SEPTEMBER 2024

Geraldton Port Maximisation Project **FAQs**

MID WEST PORTS

Contents

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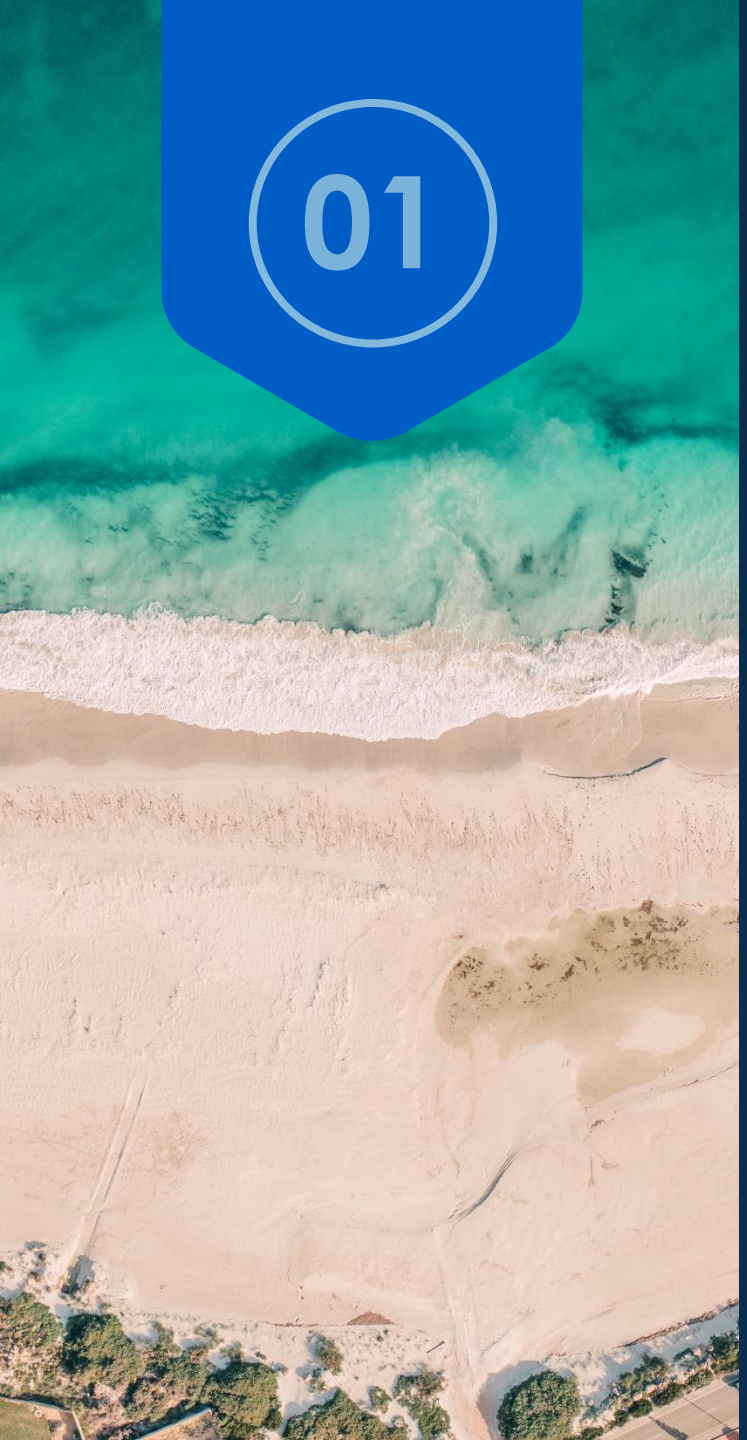

01

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Project overview

1. What is PMaxP?
2. Why is the project needed?
3. What funding has been committed for the project?
4. What are the benefits of the project?
5. What enabling works need to be undertaken to deliver the project?

1

What is PMaxP?

The Geraldton Port Maximisation Project (PMaxP) is a major infrastructure project that will modernise and improve Geraldton Port. The $350 million State Government funded project will be designed and constructed by Mid West Ports.

