

Hunters Hill

Remediation of 7-11 Nelson Parade

May 2019



Project Facts

The NSW Government owns the land at 7-11 Nelson Parade in Hunters Hill.

Contact

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NSW Government is committed to:

- Land remediation on the site.
- Complying with the NSW EPA Management Order.
- Consulting with the community.

Site's Industrial Legacy

From the late 1800s to the early 1900s, a carbolic acid plant operated on land at Nelson Parade in Hunters Hill. As a result of this previous use, the soil along the foreshore of the site has elevated concentrations of coal tar waste material and heavy metals.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (NSW EPA) has issued a Management Order for the remediation of soil in the foreshore area.

Site soils are also impacted by low-level Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM) contained within the processed ore, a by-product of a uranium refinery that operated onsite from 1911. Independent experts do not consider NORM managed on site to pose a risk to human health.

Project Update

Detailed design work confirmed that the proposed remediation solution would be safe and suitable for this site.

As a result, the Government decided to proceed to the next step and lodge a Submissions Report with the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).

The remediation approach will result in numbers 7 and 11 Nelson Parade being suitable for residential redevelopment and/or community use, and number 9 Nelson Parade suitable for open space or community use.

Further consultation will be held with the community regarding final site use following the completion of remediation.

On completion of the remediation works, confirmation that all impacted material at the site has been removed or encapsulated will be certified by an independent NSW EPA accredited site auditor.

Radon Gas Management

ANSTO has completed radon gas modelling as part of the Submissions Report and confirmed the risk from radon gas would be negligible as the gas will be contained within the proposed cell structures. There will be no ongoing accumulation of radon gas within the cells.

The encapsulation cells will include a 500mm clay barrier and 250mm thick concrete walls to prevent any gas entering the atmosphere.

The cell will be maintained and monitored by the NSW Government.

During the natural decay chain of uranium and radium, products produced remain in a solid form with the exception of radon which exists as a gas with a half-life of no more than 3.8 days. The radon gas produced as part of the natural decay chain will therefore only exist for a short period of time, after which it will move to the next product - a solid. The cells have been designed to contain the radon gas and no venting of radon gas would be required. The design of the cells will exceed the minimum recommended concrete thickness and will also be positioned below a low permeability clay cap.

Storage of NORM

The storage of NORM within the encapsulation cells at the site will make the site safe for public access and neighboring residential use. ANSTO have confirmed the NORM storage would not result in residents or members of the public being exposed to levels of radioactivity exceeding the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) guidelines for members of the public. The storage of NORM within cells is a suitable remediation strategy supported by experts including ANSTO and the NSW EPA accredited site auditor.

Remediation Approach

In May 2019, a remediation solution was lodged with DPE for consideration. The proposed solution includes:

- The treatment and offsite disposal of material subject to the NSW EPA Management Order.
- Encapsulation of NORM in two cells on number 9 Nelson Parade.

Onsite encapsulation is a safe and proven remediation method which involves retaining soil unsuitable for residential redevelopment on site.

Encapsulation of higher-level contaminants than those at Nelson Parade (not containing NORM) have successfully been undertaken at a number of locations around Sydney, including Oyster Cove, Rhodes and Breakfast Point, with each site suitably managed to allow residential development immediately adjacent to the encapsulation.

Community Consultation

Property NSW aims to improve the accuracy of information in the community on the remediation of 7-11 Nelson Parade, Hunters Hill. The Government's commitment to cleaning up the site is an important initiative and it is vital that local residents receive accurate information.

During consultation with the community in February and March 2018, residents informed the Government that they wanted progress on remediating the site including an investigation of alternative remediation methods.

As a result, Property NSW presented the encapsulation remediation solution to Nelson Parade residents between May and July 2018. Property NSW held one-on-one meetings with residents, as well as several community meetings, and noted resident feedback.

Following this feedback, in October 2018 the Government announced it would proceed with the detailed design of the remediation approach, which involves both onsite storage and the removal of soil located on the foreshore area (which is subject to the NSW EPA Management Order).

Detailed design, including ANSTO-managed field trials, geotechnical drilling and engineering design, commenced in October 2018.

Further consultation was held with residents and the community in January and February 2019 to present the findings of this detailed design work and next steps.

The community will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the Submissions Report as part of the planning process.

Removal of Soil

Temporary storage is not currently a consideration as a suitable licensed temporary storage facility is not available in NSW and a suitable long-term location has not been identified. Options such as an interstate transfer process or waiting on the national repository could take more than 10 years.

The encapsulation cells have been designed to allow the encapsulated material to be disposed off-site in the future, if a suitable disposal location is identified.

Planning Process

Now that a Submissions Report has been lodged with DPE, the project is proceeding under the provisions of the former Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EP&A Act). The report will be reviewed by DPE and placed on public exhibition for feedback from Local Council and the public. If the Submissions Report satisfies DPE requirements, DPE will make a recommendation to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) for determination. It is anticipated that this process could take nine to 12 months.

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has delegated the decision-making powers to the IPC. Local Council does not have a decision-making power as the project is a Major Project under the former Part 3A provisions of the EP&A Act.

Ongoing Community Consultation

DPE: Department of Planning and Environment | **NSW EPA:** NSW Environment Protection Authority | **IPC:** Independent Planning Commission

