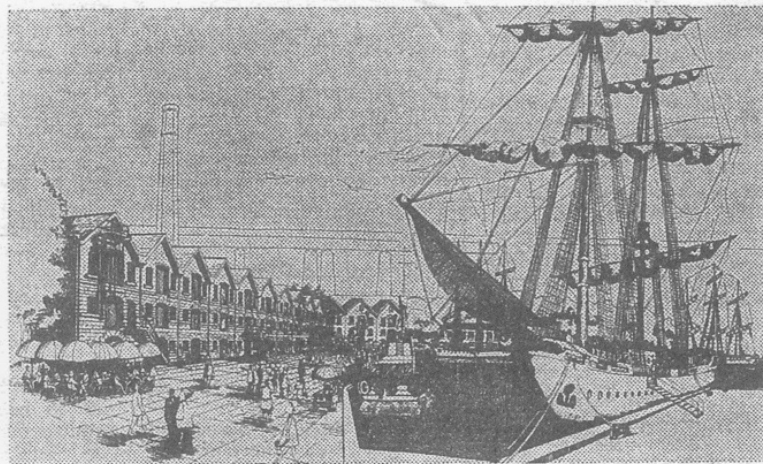
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"A spokesman for SCRA said: 'I do not think the [Maritime Services] board will try to prevent us from using the cove'."

But they did!

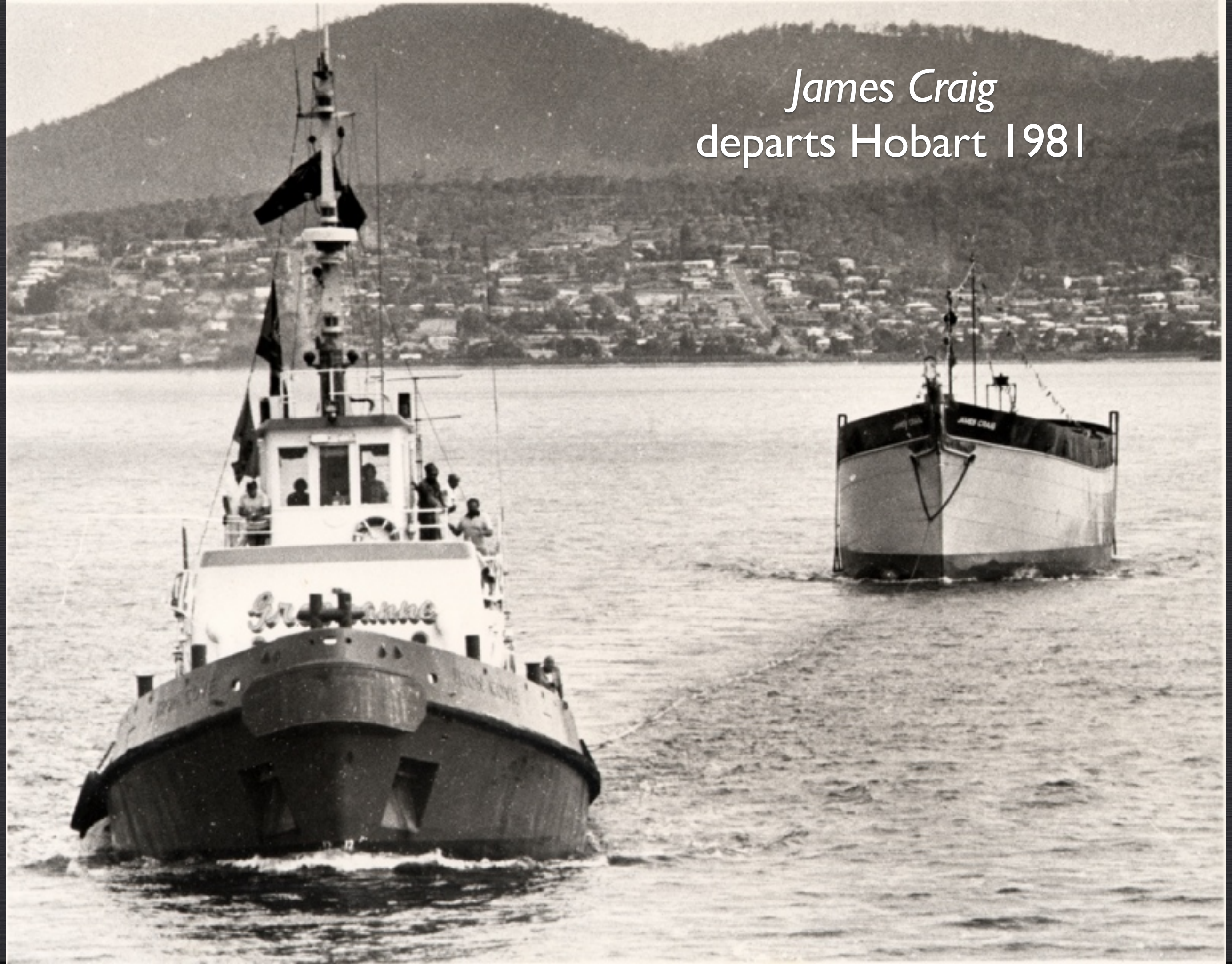
And that's another story

A shore-based home ...
for a while – 1974



Cadmans Cottage, Circular Quay

James Craig
departs Hobart 1981



18 January 1981



James Craig finally arrives in Sydney
with berth available at Birkenhead Point

The next attempt ...

Birkenhead Point 1980 -1988

Berths for ships and shore-based museum
plus retail sales

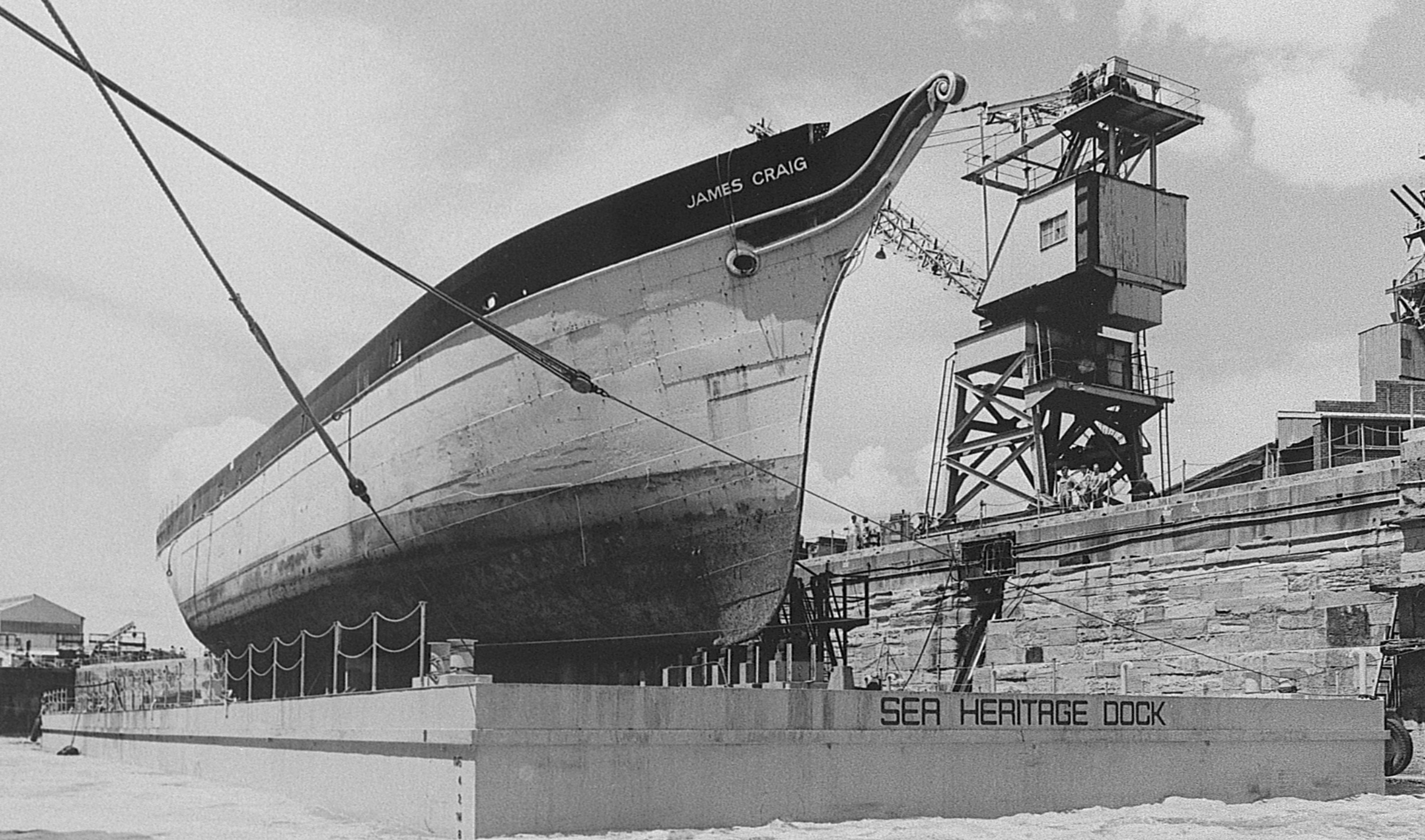
Winner 1981-82 Museum of the Year awards





Removing cement from hull

Not a happy
relationship



1985: Sea Heritage Dock completed
James Craig on dock and moved to Rozelle Bay

1987: Museum signs lease for Cockle Bay site – ‘Sydney Seaport’