PMaxP features sustainable infrastructure upgrades designed to maximise the use of our current harbour. PMaxP will improve operational efficiency, ensure our berth facilities meet the needs of new products and customers, and create greater opportunities for cruise ships and future Port expansion.

Key elements of PMaxP include:

1. **Lease 11 truck unloader** to deliver unloading efficiencies and improved emissions controls. Regulatory approvals are in place, with construction expected in Q4 2024.
2. **Construction of a new Berth 1** for passenger and cargo vessels.
3. **Construction of a new tug facility and breakwater extension** designed to reduce downtime within the port due to weather through enhanced surge mitigation.
4. **Future modifications and upgrades to the existing Berth 6** to cater for larger vessels.
5. **Port West road upgrades** to improve existing traffic flow and accommodate future vehicle movement requirements.
6. **Demolition of the existing Berth 2 wharf deck** which no longer meets modern operating requirements.
7. **Environmental considerations** for a future Berth 8 / Berth 9.

2 Why is the project needed?

For more than 150 years, Geraldton Port has been serving the Mid West community, enabling mining, agriculture and fishing sectors through its critical supply chain infrastructure. Geraldton Port is one of Australia's most diverse commodity ports. It provides a vital gateway for trade and tourism and connects the region's thriving industries to national and international markets.

In 2020, we developed the **Geraldton Port Master Plan** outlining the Port's future purpose, opportunities, and requirements to support regional trade diversification and growth.

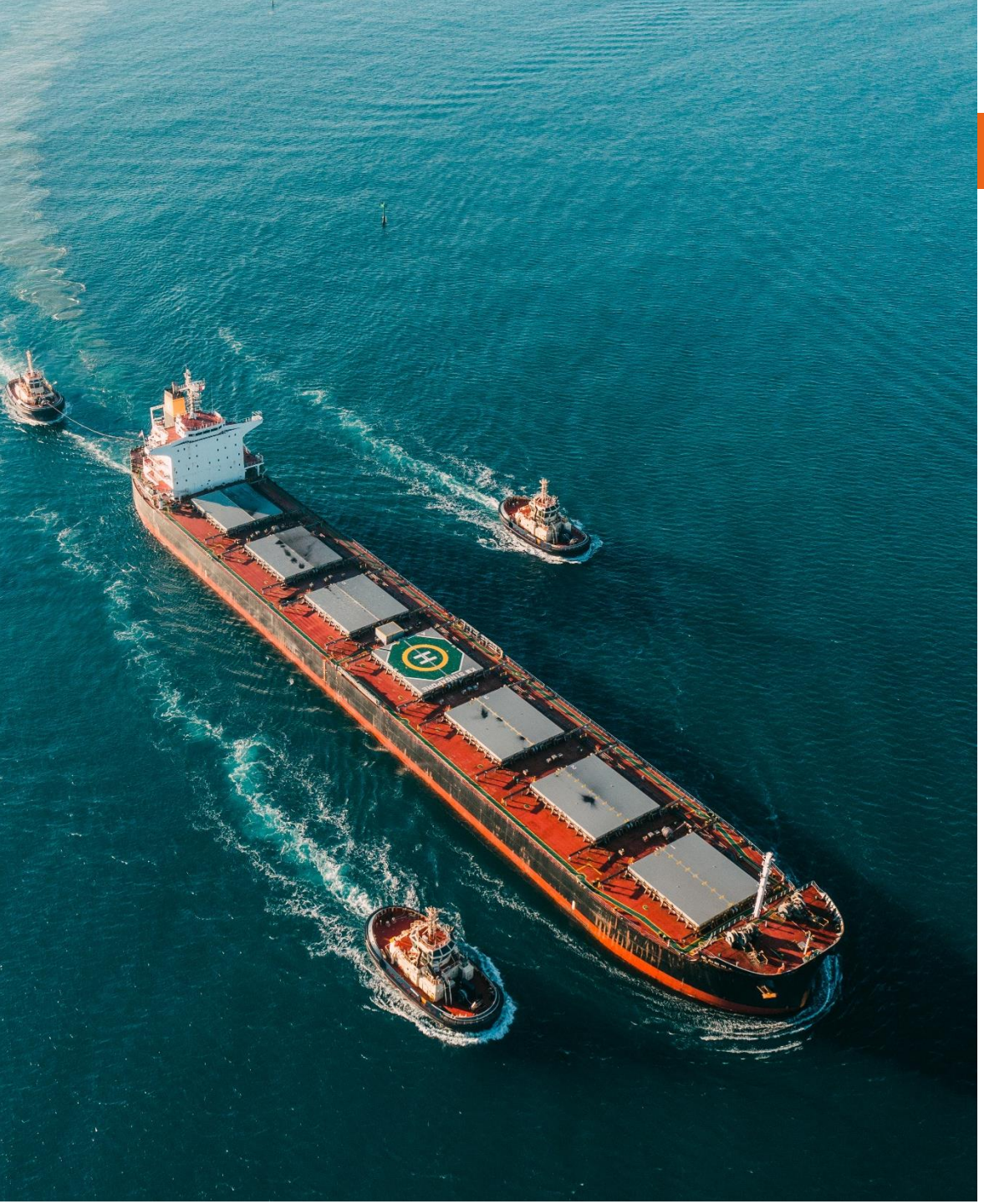
Over the next ten years, the Port will play an important role in enabling emerging industries, new customers with a diverse product mix, and significant growth forecasted within the Mid West region.

