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Sent: Friday, 16 December 2022 4:40 PM

To: ParramattaLightRail <ParramattaLightRail@transport.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Fwd: SUBMISSION TO - EIS for the Parramatta Light Rail Project and impacts on boating access to Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour

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To ParramattaLightRail

Dear Madam/Sir,

Due to issues with the online portal, I am sending this Submission by email. I have lived in the Carlingford area since 2006, however have utilised local ramps along the Parramatta River since 1987, as a General Member, Committee Member of our Scuba Diving Club, & as the President of the Scuba Clubs Association of NSW.

We have major concerns regarding the access to our Waterways due to the lack of interest of the Current Government regarding the rights of Sydney Boating Public.

Public Foreshore Land has been sold off to Developers all along our waterways, with little or no regard to the Voting Public to be able to have free access to

foreshore facilities.

To ignore concerns raised shows an Arrogance that will be noted in the upcoming State Election!!

Greg Blackburne
President
Scuba Clubs Association of NSW

SUBMISSION:

Re., Feedback on the EIS for the Parramatta Light Rail Project and impacts on boating access to Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour

We are concerned:

- the NSW Government has ignored concerns raised by the Boating Industry Association more than a year ago regarding significant impacts on access to the waterways and Sydney Harbour;
- the EIS describes the reduced access to the waterways as delivering social disruption, stress, along with damage to health and wellbeing ... without appropriate solutions to this social (and economic) disruption;
- the State Government in the EIS acknowledges Future Transport as a guiding strategy for the project but this appears to be lip services as there is no indication of a well-considered package of alternatives and or solutions to the potential disruption and fails to meet the goal of 'improving access for all boaters on the State's waterways'; furthermore, the EIS indicates there could be a net loss of trailerboat access/ parking post project completion.
- The NSW Government will:
 - prevent people for approximately three years from accessing the Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour at a safe, convenient and accessible location designed and built for that purpose;
 - force people to use Rhodes or Kissing Point which have insufficient trailer parking to accommodate the additional of usage flowing from Ermington;
 - force people to tow further afield adding to congestion, stress, access and parking issues elsewhere;
 - force people into already pressure areas for example Kissing Point which has an adjacent park that can lead to a number of single cars taking up available slots for activities to do not involve launching or retrieving a boat, which is the purpose of the facility; and
 - permanently reduce the available access and parking at Ermington Boat Ramp post construction for an 'operational building' in a valuable waterfront location.
- The NSW Government has not provided appropriate solutions or alternatives for people in Western Sydney and surrounding areas for having their access cut off for three years to what is the finest harbour in the world. This is compounded by the EIS which states: *'However, most users are expected to adapt and move to other areas on the river further from construction*

activities, which would reduce the intensity of impacts.'

- Unfortunately, this suggests the tactic is to wait for the boating public to give up thereby negating the level of concern by the NSW Government.
- The NSW Government is going to disrupt public amenity and access so that a construction company can have accommodations and carparking on public lands which were designated for public use with facilities designed and built by the waterfront to provide people with access to the Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour.

The Ermington Boat Ramp has high value to industry and boating public who reside within 45 minutes (or more) from this access point to the key waterways of Sydney and Sydney Harbour itself. The demographic impact includes, but not limited to, people of Western Sydney. The ramp is the one of the best in Sydney to access the waterways of Sydney Harbour. The variety of boats include motorboats, row boats, paddle craft and sailing craft. Many of these participate in fishing.

The EIS Social Impact Statements continues: *'Construction of the bridge between Melrose Park and Wentworth Point would take place adjacent to the Ermington Boat Ramp, which would be closed for up to three years. During this time, recreational users would need to access Parramatta River from other nearby boat ramps. The closest alternate ramps are:*

- *Silverwater Boat Ramp – located in Silverwater around five kilometres or eight minutes' drive*
- *Rhodes Boat Ramp – located in Rhodes around five kilometres or ten minutes' drive*
- *Kissing Point Park Boat Ramp – located in Putney around six kilometres or 15 minutes' drive.*

However, Silverwater Boat Ramp would not be able to be used to access areas of Parramatta River downstream of Wentworth Point for a period of up to three months when the navigation channel is closed for construction of the bridge between Melrose Park and Wentworth Point. During this period, the Rhodes or Kissing Point Park boat ramps (or those further east toward Sydney Harbour) would need to be used.