1988: Vessels move to Cockle Bay - office aboard ferry *Kanangra*



Cockle Bay – not the place for ship restoration

James Craig moved back to Rozelle Bay

1994: Fleet follows with offices at Mansfield Street, Rozelle

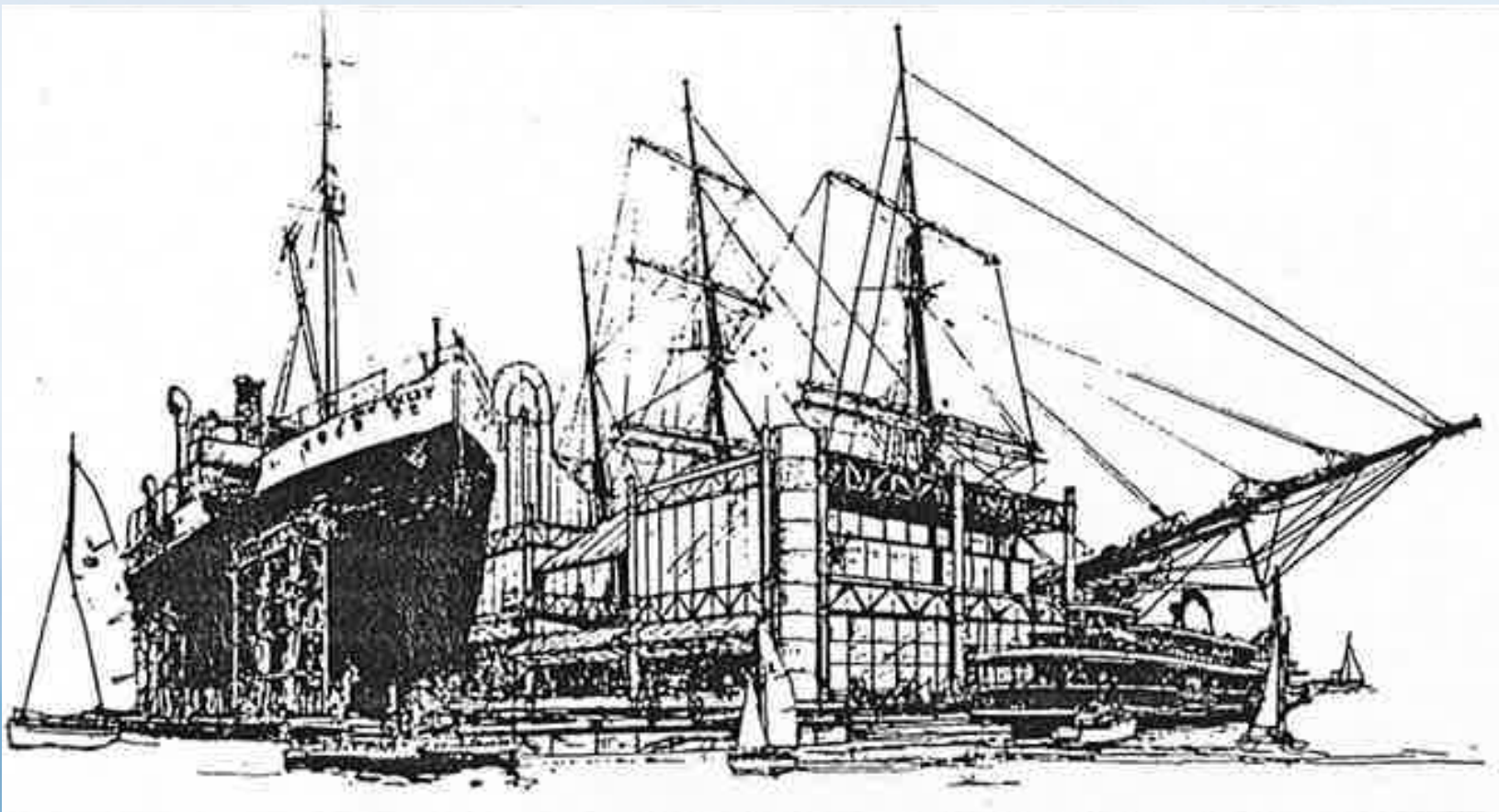


But let's go back to the 1980s ...

The Australian National Maritime Museum was created and began collecting and planning its facilities ...

Sydney Maritime Museum expected to be a partner

Sydney Seaport concept, Darling Harbour



How Nifty and Bob missed the Bicentenary boat

FEDERAL CABINET is expected to announce within the next two weeks, a decision to proceed with the construction of the \$40-to-\$50-million "bi-centenary" Australian National Maritime Museum at Sydney's Darling Harbor.

The museum, planned by Prime Minister Hawke and NSW Premier Michael Hogan in the most recent federal and NSW elections, is almost certainly not to be built in Darling Harbor.

Although the federal government is known to be under strong pressure from NSW, it is expected to resist attempts to rush ahead with plans not properly thought out. Although the museum was first seriously mooted in 1981 when its cost was put at \$37 million, no committees have been formed

and only very basic planning has gone ahead. The concept is still largely in the hands of enthusiastic volunteers.

According to federal Arts minister Barry Cohen, the museum is unlikely to be completed before 1990 or 1991. "It is entirely up to Cabinet," he said, "but at this stage all I can say is that if we do decide to go ahead we will have a museum well on the way to completion by 1988. It certainly will not be fully constructed by then. We have something of a problem for people to view," Cohen said. "The federal government has no intention of spending anything on it." Cohen said the museum was likely to be built in three stages. The first stage, he said, was likely to be a small building, which was likely to be completed by 1988. "I am not expressing any opinion on the construction but I'd say we are looking at a completion date in about five years. One of the things we are concerned about is that everything will happen with a big bang in 1988 and then we will be left with a big hangover. I mean, what do you do for an encore?"

It is understood that the museum will incorporate the existing vessels and



Impression of Sydney Seaport: living history

artefacts of the Sydney Maritime Museum, which when it moves to the Darling Harbor site, is expected to change its name to Sydney Seaport. A feasibility study for Sydney Seaport, recently completed by architects, planners and building economists Jackson Teece Chesterman Willis and Partners in association with Sydney design consultant John Wood, shows a grand and imposing yet functional arrangement for the site.

The Sydney Seaport scheme envisages a very large glass-walled restoration and exhibition hall flanked by the towering masts of the barque James Craig on the one hand and a floating pontoon dock on the other. The dock will enable on-going restoration work to be inspected by museum visitors.

According to the report, Sydney Seaport is intended to be the "active" section of the national maritime museum with visitors being allowed access

in the report, a passport guide is to be given to visitors informing them of the facilities, the exhibitions and the ships they may board.

Guides are to lead the passports through the visitor's progress through the museum. Visitors are to be met with an audio visual introduction to the historic ships explaining how they are maintained and operated. The report then calls for an escalator ride to the first floor where there will be exhibitions on each of the vessels showing their history and significance as well as their salvage and restoration.

The two exhibition areas are to be divided into "the age of sail" and "the age of steam." Visitors will descend to the ground level by viewing ramps over the workshops. These viewing ramps lead to a mezzanine balcony and a smaller exhibition area meant to accommodate temporary displays. The balcony will allow visitors to overlook the entire length of the workshop where skilled staff and volunteers will be seen working on ship repairs. □

— Bruce Stannard

"It is understood the [Australian National Maritime Museum] will incorporate the existing vessels and artefacts of the Sydney Maritime Museum."

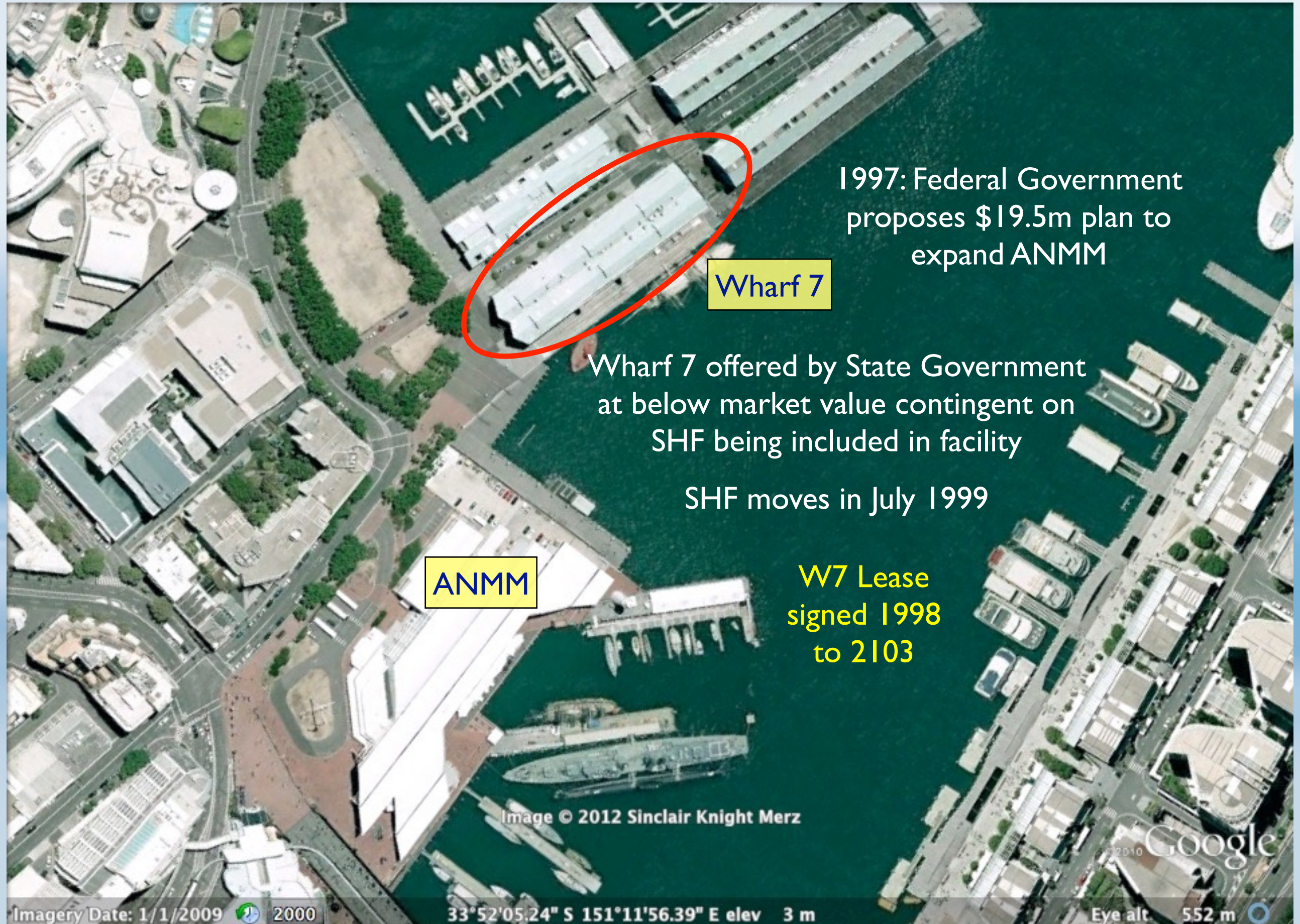
As noted in a 1988 Sydney Maritime Museum document:

“Both State and Federal Governments encouraged S.M.M in its belief that there should be a melding of both institutions [S.M.M & ANMM] ...