The Port Maximisation Project (PMaxP) will build on our proud history and prepare Geraldton Port for the future. PMaxP will help the Port to cater for emerging industries and sustainable increases in trade demand within the region over the next decade and deliver lasting economic benefits that will enable our region to thrive.

3 What funding has been committed for the project?

The State Government has approved a total of $350 million in funding for PMaxP.

This includes $18 million initially approved to undertake design development, and an additional $332 million to deliver the infrastructure upgrades.



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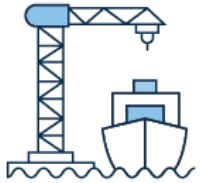
What are the benefits of the project?

PMaxP will deliver sustainable port solutions for our customers, support regional trade diversification and deliver a range of economic benefits for our community.



Reliable, safe and efficient infrastructure to maximise the use of our current harbour.

Greater opportunities for cruise ships, benefiting our local cruise tourism and retail industries.

Supporting regional economic growth and trade diversification, leading to improved community resilience and success.

Boosting local job and business opportunities through PMaxP construction.

5 What enabling works need to be undertaken to deliver the project?

A range of construction activities will be completed to deliver PMaxP. To support these works, Mid West Ports is undertaking detailed investigations and will develop rigorous management plans to understand, manage, and minimise potential impacts and disruptions. Key activities to support upgrade works include:

Dredging

Just like roads and rail, underwater port infrastructure requires maintenance, and at times upgrading, to ensure vessels can safely enter and manoeuvre into port.

Dredging is conducted to either remove natural sediment build up to maintain existing channel and berth depths (maintenance dredging) or to expand the existing depth or width of a channel or berth (capital dredging).

Dredging activities to manage marine sediment in ports are highly regulated and must undergo regulatory approvals processes under Commonwealth and State legislation.

Maintenance and capital dredging activities that will be undertaken to deliver PMaxP, include:

- **Berth 1:** Maintenance and capital dredging.
- **Berth 6:** Capital dredging, including land-based excavation.
- **Tug harbour inner walls:** Capital dredging.
- **Berth 8/9:** Capital dredging (works to be completed outside of the PMaxP construction scope).

A Trailer Suction Hopper Dredge will be used to complete maintenance dredging at Berth 1 to remove existing sediment from a previously dredged pocket. This is similar equipment to what is currently used at the Port to complete maintenance dredging in the harbour. A comparable process will also be adopted for the capital dredging at the Tug Harbour as there is no need to remove consolidated rock to achieve the design depth.

The last capital dredging at the Port was completed in 2002 as part of the Port Enhancement Project (PEP). Based on key learnings from the PEP dredge campaign, PMaxP will adopt a different methodology. This will involve rock conditioning using a hydro-hammer (to break the consolidated rock underlying the seabed into large pieces that will be used in land reclamation) and excavation via backhoe into a split hopper barge .

