



22 July 2011

The Hon Stephen Smith MP  
Minister for Defence  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister



## THE FUTURE OF GARDEN ISLAND

I write following your announcement of an independent review of the future use of the naval docks at Garden Island to be carried out by Dr Allan Hawke.

### A HOLISTIC REVIEW

While the issue of docking space for large visiting cruise ships which cannot fit under Sydney Harbour Bridge is the principal impetus, I ask that the future use of the whole naval compound be included in the review.

Garden Island is one of the last remaining accessible dock facilities near Sydney, and I support a continuing naval presence on part of Garden Island, recognising the contribution to city diversity, history and heritage, local employment and tourism. I also support the sharing of deepwater berths between naval and commercial shipping.

### SHARING THE SITE WITH CRUISE SHIPS

The Cruise Passenger Terminal Steering Committee report to the NSW Government in January 2011 highlighted that Sydney Harbour will not be able to accommodate the number of cruise ships requiring berths by 2015. Greater use of larger cruise ships that will be unable to dock west of the Harbour Bridge raises concerns about future berthing capacity and the potential bypassing of important sea based tourism to our City and State.

I believe that Garden Island is an option for expanding deepwater berths east of the Bridge.

### PASSENGER ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

The review should also look at potential passenger access and circulation. If cruise ship berthing at Garden Island goes ahead, I ask that a ferry terminal with connections to Circular Quay be considered to provide passenger access to the Central Business District with the aim of reducing traffic congestion and providing a direct and more scenic entry to the City.

Ferry services are currently provided to Garden Island but only provide access to the Australian Navy Heritage Centre. The adjacent residential community would also benefit from access to improved public transport needed for cruise ship passengers.

### OPEN SPACE FOR COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Garden Island has very limited public access, and I have argued over many years for public access to the northern tip of Garden Island to benefit the adjacent densely populated areas and link with the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Walkway.

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The residential precincts of Potts Point, Elizabeth Bay and Kings Cross have the highest population densities in Australia, but have very limited access to public open space. These increases in population are continuing.

The occupation by the Navy and associated uses has barred access to the adjacent foreshores for too long, and opening up of some public space and Harbour foreshore on Garden Island would provide significant community benefit.

#### **SYDNEY HARBOUR FORESHORE WALKWAY**

Sydney Harbour belongs to the people of Sydney and beyond, and is a key attractor for tourists as well as contributing to residential amenity for greater Sydney. I have strongly supported the policy encouraging public foreshore walkways. Such walkways are expanding along the Harbour particularly fronting inner city areas west of the Bridge.

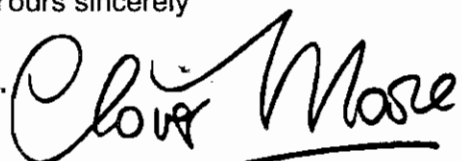
The review of the future of Garden Island is an opportunity to extend a Harbour foreshore walk from the Botanical Gardens via Woolloomooloo Bay through to Elizabeth Bay.

#### **THALES FACILITIES**

Thales operates the Australian Navy's major east coast refit, repair and maintenance facilities at Garden Island, and must also be considered in this review. Heavy industry activities that generate excessive noise pollution create significant conflict with neighbourhood residential amenity. All current Garden Island uses should be reviewed in order to get a balance that better uses and shares our precious harbour resource to include tourism and residents' needs.

A Garden Island Masterplan could lead to significant community benefit over time, and I strongly support thorough review of the site. I welcome the Commonwealth Government commitment to a more flexible approach to the use of Garden Island that balances defence and cruise industry needs, and ask that community benefit also be considered, particularly foreshore access and need for inner city open space.

Yours sincerely



Clover Moore MP

**Member for Sydney**

CC: NSW Minister for Planning and Infrastructure; Minister for Roads and Ports.