“But this was not to be... It became clear [1987], that instead of a combined role, each should proceed independently, but complementing each other and co-operating rather than seeking to compete.

Clearly, two Museums into one won't go.”

Wharf 7 & SHF



1997: Federal Government
proposes \$19.5m plan to
expand ANMM

Wharf 7

Wharf 7 offered by State Government
at below market value contingent on
SHF being included in facility

SHF moves in July 1999

ANMM

W7 Lease
signed 1998
to 2103

Image © 2012 Sinclair Knight Merz

Google

Imagery Date: 1/1/2009 2000

33°52'05.24" S 151°11'56.39" E elev 3 m

Eye alt 552 m

On to Goat Island . . .



© 2007 Europa Technologies

© 2006 Google™

33°51'07.71" S 151°11'48.63" E elev 0 m

Streaming ||||| 100%

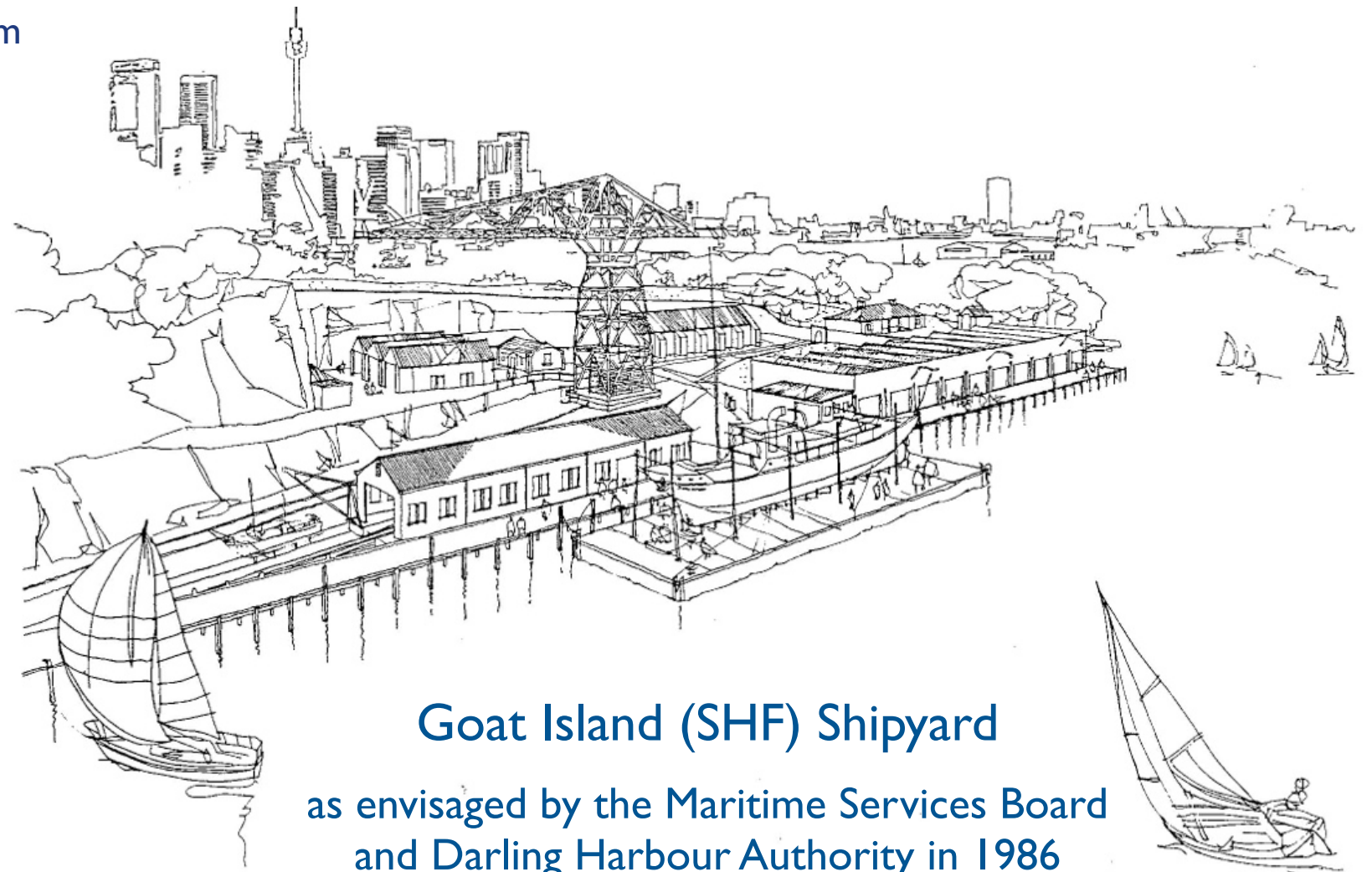
Eye alt 469 m

1986 study: Potential re-use of Goat Is Shipyard by SMM

“The shipyard facilities will make an ideal centre for the Museum, providing slipways, crange, wharf frontage and workshop/display space.

“As a working environment the Museum will become a key component in the emerging Goat Island Historic Park, in terms of both conservation/activities and visitor attraction.

“It is clear . . . that with their current expertise, the Sydney Maritime Museum will have a key part to play, not only in their own precinct, but as part of an integrated whole.”



Excerpts from 1986 study by Schwager/Brooks and Partners Pty Ltd, Architects and Heritage Consultants, carried out for The Darling Harbour Authority on the potential re-use of Goat Island Shipyard by Sydney Maritime Museum (now trading as Sydney Heritage Fleet)

Goat Island (SHF) Shipyard
as envisaged by the Maritime Services Board
and Darling Harbour Authority in 1986

GOAT ISLAND
SHIPYARD SKETCH

SYDNEY MARITIME MUSEUM
Potential Re-Use Of Goat Island Shipyard
For The Darling Harbour Authority
Schwager/Brooks and Partners Pty Ltd

Sydney Maritime Museum & Goat Island - 1980s

Following the recommendations of the MSB and Darling Harbour Authority

- NSW Government offered Goat Island to Sydney Maritime Museum

Sydney Maritime Museum & Goat Island - 1980s

The Government's offer was put to the membership of the Museum ...

THEY TURNED IT DOWN!

1991: Opening of the ANMM at Darling Harbour

1994: S.M.M signs MOU with ANMM: S.M.M will trade as 'Sydney Heritage Fleet'



And so the search went on . . .