There will be no sea dumping of dredge spoil; all material will be used at either the new Berth 1 reclamation area or in the construction of the Tug Harbour, depending on the assessment of material quality.

To learn more about the different types of dredging activities, view our dredging information pack here.

5 What enabling works need to be undertaken to deliver the project?

Land reclamation and seawall construction

Creation of the Berth 1 rock revetment, causeway and reclamation area will be land-based using standard earthmoving equipment including dump trucks, loaders, excavators and rollers. The causeway will be created using commercially sourced quarry products. Land will be reclaimed at Berth 1 using a combination of imported fill and dredge materials.

The Tug Harbour breakwater will be created from land by gradually creating a land formation from north of the existing Berth 7 reclamation area extending northwards into Champion Bay. Rock armour is then placed along the outside of the formation to create the breakwater and to provide additional reinforcement and protection. Important not to use the term “clean fill” as it has a definition in the guidance

Piling works

Marine piling is the process of setting deep foundations into the bedrock below sea level to support nearshore and offshore based structures.

For PMaxP, most of the piling required will be marine based, for Berth 1, Berth 6, the Tug Harbour and the future Berth 8 / Berth 9. Piling works will involve the installation of tubular piles to form the foundations of the wharf decks. This is achieved using a combination of vibratory and impact piling hammers operated from either a piling barge or a land-based piling rig.

Berth 2 wharf deck removal

The original Berth 2 wharf deck was constructed in 1930 and no longer meets modern operating requirements. The removal of the Berth 2 wharf deck will be progressed as a construction activity. Construction cutting saws will be used to separate the deck into manageable segments. Each segment will be lifted out using a crane excavator and disposed of or recycled. Once the deck is removed, the piles will remain in place.

Port West Road upgrades

The Port West Roads upgrades will improve safety and connectivity for traffic through the Port road network. The upgrades will allow for greater road drainage and serviceability through dedicated service corridors, separate vehicle movements and enhance Port security through a consolidated security gate access point.

02

Click on a question to read the response

Planning and approvals

1. What are the key milestones that the project must meet to proceed to construction?
2. What is the EPA?
3. What elements of the project will be assessed as part of the environmental impact assessment?
4. What surveys and investigations will be undertaken to support the environmental impact assessment?
5. How is the data from studies and investigations used?
6. When will you share the outcomes from the environmental and marine investigations?
7. What opportunities will the community have to learn about the project and provide feedback?

1

What are the key milestones that the project must meet to proceed to construction?

Infrastructure projects such as PMaxP must comply with stringent regulations, with thorough consideration of environmental, social and heritage impacts. PMaxP will pass through several project phases between preliminary project planning through to construction and must meet specific approvals milestones to proceed.

PROJECT TIMELINE

2022

- **Preliminary project planning** – design concept development.
- Design concept validation with community and stakeholder input.
- Baseline surveys, investigations and modelling commences.

2023

- **Project development** – detailed design development.

2024

- Detailed environment and marine investigations commence.

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Community and stakeholder engagement to support understanding of project impacts.

- Referral of the project to the relevant regulatory bodies.
- Project environmental impact assessment.

2025

- Project refinement in response to environmental impact assessment outcomes.
- **Project approvals** – Project will not proceed until relevant regulatory approvals have been obtained.

2026

- **Construction** – staged construction works commence.

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Preliminary project planning (2022 – 2023)

Preliminary project planning involved the development of the project design concept informed by vessel and mooring simulations, wave modelling, and consultation with community and key stakeholder groups. Baseline surveys and investigations commenced during this phase to establish an understanding of the existing environment.

Project development (2023-2024) **Current phase*

The project is currently within the project development phase.

During project development, a range of planning works are undertaken to build the project's understanding of potential impacts, refine the design of project infrastructure and determine environmental approval requirements.

In August 2024, Mid West Ports referred key elements of the project to the relevant regulatory authorities. This is the first step of the environmental approvals process. Preliminary project information and baseline environmental survey data will be reviewed to determine the level of environmental assessment required for the project.

A range of detailed terrestrial and marine investigations are currently underway to support our understanding of potential impacts. This ensures there is a comprehensive understanding of how the project will impact the environment and the best way to avoid, minimise or manage these impacts.

