



SYDNEY UNIVERSITY BOAT CLUB

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Major Projects
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects/project/10011>

Dear Madam/Sir

Re SSD 8924 - New Sydney Fish Market Concept and Stage 1 Early Works

I write on behalf of the Sydney University Boat Club, an amateur rowing club whose association with the waters of Blackwattle Bay goes back to 1896, when the newly formed Sydney University Women's Boat Club first rowed there, and 1900, when Sydney University Boat Club (then a men's club) began rowing from there. We have operated from our current boatshed at the end of Wharf Road since 1995, and currently have some 25 masters rowers, about 50 schoolgirl rowers, and about 20 canoe club paddlers, accessing Blackwattle Bay from the shed.

Objections

We object to a number of important aspects of the proposed development

1. The available rowing course on Blackwattle Bay is shortened by 45-50 m in the long term, and an unspecified amount during the 4-5 years of construction
2. The public wharf on the eastern side of the project is too long to allow safe rowing/canoe turning. This extended length is not justified in the project.
3. The current assessment of water traffic within the Navigational Impact Assessment (NIA) is inadequate because it fails to accurately reflect the current and predicted water traffic volume.

1. Shortening of rowing course

We acknowledge that there has been considerable and constructive consultation between Sydney Fish Markets, Infrastructure NSW and recreational water users concerning the proposed western trawler wharves, and that the resulting proposed trawler wharf layout is a significantly better outcome for us than the indicative design of 2018. However, the proposal remains a "least worst" outcome for us, in that it still results in a loss of some 45-50 m (approximately 10%) in the length of the rowable water on Blackwattle Bay. The proposed long term shortening of our course may well offset safety concerns that would otherwise arise, but is also reduces our amenity significantly. Our preferred position remains no reduction in our course.

In addition, it would seem likely that the perimeter of work during construction will be greater than the final perimeter of the development. The proposal fails to identify how much of the Bay may be taken over by construction activities. We object to any further reduction of the rowing course for construction activities – any such further reduction is likely to place rowing craft more closely in conflict with powered vessels from the remaining east side marina, as well as further reducing our amenity over the extended period of construction activity.

Also, we note that the apparent impact of the development on the rowing course is lessened by the omission of Glebe Rowing Club and its pontoon from most of the major relevant diagrams including those in A3 Vol Appendix 1 Concept Drawings and A3 Vol

Appendix 2 Concept Design Report Part 3. Inclusion of this structure would make the distances clearer, and better indicate how much of the course is proposed to be lost.

2. Public wharf on eastern side is too long

The proposed public ferry and recreational wharf extends 35 m beyond the proposed trawler wharves, into the current agreed rowing course (Fig 21 in NIA) and overlaps the rowing route up the east side of the Bay. We currently muster and turn where the Eastern wharf is proposed. Even with the length of course reduced by 45-50m, we would still be turning within about 20 m of the proposed wharf – an unsafe distance.

We note that the NIA projects that private motorized vessel access to the new Market is expected to increase, but no estimates of current or projected usage are provided to substantiate such a large wharf.

We request that the public wharf be shortened by at least 25 m to provide safe clearance to turning rowing boats.

One reason why the problem of the eastern wharf is not so obvious in the NIA is because the agreed rowing course (Fig 21 on p.21) has not been transferred accurately to the “indicative” Diagrams on pp 43-44. The course negotiated by RMS and Rowing NSW allows safe passage up and down the Bay by providing a course width of approximately 115-150m. The width appears to have been reduced in the indicative diagrams to perhaps 90 -100m. Such a width suggests a lesser interaction between ferries on the extended wharf and rowing boats, but would increase the risk of collision between rowing craft and motorized vessels travelling up and down the Bay.

3. Water traffic assessment

The current DA has no adequate assessment of future volume of water traffic. With a proper assessment, we feel that the development proposal could be improved, and the risks to safety posed by plans such as the east wharf (see above) could be ameliorated.

The submitted EIS (p 18) and the NIA (p.20) both fail to grasp the full extent of recreational use of the Bay. Data was gathered from websites, but without consultation with us or other recreational users of the Bay. Examples of incorrect or missing information include:

- Reference to the rowing course as voluntary (p. 19 NIA). In fact, the course navigation plan was negotiated and agreed by RMS and Rowing NSW.
- Lack of data of the frequency of use of the rowing course. The NIA reports the course is used most weekday mornings and weekends, but appears to have no quantification of the recreational use. The comment does not pick up, for example, on our schoolgirl rowers or those of other clubs such as Glebe Rowing Club, on weekday afternoons, or the extended day use of the Bay by our canoeists.
- There appear to be no estimates of day-tripper arrivals to the Fish Markets by small powered vessels – either currently or into the future – to justify the size and positioning of the Eastern wharf.
- There appear to be no estimates of either the current use of the public ferry or of the size of increases in its use in the future.
- While the proponents were required to consider the possible cumulative impacts of Glebe Island developments along with the Fish Markets, there has been no apparent consideration given to the impact of the concurrent development of the (already approved) Banks Street marina. The NIA report points out that where developments occur concurrently, there may be significant navigational impacts. The Banks Street marina is far more likely to impact Fish Markets construction activity than the Glebe Island developments. Also, the Banks Street marina will have a significant impact on

the agreed rowing course, although a new navigation plan to reflect its impact has yet to be negotiated.

The lack of adequate water traffic volume assessment means that the analysis of potential collision risks is also inadequate, and neither the government nor water users can be assured the risks have been properly addressed.

Other comments

Safety provisions during construction

It is expected that the construction phase will create some 4-5 years of disruption for water activity by recreational users. We note the DA makes provision to minimize the disruption and safety risk during this phase.

We agree with the need for these safety measures and argue that these should be reflected in the tender and terms for the construction contract, including:

- Demolition material will not be transported via Sydney Harbour
- Transit of any floating plant should account for navigation restrictions and general safety requirements including keeping a good lookout for recreational vessels
- Clearly marked floating boom and silt curtain to assist in defining no-go areas for non-powered craft during construction
- An appropriate program of consultation and information to ensure that stakeholders including recreational water users are fully notified of proposed construction activities.

We request that the construction company be required to create a recreational users community consultation group to assist in the management of all safety and operational aspects of construction to ensure that stakeholders are well informed of planned activities as well as of day-to-day changes to plans (e.g. necessary for weather or other contingencies) in a timely and regular manner. That consultation group should have recourse to the government department letting the contact as final arbiter.

In summary, we object to:

- The proposed reduction of our rowing course by 45-50 m in the longer term, and by what we assume will be a greater amount during the construction period
- The proposed over-development of the eastern wharf
- The inadequacy of the assessment of future water traffic volumes.

We request that:

- Any overall reduction in our rowing course be minimized, both during construction and in the longer term
- The eastern ferry/public wharf be shortened by at least 25 metres
- An assessment of current and future traffic volumes based on appropriate data be used to inform a risk analysis and the development of a reasoned and fair navigation plan for Blackwattle and Rozelle Bays
- Water risk amelioration measures should be documented in the construction contractor's tender documents and contract.
- The construction contractors be required to set up a recreational users community consultation group to negotiate safety and operational aspects and ensure timely and accurate information transfer.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Cook". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Cook
President
Sydney University Boat Club