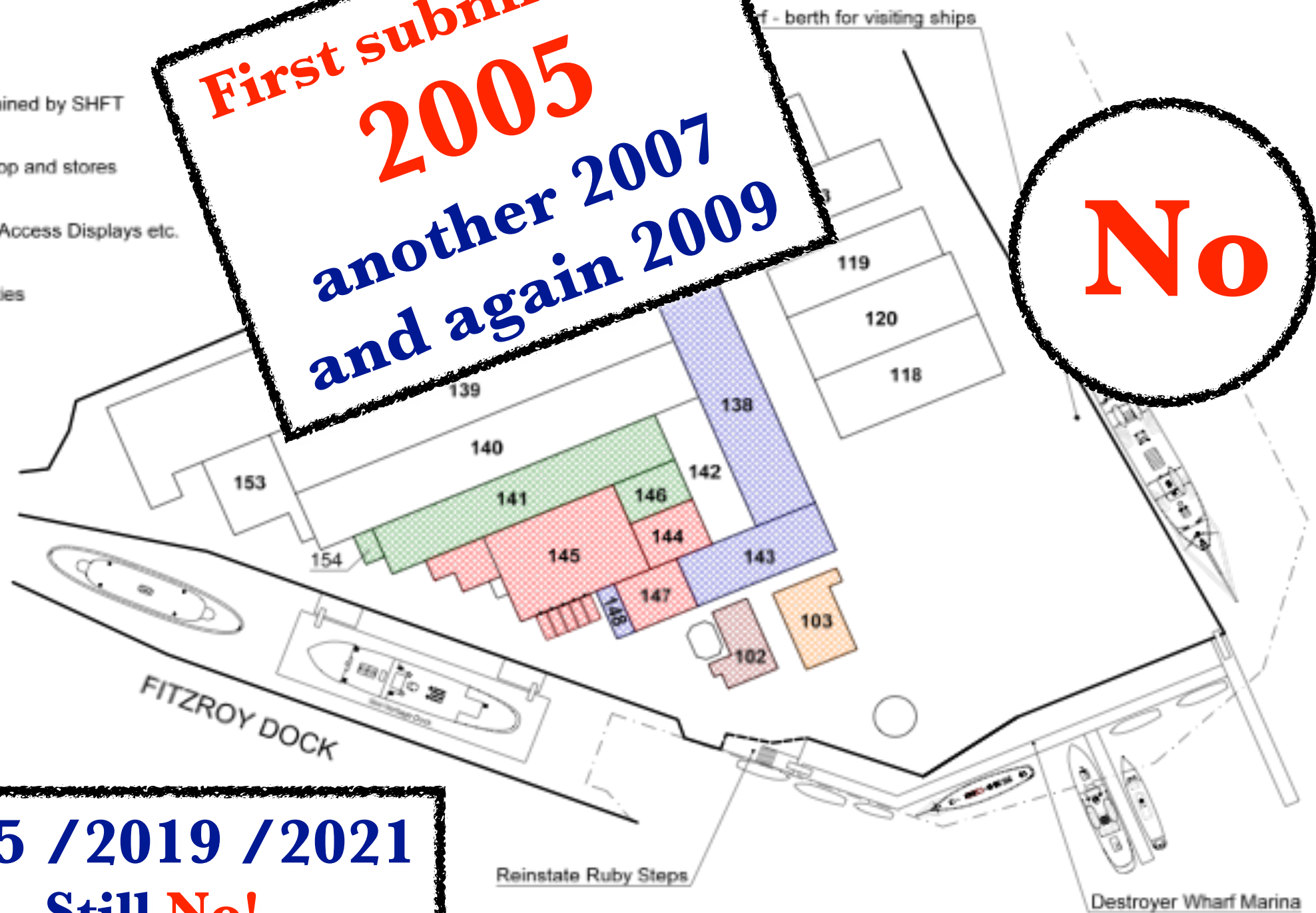
Cockatoo Island

First submission
2005
another 2007
and again 2009

No

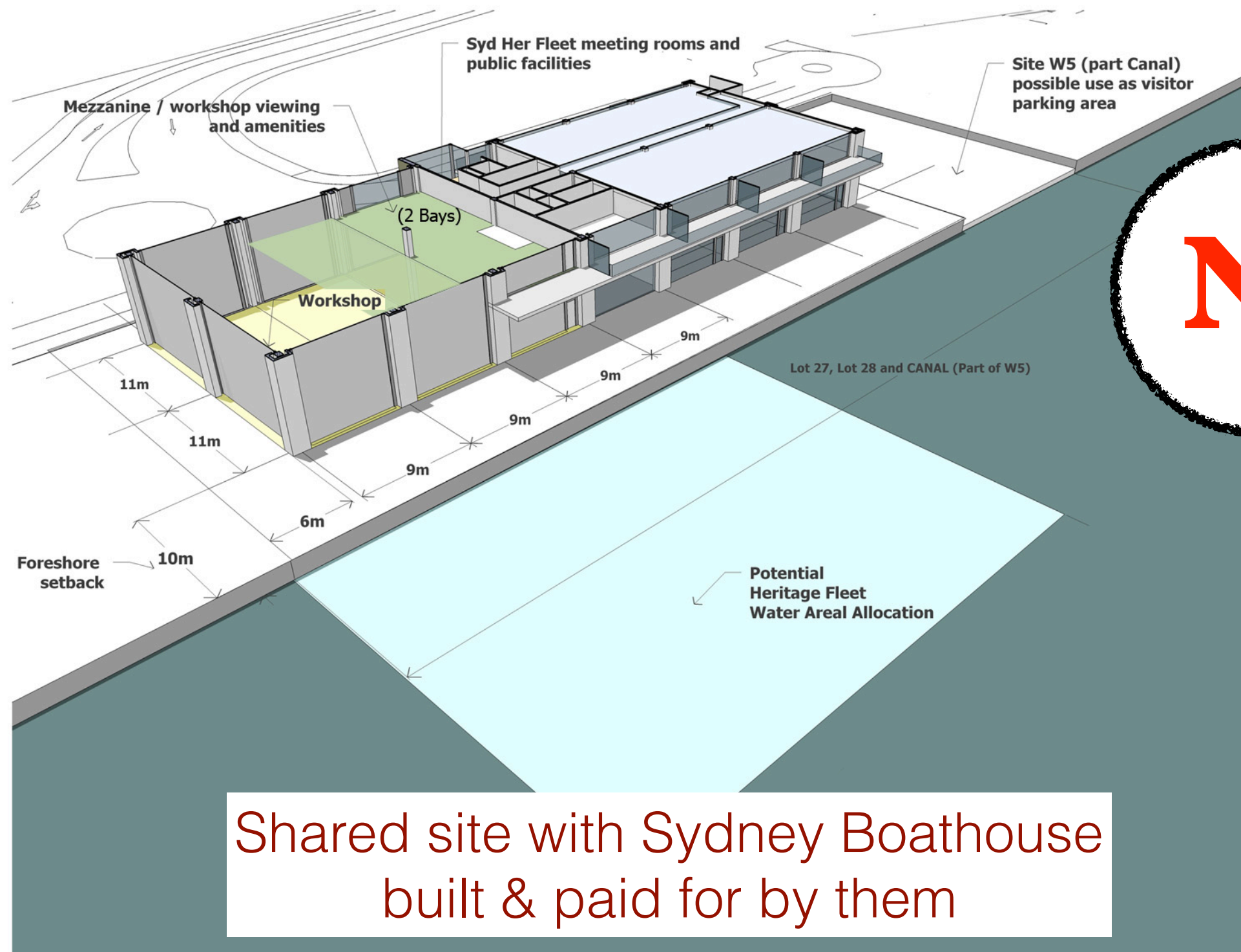
KEY:

-  Buildings retained by SHFT
-  SHF Workshop and stores
-  SHF Public Access Displays etc.
-  SHF Amenities
-  SHF Offices



2015 / 2019 / 2021
Still No!

Rozelle Bay – 2006-2008



Micheal Fountain Architects Pty. Ltd.

Sydney Heritage Fleet
Concept Plan: 28 / 02 / 08

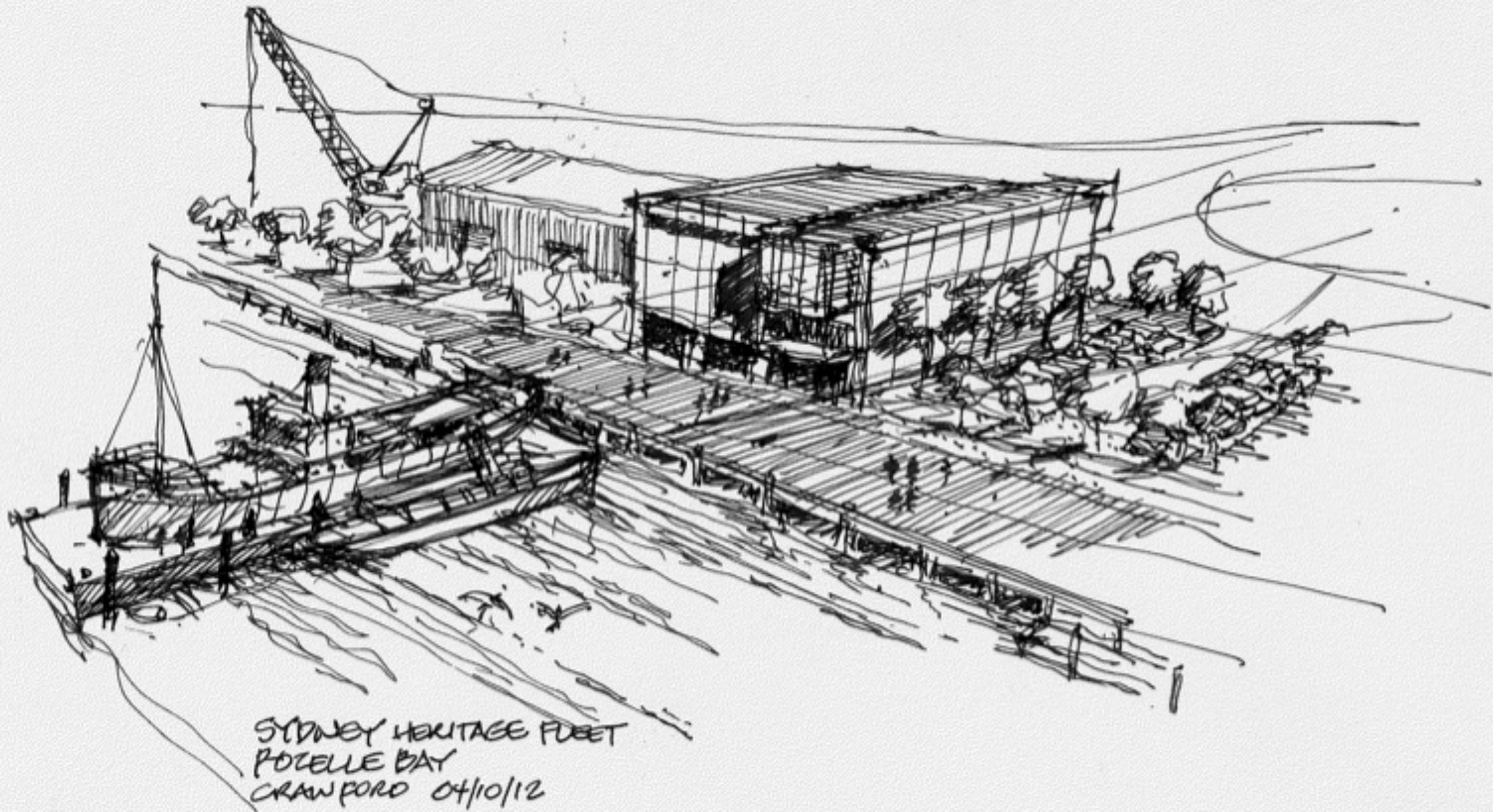
CONFIDENTIAL

WORK IN PROGRESS
Issued: For Discussion

Schematic Plan 2 - Upper Floor Plan

Rozelle Bay – 2012

No



Back to Goat Island

**Fleet
plans
applauded
then
blocked**

**Submissions
2005,
2007-2009,
2014**

SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET Harbour Heritage

MARCH 2008

Sydney Heritage Fleet proposes a Maritime Heritage Centre for Goat Island Shipyard with Rozelle Bay land base

The Concept:
To transform the Goat Island Shipyard into a . . .
**LIVING
WORKING
ACTIVITY**



Some vessels of the Sydney Heritage Fleet in Sydney Harbour

A MARITIME HERITAGE CENTRE IN THE



1: **Create a significant site** for maritime heritage in NSW.

2: Ensure our maritime heritage is **accessible to the public** in an ideal and authentic setting.

3: Provide school individuals and interest groups **educational and transfer opportunities** based around related tours, learning activities and specialist maritime skills training.

4: Value and build on maritime heritage **volunteering**.

5: Build upon Sydney Heritage Fleet's demonstrated track record of **quality conservation**.

6: **of skills** necessary to conserve, display and restore the Fleet's fine heritage assets.

8: Become a **must-see tourist destination** in Sydney Harbour.

SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET: Contact - Alan Edenborough 0403 892 701 Email: alan@edenboroughclark.com

SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET GOAT ISLAND SHIPYARD

The Shipyard is tenanted by Sydney Ship Repair & Engineering Pty Ltd (SSRE). SSRE has 30 years to run on its lease.

- **SSRE wishes to assign its lease to the Sydney Heritage Fleet** as a result of increasing competition and costs.
- National Parks & Wildlife Service and the Goat Island Reference Group are in broad agreement.

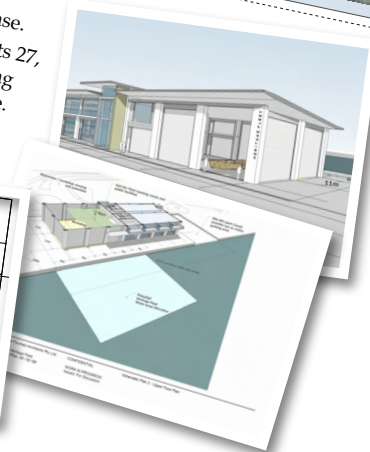
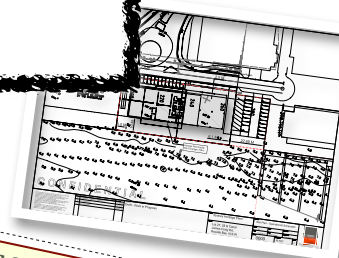
• The supply funding
• There is the 2006 rail heritage funding of \$20m over 5 years with \$14m for the Rail Heritage Centre.

