

Project update on remediation at Barangaroo

In September 2015, the Barangaroo Delivery Authority announced the commencement of work to remediate material underneath Hickson Road and underneath the Barangaroo site, contaminated by the former Millers Point Gasworks which closed almost a century ago.

The Authority today gave an update on progress and upcoming activities, which include the building of an underground retention wall, a new pedestrian crossing for Hickson Road and the temporary closure of parking spaces.

The project is being managed by the Barangaroo Delivery Authority, delivered by the contractor, Lendlease, together with a team of national and international experts, and monitored by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

Two remediation projects will clean up the site over the next three years. The first is a pilot trial to remediate the contamination where it is, underneath Hickson Road.

The second project is now getting started in earnest, to remediate contaminated fill material underneath Barangaroo.

A large underground perimeter retention wall will be constructed to create a 'bath tub' from the surface down to bedrock - to seal this part of the site and prevent water from entering this area during excavation. Site preparation work is now underway on this.

A conventional 'dig, treat and backfill' approach will then be used to remove around 150,000 tonnes of contaminated fill material from Barangaroo Blocks Four and Five.

"We need to remediate this site so that it is safe for future generations, and we are employing a method which is safe, proven and effective," said the Director of Remediation, Andrew Tompson.

Changes people may notice

- A new 'zebra' pedestrian crossing on Hickson Road will include islands and refuges to ensure pedestrians can safely cross the road. The crossing will be in place for a number of years. New signage is being placed in the precinct to direct pedestrians.
- Tents and air filtration systems are now visible on site. The tents will contain unpleasant smells during excavation, protecting the amenity of the public. They will be linked to air filtration systems that discharge safe, cleaned air. Some tents are fixed, and some will move along a sliding rail system, as the underground perimeter wall is constructed.
- Larger tents on site house the excavated soil and the jet grout mix used to construct the walls. Once the material has been classified for disposal, it will be covered and sealed to ensure safety. The material will be sent by truck to one of several EPA-licensed facilities around the State, depending on its classification. Before each truck leaves, it will be washed to ensure that no soil is transferred on to roads.

- Some 50 car spaces and a motorbike parking bay will progressively be removed to accommodate the new pedestrian crossing, new protective hoarding, and footpath changes. The 300-space parking station under Barangaroo Reserve can be used as an alternative.
- Workers involved in this phase of remediation on site at Barangaroo will be wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), which could include chemical style coverall and respirators, and may be visible from surrounding buildings from time to time.

Background

The old Millers Point Gasworks enabled Sydney to have the first gas street light network outside Europe. The lighting was turned on in Sydney on 24 May 1841 – and all of the original lights were placed outside pubs. The gasworks was decommissioned in 1921 and its above-ground structures were removed by 1925.

However, certain underground gasworks structures were left behind: gas holders and tanks cut in the sandstone containing coal tar; and contaminated fill material, all of which remain there to this day.

In 2009, the EPA directed that the site be remediated. Extensive planning since then by the Authority has included soil sampling, preparation of remediation plans and obtaining development approvals.

For detailed information about the remediation, go to www.barangaroo.com.

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