



NEW SOUTH WALES

24 March 2006

MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Frank Sartor MP

Minister for Planning

Minister for Redfern Waterloo

Minister for Science and Medical Research

Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)

SITE CHOSEN FOR SECOND STAGE OF PORT BOTANY EXPANSION

The NSW Government has announced the location for the second stage of the Port Botany expansion, following an investigation of three potential sites by an independent expert panel.

Planning Minister Frank Sartor has approved plans for the fifth berth to be built on to the north of the first stage of the expansion.

“The expansion of Port Botany is critical to this State’s continuing economic success,” Mr Sartor said.

“Port Botany handles a third of Australia’s container traffic. Each visiting container ship generates more than \$1 million in economic activity and eight full-time jobs.

“The port is expected to reach full capacity by the end of the decade, and must be expanded to ensure we don’t lose business to Queensland and Victoria,” he said.

“Each expansion option was carefully considered in terms of the economic and environmental impact, and I am confident the northern site recommended by the panel is the best option.”

Stage One of the \$500 million Port Botany expansion was approved last October. In February, the Minister appointed an independent panel of experts to consider three possible locations for a fifth berth, including a northern, western and eastern option.

The panel found that the northern option offered key benefits:

- It addresses maritime operational issues and will help attract a third stevedore;
- It provides superior rail access and land tenure;
- It is up to \$253 million less expensive than the other options.

Mr Sartor said conditions attached to the approval included measures to protect and enhance the bay environment:

- Water quality in Penrhyn Estuary must be maintained by incorporating water channelling devices to ensure tidal flushing, and imposing strict controls on run-off;
- Nearby salt marsh habitat will be expanded by up to six hectares, to provide additional bird habitat and help attract wading birds;
- Seagrass habitat will be expanded by eight hectares to attract additional fish and marine life and replace seagrass removed in the 1970s;
- A Penrhyn Estuary Habitat Management Plan must be prepared.

The independent panel liaised with key stakeholders, including the Department of Environment and Conservation, local councils, stevedores and transport operators. Its draft report was exhibited for public comment in June.

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