None of these boat ramps have the same level of parking provisions as the Ermington Boat Ramp, which has 52 boat trailer car parking spaces, and 62 spots in total. The car park at Ermington Boat Ramp would be reinstated following construction, however the presence of the project's operational infrastructure has the potential to result in a permanent reduction of about 10 boat trailer parking spaces. This reduction in trailer parking may inconvenience users and could deter some users from participating in recreational boating and water sports at this location, which was raised by some social impact survey respondents as a concern.

The reduction in boat trailer parking at the ramp has the potential increase the overflow parking activity in surrounding local streets, which could increase existing amenity issues. Reduced participation in boating and recreational activities could impact quality of life and wellbeing for some. Increased use of the Silverwater, Rhodes and Kissing Point Park boat ramps could result in increased traffic congestion and reduced availability of parking spaces, which may inconvenience

other users and decrease pedestrian safety.

Ermington Boat Ramp services a large proportion of recreational and boat-based fishers from an area 45in drive (or more) away. If the boating public were to lose access to the Ermington/Wharf Road Boat Ramp, the other ramps upriver could not sustain the increased numbers nor have the facilities to offer. To highlight the concerns, it is not uncommon at this ramp to wait up to 30 mins to launch/ retrieve your boat due to its popularity.

Ermington/Wharf Rd Boat Ramp has the ability to park 53 cars and trailers in marked bays, with the further ability to park another 20-25 on surrounding grass areas. During popular times, on weekends and during midweek, it is common to see overflow parking from the boat ramp into the surrounding residential streets. This ramp also has the ability to launch and retrieve three vessels at a time. It has a toilet facility, a fish cleaning facility and a generous floating pontoon area for safe access to less experienced operators.

The EIS states the Project references key state significant government strategies which includes Future Transport Strategy C4.8 Create safer waterway access and infrastructure.

Under this 'strategic direction' endorsed by the Minister, where C stands for Connecting our Customers, the commitment is as follows: *The NSW Government is committed to improving access for all boaters on the State's waterways. We have already made significant investments to improve boating access, infrastructure and amenities, dredge navigable waterways and install navigation aids. We will continue to deliver in these areas through programs such as the Maritime Infrastructure Stimulus and Boating Now programs. We will also activate maritime and foreshore precincts to attract more visitors and private investment. The NSW Government also has a role in balancing the increasing demand for on-water storage, with the impacts of moorings on the environment. We must also ensure people have safe and responsible access to the water.*

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Project Team (NSW Government & Contract Builder) note the above and for the duration of the construction period impacting Ermington Boat Ramp to deliver the following:

1. to not close Ermington Boat Ramp for the duration of the construction period which could be approximately three years;
2. if absolutely necessary, to not totally close Ermington Boat Ramp for the duration of the construction period;
 - a. for example to provide managed access for vehicles towing or carrying boats in order to continue to support access the waterway and Sydney Harbour
3. to not disenfranchise the public and restrict access to the waterway and Sydney Harbour, in order for the Ermington Boat Ramp site to accommodate project site sheds or offices, and or project car parking at a high-value waterfront location;
 - a. if such operational occupation is needed, use a site of less public

amenity and public value by the waterfront;

4. to ensure alternative and adequate launching facilities are identified that can accommodate the range of vessel types, with appropriate access and parking space
5. to ensure there are appropriate traffic management plans in place at Ermington Boat Ramp and any alternate boat ramps which incorporate the following:
 - a. access and parking appropriate to accommodate increased use due to restrictions at Ermington Boat Ramp
 - b. an appropriate funded and sustained education campaign to raise awareness amongst the impacted public
 - c. an appropriate compliance approach which enables people to access and park in and around these sites
6. that if the closure regrettably proceeds, Transport for NSW (the regulator for vehicles, vessels and trailers) provides owners of registered boats within a 60min drive of Ermington Boat Ramp with the following:
 - a. 50% discount on registration fees
 - b. 50% discount on licence fees

50% discount on any Tolls accumulated in using alternate ramps to access the waterway and Sydney Harbour.

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