A range of engagement activities will also be undertaken during project development to share project information and gather insights and feedback from the community and key stakeholders.

Environmental and planning approvals (2024-2025)

Following PMaxP's referral to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) in August 2024, a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is currently being prepared for the project. The EIA will summarise the outcomes of the terrestrial and marine investigations and information gathered through community and stakeholder consultation.

The EIA will also outline how identified project impacts will be avoided, minimised or managed, adopting best practice approaches.

Later this year, the EIA will be submitted to DWER for assessment under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

The environmental approvals process is expected to take 12-18 months to complete.

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Construction (2026-2028)

Rigorous management plans will be developed and approved as part of the environmental approvals process to manage staged construction activities and avoid, minimise or manage potential impacts.

Throughout the life of the project, Mid West Ports will keep our community and stakeholders up to date about the construction stages, and how we'll be working to ensure any potential impacts are minimised.

Construction of Berth 1, Berth 6 and the Tug Harbour facility works are expected to commence in 2026.

2 What is the EPA?

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) comprises five members and operates completely independently from Government. This means, the EPA does not take direction from the Minister and its advice to Government is made public record. The EPA's operations are governed by the *Environmental Protection Act 1986 (EP Act 1986)*.

The key functions of the EPA are to conduct environmental impact assessments, prepare statutory policies and guidelines for environmental protection and provide strategic advice to the Minister for Environment.

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) will complete the assessment for PMaxP under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. DWER will provide recommendations to the EPA to inform the project's environmental approvals. At the completion of the assessment the EPA prepares a report and recommendations for the Minister of Environment.

3 What elements of the project will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment?

PMaxP will progress in stages, aligned with required environmental investigations and approvals. The environmental approvals process is underway for PMaxP upgrade works for Berth 1, the new Tug Harbour facility, and Berth 6.

While the construction is not a part of the PMaxP scope, potential environmental impacts will be considered as part of the approvals process for future construction of Berth 8 / Berth 9, to support future renewable energy projects.

The environmental impact assessment will assess the following key activities:

- **Berth 1, 8/9:** Dredging, piling, land reclamation and wharf deck construction.
- **Berth 6:** Dredging and wharf deck extension.
- **Tug Harbour:** Breakwater extension, dredging, land reclamation, piling and jetty construction.

4

What surveys and investigations will be undertaken to support the project's environmental impact submission?

Initial terrestrial and marine environmental surveys commenced in 2022 to establish a baseline understanding of the existing environment. Further detailed environmental, social, heritage, and engineering surveys and investigations are currently underway to inform our understanding of potential project impacts.

There are several key factors that the project must consider, including:

- Marine environmental quality.
- Benthic communities and habitats.
- Marina fauna.
- Coastal processes.
- Social surroundings.

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A range of data and information is being gathered through detailed investigations and studies to understand how the project may affect these factors and ensure appropriate measures are in place to avoid, minimise or manage impacts. Current investigations include:

