

Maintenance Dredging at Nelly Bay Harbour

Sea Placement Option

16 November 2025 - 7 December 2025



This document provides an overview of the content available in our interactive map.

To view the map and share your feedback, visit [Have Your Say](#) from 16 November - 7 December 2025

Why are we dredging?

- Council is responsible for maintenance of the canal sections in Nelly Bay Harbour.
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- The last significant dredging campaign was carried out in 2011.
- Recent investigations show $>10,000\text{m}^3$ of material needs to be removed from the canal sections of the Nelly Bay Marina to return to safe, navigable depths.
- Council intends to remove up to $15,000\text{m}^3$ of material from the Nelly Bay Harbour in 2026 to return to safe, navigable depths. (This volume is based on sea placement - lower limits apply for land-based management).



When and where will material be removed?



- The timing of work will be subject to permit approvals and other factors (Marina use, coral spawning, etc) and the physical dredging work is expected to take approximately three months to complete.
- The survey map shows areas of sediment build-up, with red and orange indicating the highest levels, and green and blue indicating lower accumulation.
- Three locations have significant sediment build-up, as outlined in yellow. This is where dredging activities will take place.



What is the dredged material made of?



- In 2025, Council engaged a qualified consultant to prepare an updated Sediment Investigation Report on the nature and quality of sediment to be dredged from Nelly Bay Harbour.
- The dredge material has been assessed and is suitable for both land and unconfined sea placement.
- You can find more information on this in Council's [Dredging Q&A](#) or [access the full sediment report online](#).



Dredging Operations and Impact on Nelly Bay Users



- Two (2) barges would likely be used for dredging activities in the harbour - operations from 6am to 6pm Monday to Saturday.
- An excavator would dig from one end of the barge and place material onto either its own deck or into an adjoining barge. (The adjoining barge is either a dredge material barge or a hopper barge).
- Nelly Bay Harbour and Marina facilities would remain open for use throughout the work.
- During dredging operations, access to certain parts of the harbour will be restricted for Marina users (vessel owners). Council will work closely with the Marina and its users to ensure harbour operations continue smoothly, including relocating vessels as needed.
- There will be minimal noise from dredging operations, and no restriction on boat movements in the Harbour area.

Movement of Material from Marina to DMPA



- The dredge material will be transferred to the approved Cleveland Bay Dredge Material Placement Area (DMPA).
- Approval will be requested from the Regional Harbour Master for vessel movement both within and outside of the Nelly Bay Marina.
- It is expected that there will be one (1) barge movement per day, to and from the Cleveland Bay DMPA, most likely at the end of each day.

Option for Sea Placement using DMPA

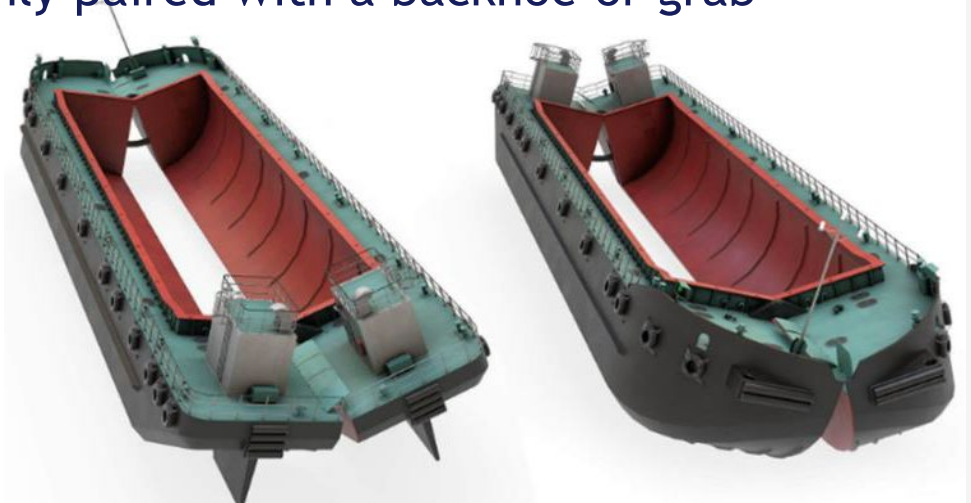


- Over recent months, Council has been working with the Port of Townsville on a proposal to use the established Cleveland Bay Dredge Material Placement Area (DMPA) for the placement of dredge material from Nelly Bay Harbour.
- The Cleveland Bay DMPA is located between Magnetic Island and Cape Cleveland.
- The 2026 Nelly Bay dredge works would involve placing a maximum of 15,000m³ of dredged material in the Cleveland Bay DMPA, depending on the amount of sediment that needs to be removed at commencement of the work.
- Any sea placement of dredged material is tightly controlled and subject to environmental approvals from the Commonwealth Government.
- Council is required to secure project-specific approvals to enable use of the Cleveland Bay DMPA.