LEFT: Proposed lease area by the Maritime Heritage Centre in the Goat Island Shipyard.

RIGHT: The SHF would provide guided tours on its own vessels to Goat Island from Darling Harbour, in conjunction with NPWS. The Rozelle Bay land base would be used as the Shipyard transport base.



Shipyard needs a land base. NSW Maritime leasing Lots 27, developing the site on a long term Goat Island Shipyard lease. Management whereby a



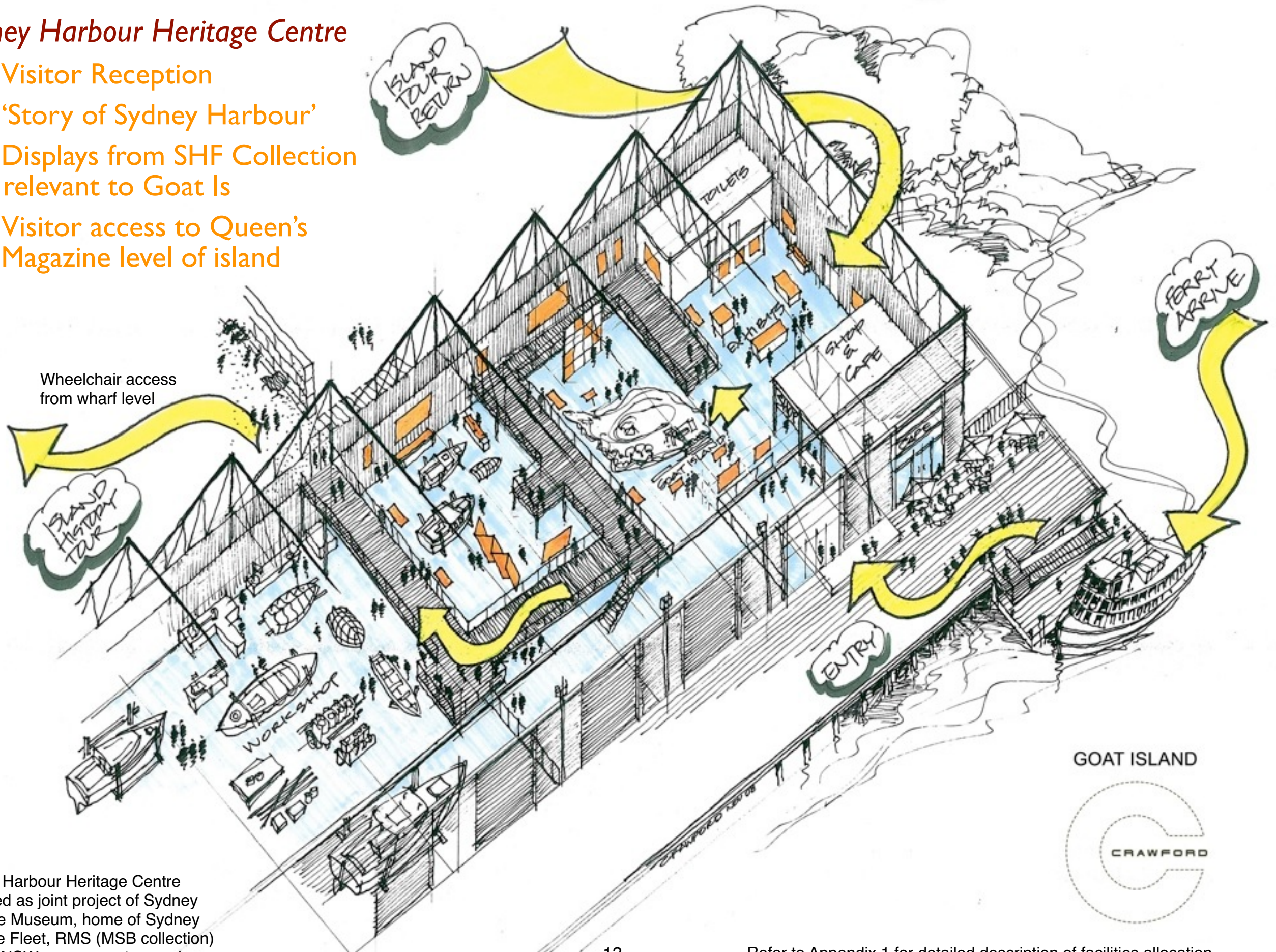
THE NEXT STEP - A GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

The NSW Government is promoting the establishment of a Maritime Heritage Centre in the Goat Island Shipyard by the Sydney Heritage Fleet. The Government is supporting the Sydney Heritage Fleet in securing the establishment funding of \$5million.

Contact - Alan Edenborough 0403 892 701 Email: alan@edenboroughclark.com

Sydney Harbour Heritage Centre

- Visitor Reception
- 'Story of Sydney Harbour'
- Displays from SHF Collection relevant to Goat Is
- Visitor access to Queen's Magazine level of island



Sydney Harbour Heritage Centre proposed as joint project of Sydney Maritime Museum, home of Sydney Heritage Fleet, RMS (MSB collection) & other NSW government agencies

2009: Goat Island – Keating-led recommendations accepted by NSW Government & Conservation Management Plan shelved



2010: Goat Island

Goat Island Reference Group Vision

“For Goat Island to be a special place of beauty and unique experience, revived and enjoyed by the public as part of the natural and cultural domain and a focal point of one of Sydney’s most valuable community assets – the network of national parks, reserves and visual landscapes.

Through retention, conservation and promotion of its outstanding natural, Aboriginal and European cultural heritage, Goat Island would become recognised as a place of national significance, featuring its pre-European shoreline and vegetation, and convict-constructed stone buildings.”

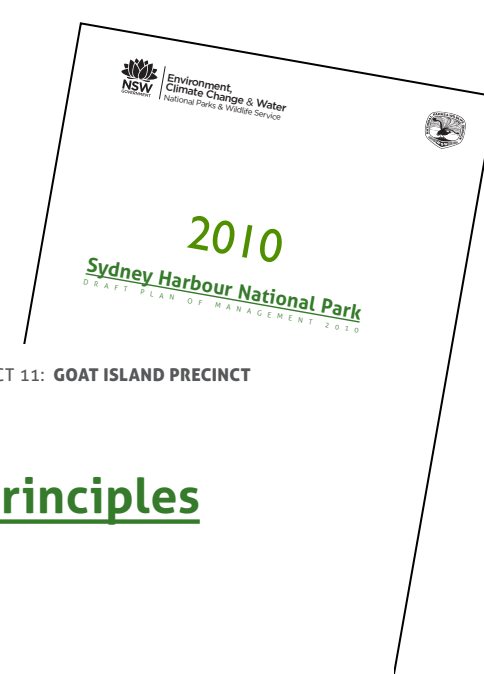


Management Goals Goat Island Reference Group Guiding Principles

“In accordance with the vision and visitor experiences being proposed for the island, the present [shipyard] operations should cease and the buildings and structures be removed. Such maritime features and on-going operations – and some of the important “working harbour” heritage – are more suitably sited and interpreted elsewhere e.g. on Cockatoo Island.”

The island and its following guiding

- » The most significant elements of the island to be preserved and revived.
- » Goat Island’s heritage, including its convict and rock-formation and indigenous heritage, to be highlighted through interpretation linked to the “working harbour” concept.
- » The ability to provide a rich Aboriginal and European heritage experience for visitors to be a part of the island’s activities and interpretation.
- » The convict and other colonial structures (including the Magazine and the Water Pump) being of outstanding significance, restored and interpreted for visitor interpretation.
- » Buildings, structures and operations which are materially associated with the values of the Sydney Harbour National Park and their high heritage value to be retained and interpreted elsewhere.



PRECINCT 11: GOAT ISLAND PRECINCT

with the

ity) have impact on precinct operation. It is likely to be the future site change. The vision is being developed, the buildings could cease operations and be removed. Such on-going operations of the “working harbour” are suitably interpreted elsewhere. The buildings of the precinct are part of the island’s heritage and are of outstanding significance. They are being retained and interpreted elsewhere, e.g. on Cockatoo Island.