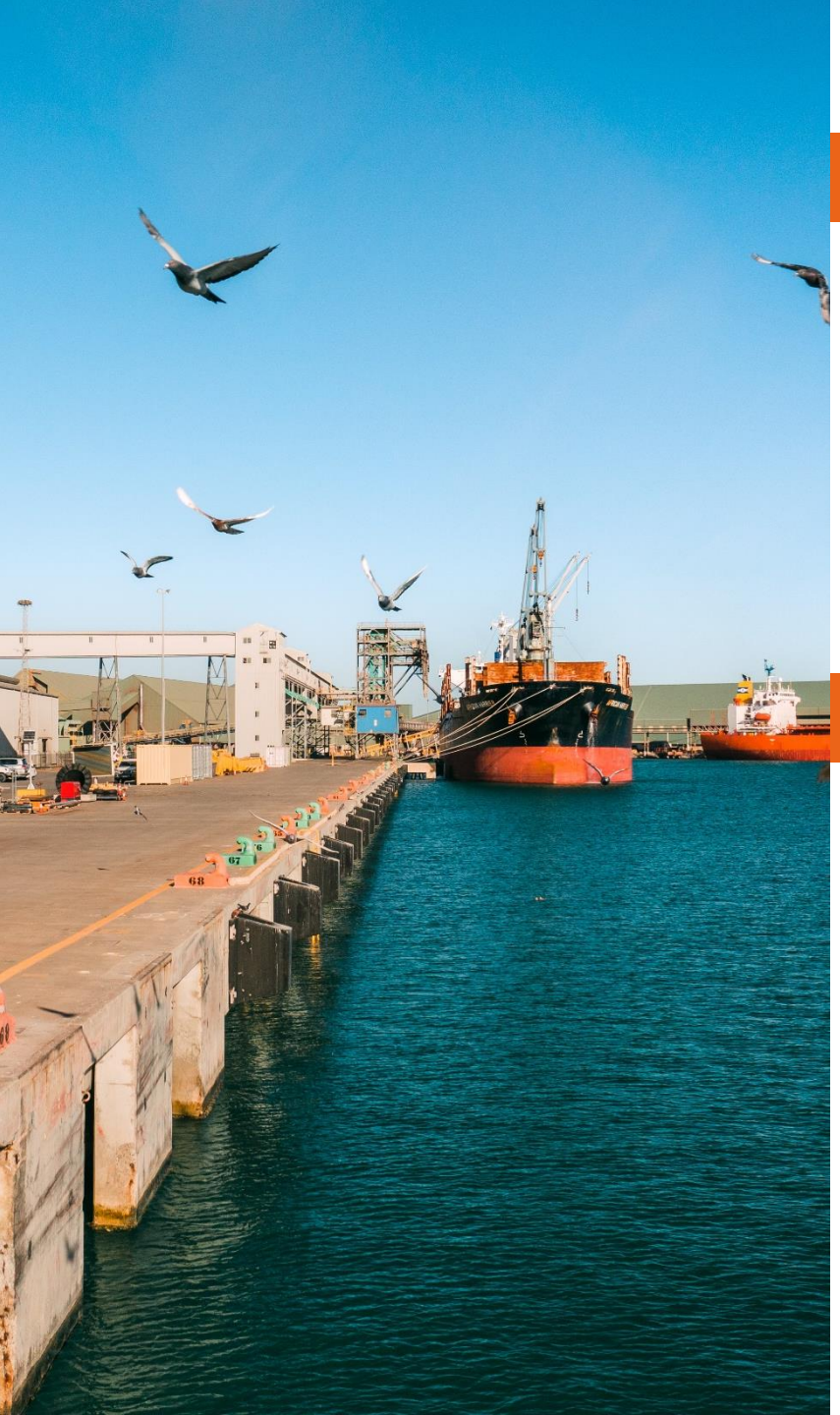
- Coastal processes - wave and sediment transport modelling.
- Optimisation study for the tug harbour footprint and outer breakwater orientation.
- Dredge impacts: Hydrodynamic and plume dispersion modelling.
- Benthic communities and habitats survey.
- Sediment quality sampling.
- Marine water quality monitoring.
- Underwater noise modelling - in relation to impacts to marine fauna.
- Noise modelling (air and land-based noise) - in relation to social surroundings.
- Greenhouse gas emissions assessment.
- Landscape and visual impact assessment.
- Social impact assessment.

5

How is the data from studies and investigations used?

Our investigations allow us to understand how the environment may change as a result of the project and determine best-practice ways to manage identified impacts.

Information gathered in our preliminary project planning and project development phases will inform the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) document for assessment by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER).



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When will you share the outcomes from the environmental and marine investigations?

Detailed terrestrial and marine investigations are currently underway to support the project's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) submission to DWER for assessment.

All investigation outcomes will be included in the EIA provided to DWER as part of the assessment process. The EIA will be available on the Environmental Protection Authority's website for public reference at this time.

7

What opportunities will the community have to learn about the project and provide feedback?

Throughout the delivery of PMaxP, we will work with our community and stakeholders to share project information, identify ways we can reduce any potential impacts, and support strong community outcomes.

We value your input and encourage you to share your feedback through our project website, via email, and at our upcoming community information sessions.

To learn more about PMaxP, future information sessions and to sign up to our e-newsletter for project updates, visit our webpage **here.**

Please reach out to the PMaxP Team today for questions or further information.

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