Placement of Material in the DMPA



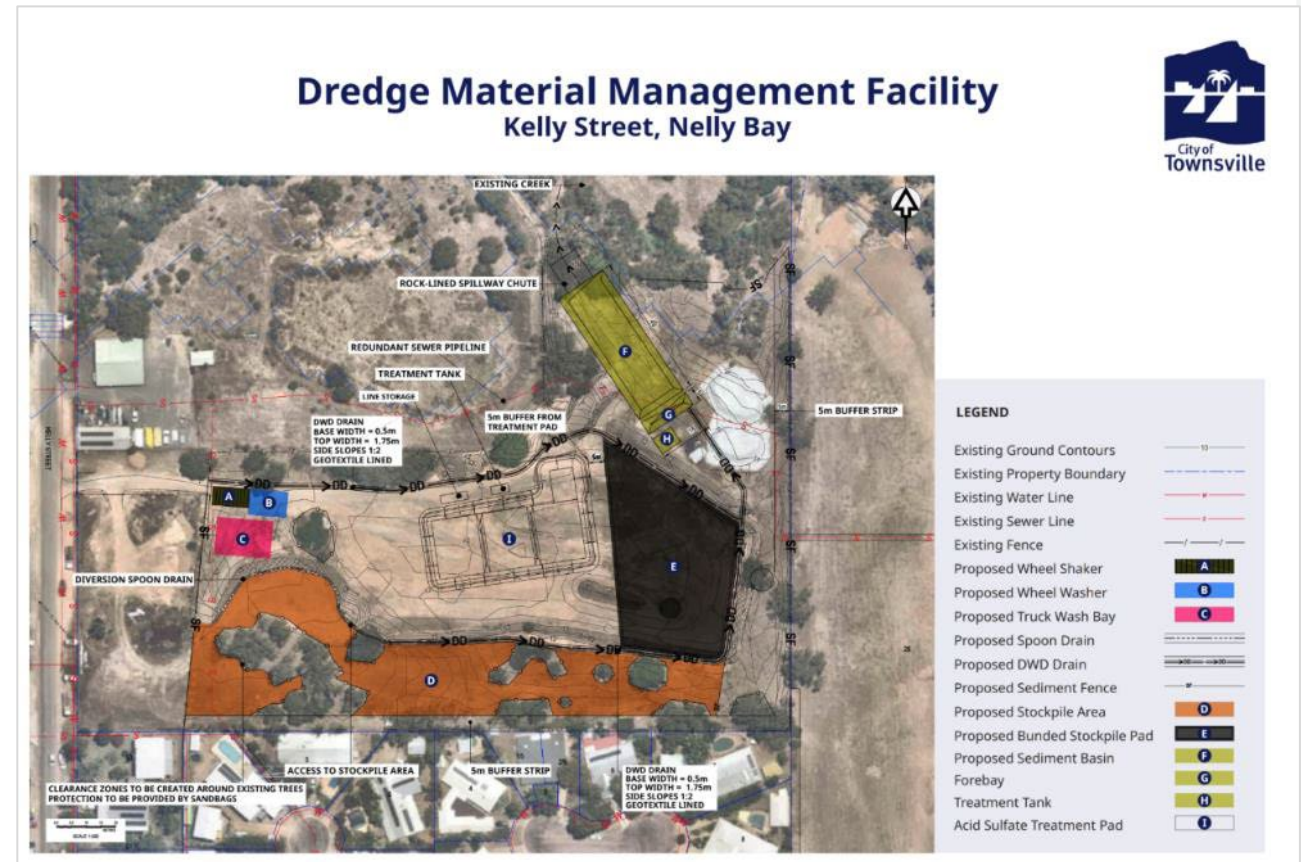
- The method used to unload dredged material will depend on the type of dredge equipment that is available and listed at time of tender. Options may include the following:
- **Split Hopper Barge Option:** A split hopper barge is a specialised vessel used to transport dredged material. Its defining feature is a hull that splits longitudinally, allowing fast and direct discharge of sediment. These vessels are commonly paired with a backhoe or grab dredgers.
- **Backhoe Dredge (BHD) and Grab Dredge Option:** One barge load filled each morning then transported to the Cleveland Bay DMPA in the afternoon; once the loaded barge arrives at the Cleveland Bay DMPA, a 45t long reach excavator onboard barge unloads material into the Cleveland Bay DMPA approved area.



Current Approved Option: Kelly Street Site



- In early 2025, Council carried out community consultation on our current approved option for the management of the maintenance dredge material at an appropriate Council-owned site in Kelly Street.
- You can find more information about our [proposal for the use of Kelly Street here](#), including a [detailed Q&A](#) created following community consultation.



Next Steps



- [Click here to return to the Have Your Say survey](#) (open 16 November to 7 December 2025)
- ***PLEASE NOTE:*** The dredging disposal area does NOT fall within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (exclusion area outlined in red on the map at the start of this document).