Next – Bank Street
2009-2014

Proposed **Sydney Heritage Fleet** site,
waterfront park & water sports centre

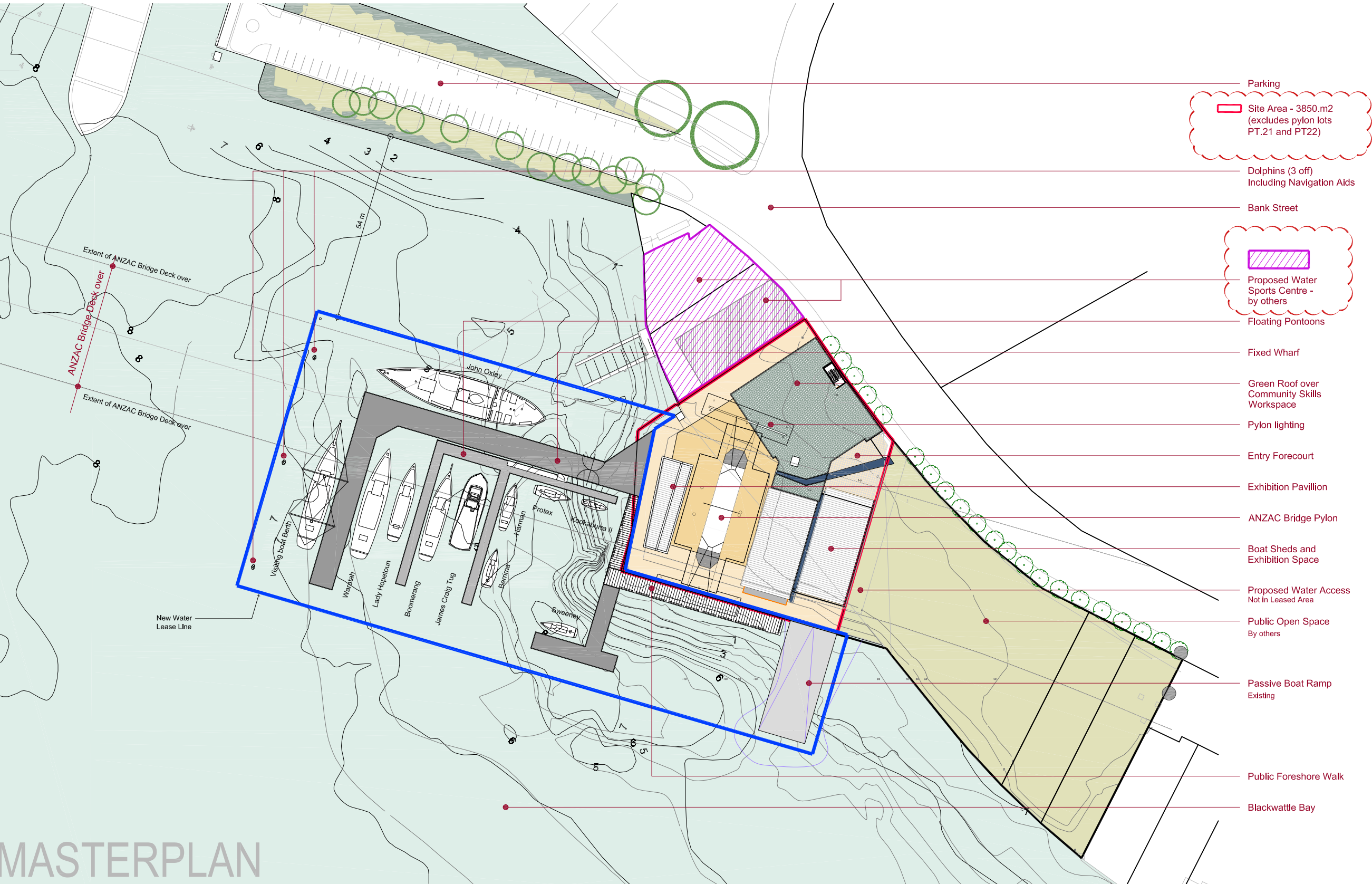
Access from Bank Street, Pyrmont



- Site owned by NSW Maritime
- Land zoned 'Public Recreation'
- No commercial use
- Community rent – \$460pa + CPI
- 40 year lease

Blackwattle Bay
Looking North

Bank Street – Site plan



SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET BASE - Environmental Assessment

Bank Street



Sydney Heritage Fleet Bank Street development

Above: Bank Street facade and main entrance

Below: View of waterside launching ramp, foreshore promenade and Museum building



Bank Street DA approved
March 2014

APPROVED

SYDNEY MARITIME MUSEUM
HOME OF SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET

A problem –

Where to put Blackwattle Bay charter boats to make way for new Sydney Fish Market?



Solution –

Use the SHF's approved Bank Street 'marina' and find the Fleet somewhere else

New Government offer – ANMM/SHF Maritime Heritage Precinct - Darling Harbour





ANMM/SHF Maritime Heritage Precinct - Darling Harbour
cancelled by NSW government without clear explanation

It was time for a pause ...

Some 'old hands' in the Fleet got together and met with an internationally recognised museum masterplanning firm – FRD

With financial assistance from the Fleet's governors, FRD was commissioned to take a long look at the SHF and make recommendations



DEFINING THE PURPOSE AND FUTURE OF SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET

The outcome ...

- That the SHF use its museum Collection to tell the compelling story of Sydney Harbour, under the new name **Museum of Sydney Harbour** – to be badged as the home of Sydney Heritage Fleet
- Such a concept should unlock support for a more relevant Sydney Harbour home for the Fleet



A NEW OPPORTUNITY



Berrys Bay



THE NEW HOME OF THE
SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET

MUSEUM OF
SYDNEY HARBOUR

AT BERRYS BAY

Berrys Bay – centred on the old Woodleys shipyard

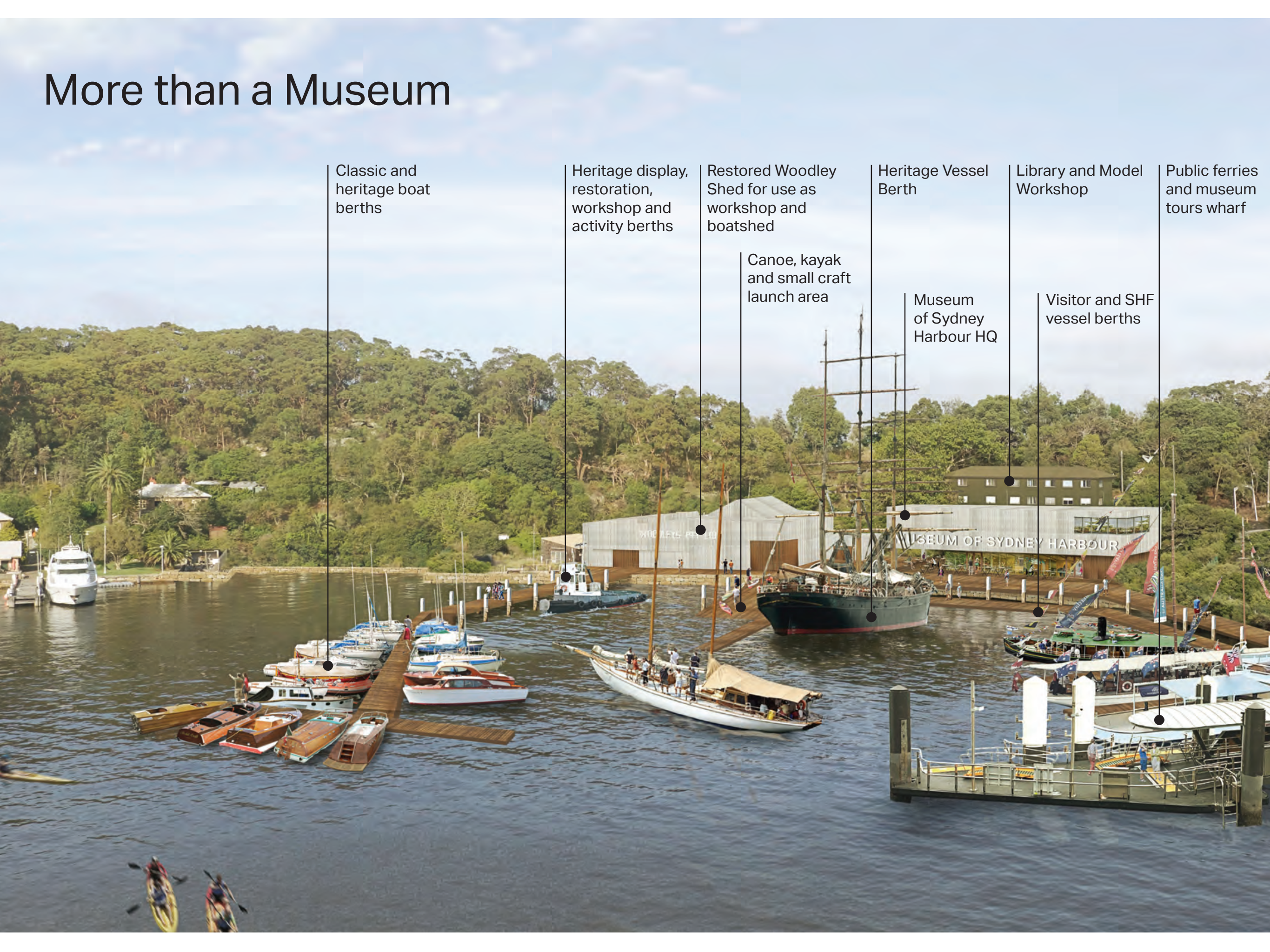


A unique opportunity to combine heritage preservation with cultural tourism and provide Harbourside community access, facilities and activities.

A place with an authentic cultural identity.



More than a Museum



Classic and heritage boat berths

Heritage display, restoration, workshop and activity berths

Restored Woodley Shed for use as workshop and boatshed

Canoe, kayak and small craft launch area

Heritage Vessel Berth

Museum of Sydney Harbour HQ

Library and Model Workshop

Visitor and SHF vessel berths

Public ferries and museum tours wharf

THE MUSEUM OF SYDNEY HARBOUR AT BERRYS BAY

A PROPOSAL

The Coal
Loader

Pedestrian walkway

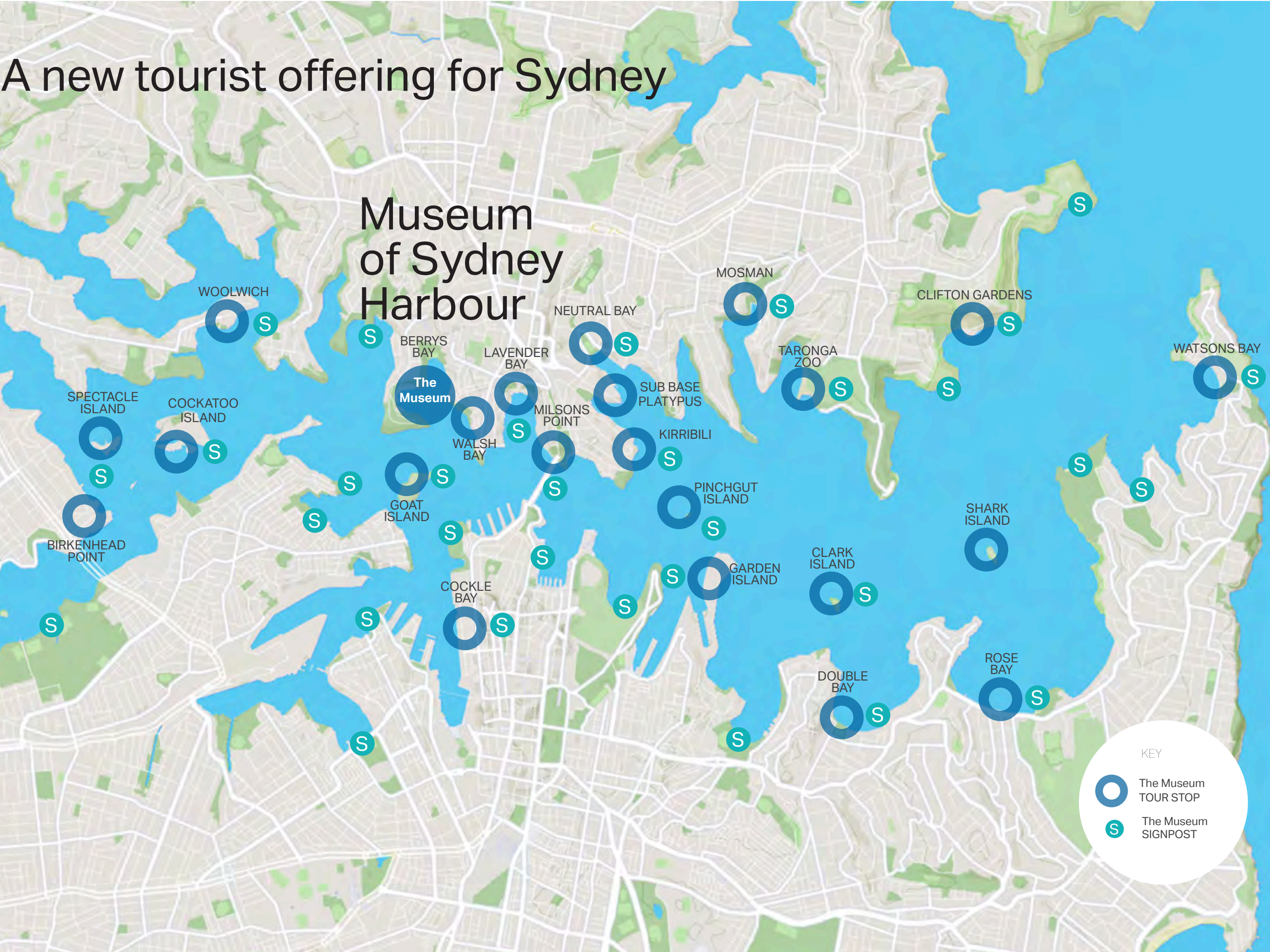
Pedestrian walkway

- 1 The Museum HQ
- 2 Waterfront Cafe beneath Museum HQ;
outdoor and undercover seating
- 3 Museum library and research
centre/model workshop
- 4 Kayak/Canoe/Dinghy undercover
storage and change rooms
- 5 SHF Woodleys Shipyard Experience;
 - Woodworking
 - Small wooden boat restoration
 - SHF vessel running maintenance
 - Visitor tours
- 6 Volunteers & Boat owners amenities
- 7 Woodleys Shipyard Wharf
and Marina access
- 8 Small Marina max 15m, Local berths.
Guaranteed no expansion.
- 9 Kayak/Canoe/Small craft
launching ramp
- 10 Public activity deck
- 11 Visiting heritage vessel berth
- 12 Day Visitor berths
- 13 SHF Historic Ships
- 14 Tour and potential Ferry wharf
- 15 Car park - controlled access



A new tourist offering for Sydney

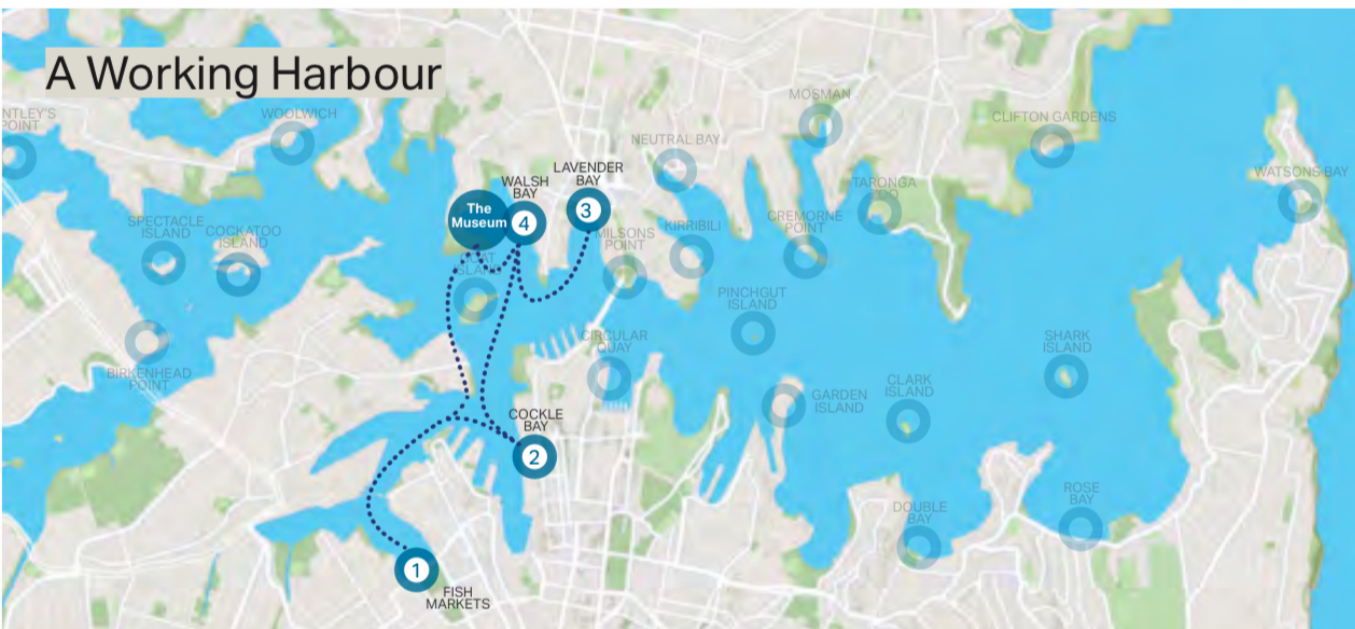
Museum of Sydney Harbour



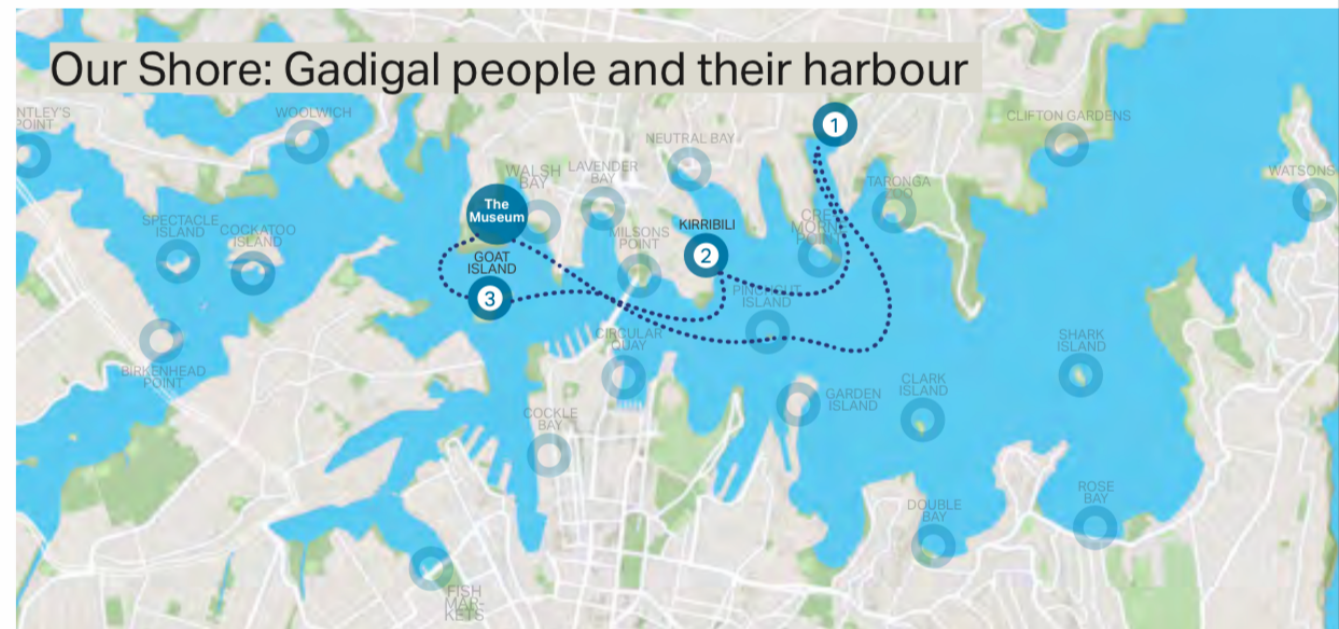


The harbour overflows
with stories, engaging
and relevant that will
bring the heritage of
this place to life

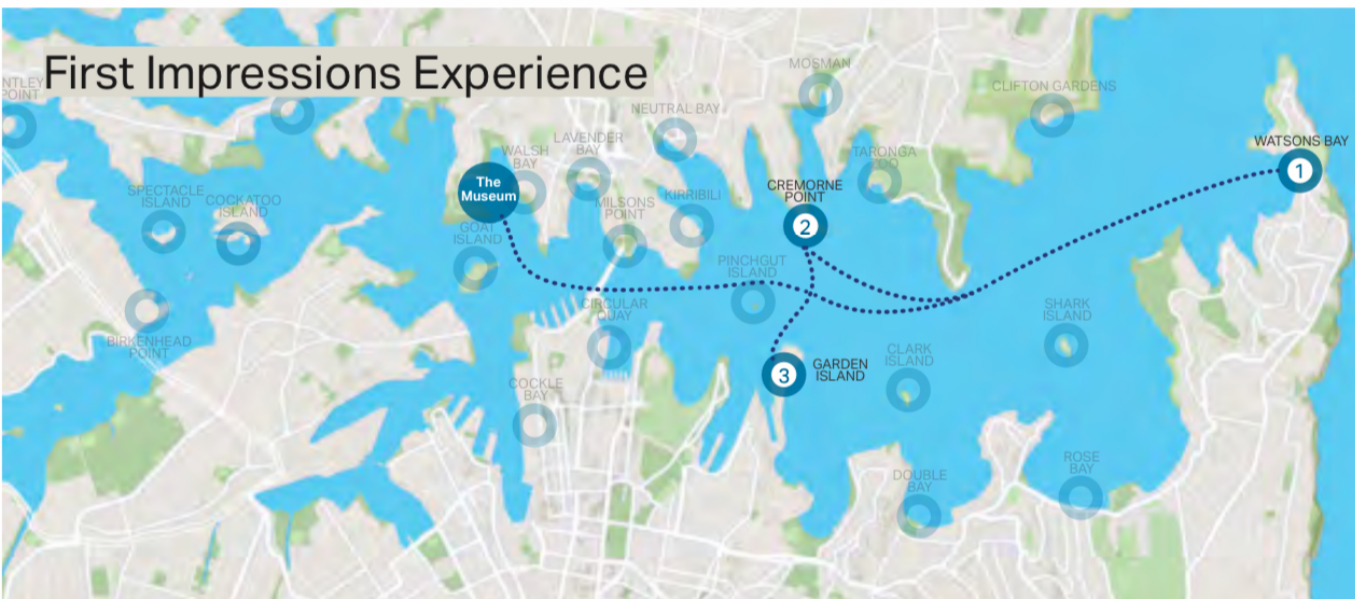
A Working Harbour



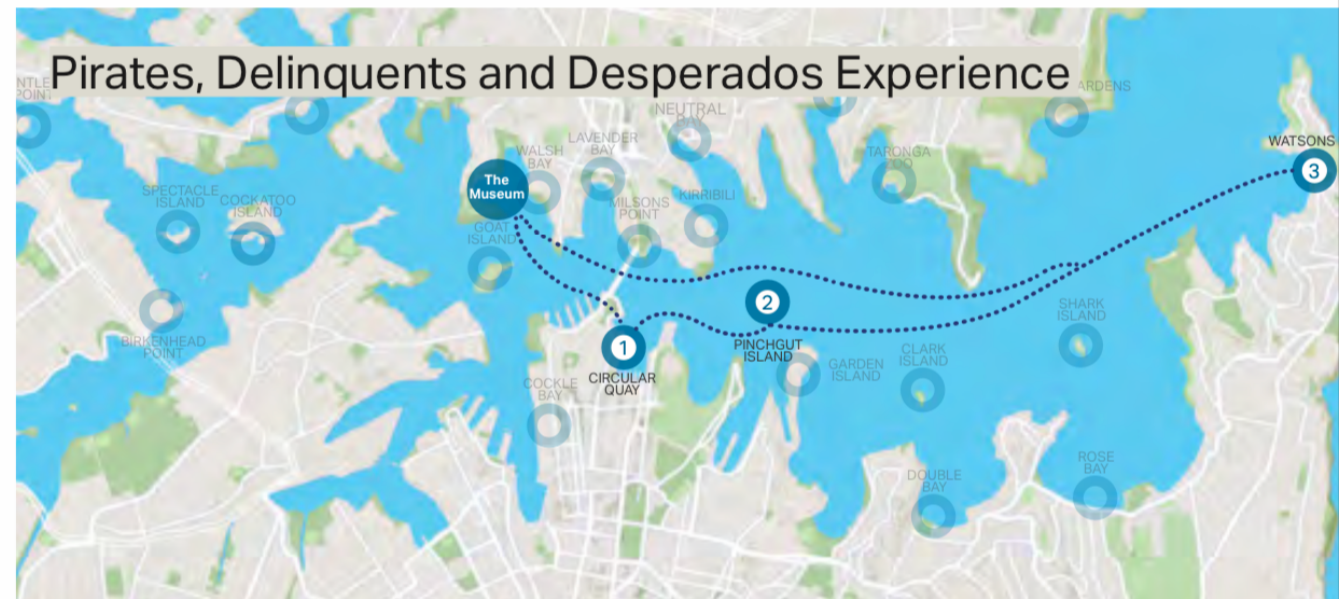
Our Shore: Gadigal people and their harbour



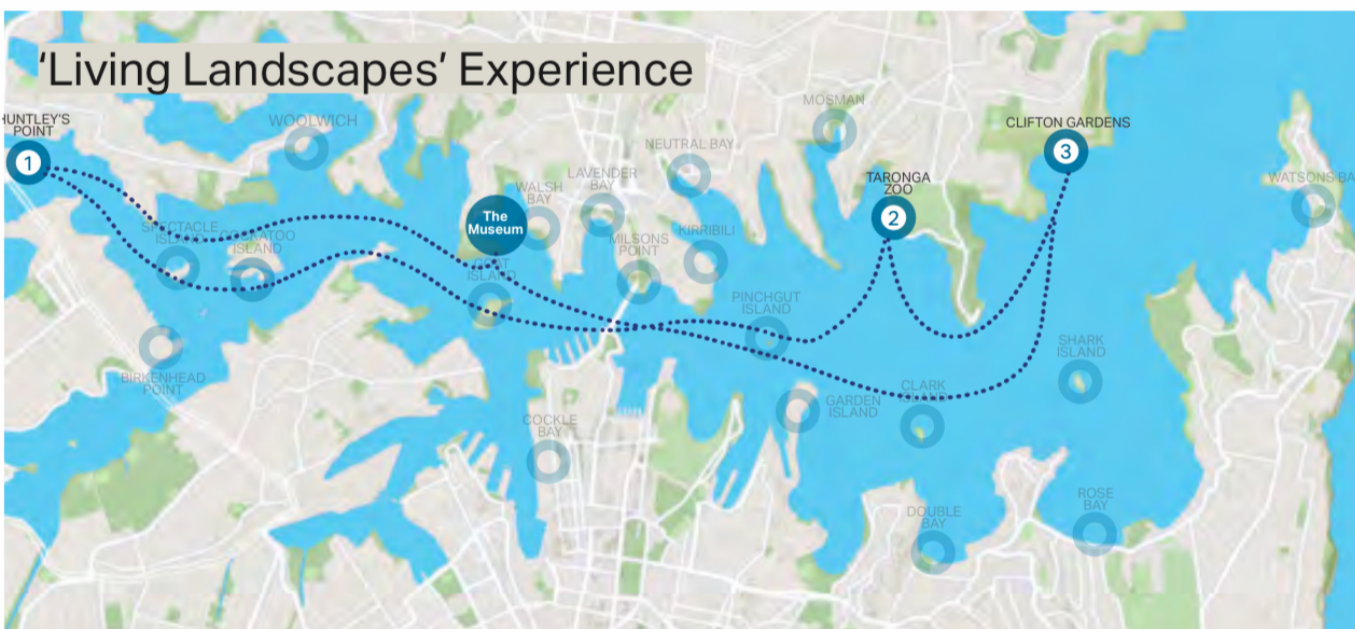
First Impressions Experience



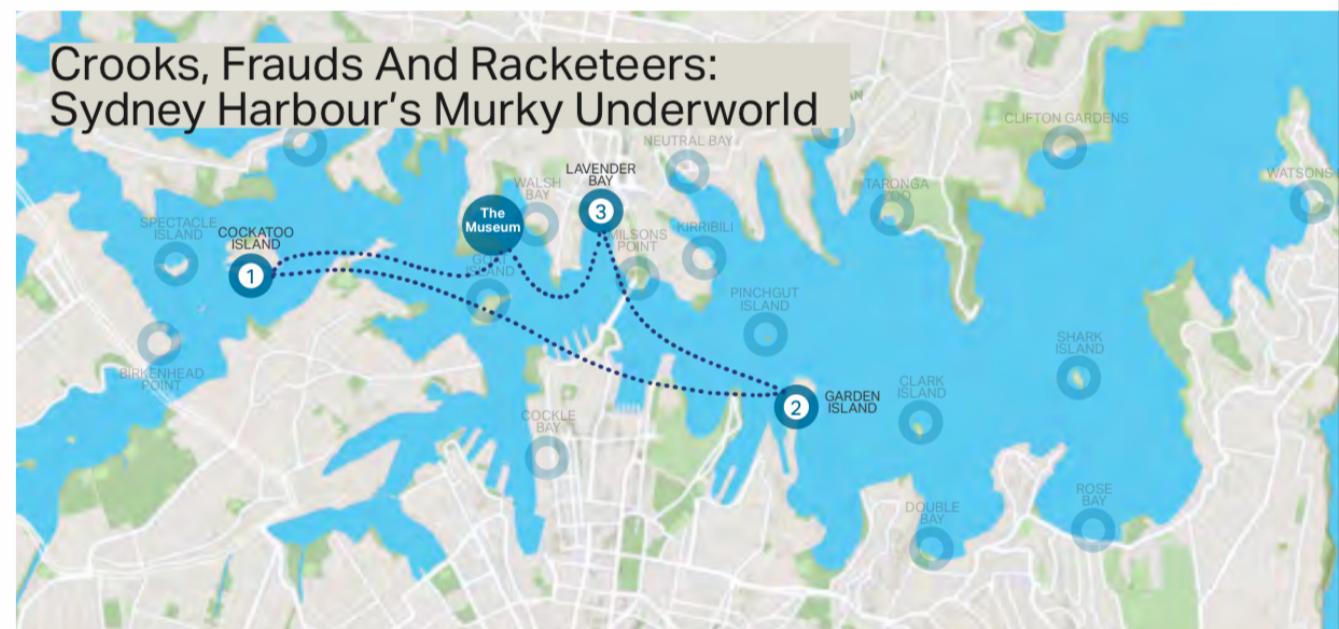
Pirates, Delinquents and Desperados Experience



'Living Landscapes' Experience



Crooks, Frauds And Racketeers: Sydney Harbour's Murky Underworld



The Fleet's Berrys Bay concept had North Sydney Council support



Council voted unanimously;

THAT Council, recognising broad community support for the concept plans provided by the Sydney Heritage Fleet for the Museum of Sydney Harbour as the base for its fleet in Berrys Bay, resolves to work with the Sydney Heritage Fleet and the North Sydney community with a view to making the concept plan a reality.

A large sailing ship with multiple masts and sails is on the left, and a steamship with a single smokestack is on the right. They are both on a body of water with a hilly shoreline in the background.

THE NEW HOME OF THE SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET MUSEUM OF SYDNEY HARBOUR

AT BERRYS BAY

But once again it was not to be ...

- North Sydney Council changed its mind
 - The Mayor was concerned SHF's planning process would delay a new Berrys Bay park
 - The Government, while still supportive, was unable to proceed with SHF as Council was to be head site lessee
 - Despite intensive SHF lobbying, with an election looming, it was clear the project was in trouble
 - The Opposition won. Despite expressions of good intentions, with other priorities, it failed to follow through
 - The Museum of Sydney Harbour was dead in the water

Bays West Precinct - White Bay & Glebe Is

2026 NSW Government Concept



2026 – Bays West Precinct

- SHF in negotiation with NSW Government
 - Government proposal – move the current Fleet operations to proposed development in White Bay
 - Comply with government-stipulated planning requirements
 - Submit development application and go through public consultation and government approval
 - Build new workshops & facilities to approved plans
 - Fund the move and new development

And still volunteers all



A large, multi-masted sailing ship with white sails is navigating through a natural rock archway in a rugged, layered cliff face. The ship is positioned in the center-left of the frame, with its bow pointing towards the right. The cliff is composed of light-colored, horizontally stratified rock. The sea is a deep blue with white-capped waves. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

*Here ends the story
so far (2026)*

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