



# Submission - Ermington Boat Ramp

**ISSUE:** Ermington Boat Ramp

**SUBJECT:** Boating activity

**BACKGROUND:**

29 Aug 2021 – BIA met with Thompson Clarke Shipping (TCS) who have been engaged by TfNSW to conduct a survey of vessels using Parramatta River as they are considering a bridge between Archer Point and Ermington for the Parramatta Light Rail.

TCS would like to understand the level of recreational vessels use the river around Archer Point along the lines of the following agenda

- a) Location of proposed bridge for the light rail (see dotted line on map attached)
- b) Types of vessels that use that area of the river
- c) Annual usage of ramps at Silverwater Bridge, Ermington, John Whitton Bridge
- d) Concerns about the probable loss of use by recreational vessels of Ermington ramp during construction



ShipImage.JPG

Feedback to Richard Lorraine on e., [paddy1or1@bigpond.com](mailto:paddy1or1@bigpond.com)

**CURRENT POSITION:**

The BIA submits the following:

I have advice that goes as follows: The Ermington (Wharf Road) boat ramp is the gateway to Sydney Harbour for trailer boats in west. The massive car park is more often than not overflowing in the summer months, the trailers and cars stretch out onto the surrounding streets.

The BIA trailer boat members in the West agree that the Ermington Boat should not be impacted by these constructions and everything should be done to ensure its kept open – there are only 7 functional boat ramps for Sydney Harbour, this is one of the major ones. Access to Sydney Harbour is already stretched and limited.

Close by there is the Silverwater boat ramp under the bridge – This ramp is not used widely due to it being a shallow ramp, especially at a low tide, plus the location has less pontoons for vessel access. This location would be a better site for the construction set up.



## Submission - Ermington Boat Ramp

In the other direction is the John Whitton Ramp – very small facility with parking for less than 20 Car trailers. Heavily impacted by current flow. Not a viable option to take the overflow from Ermington.

Further towards the harbour is Five Dock ramp – runs at full capacity in the summer months. The next ramp is Rose Bay on the harbour – that is a nightmare at the best of times.

All in all if boaters are unable to use Ermington ramp they will be forced to source other ramps putting pressure on their capabilities plus forcing more travel time on already busy roads in and around Sydney.

Industry members that would have their customers impacted would be:

- Shannon Outboards
- Blakes Marine
- TR Marine
- Watersports Marine
- A & J Outboards
- Independent Outboards

**AI McGlashan added:** The other ramps are inadequate in comparison to Wharf Rd and will only add further traveling to a disgruntled West. As a result there is often a queue to launch, not just in summer, but now for much of the year. Boats ranging in size from kayaks right through 8 metre plus vessels. It is also worth mentioned that with Western Sydney copping it so hard presently not being able to go boating any further restrictions, loss of access or delays at this ramp will be like lighting a firecracker under the State Government as the situation gets ever more volatile with a very unhappy West

I have used the ramp on a weekly basis for over a decade and the boating traffic has increased dramatically so we should be looking at upgrading the facility and increasing trailer parking at this point and definitely not any reduction.

**Futhermore, input from a person who makes frequent use of the ramp:**

I would like to start by responding to the dot points listed in your email.

a). The location of the proposed bridge has raised concerns in the local community in relation to (temporary) closure but also long term accessibility and parking for recreational boaters and fishers. I am of the understanding the Melrose Park Residents Action Group have voiced the



## Submission - Ermington Boat Ramp

community's concerns and their preference for moving the proposed position of the bridge to the west of the boat ramp, ie: via Waratah Street and not Wharf Road, therefore negating access issues during construction of the new bridge and access thereafter.

b). The location of the proposed bridge for light rail (shown as the dotted red line on the map attached to your email) indicates the location of the proposed bridge to the east of the existing boat ramp facilities and circulation roadways to the boat ramp facilities. The location of the bridge in that location will potentially adversely impact on the existing boat ramp facilities and circulation roadways to the boat ramp facilities. Being actively involved with the boating community, and as a local resident and regular user of the existing boat ramp facilities, I know how important the existing facilities are for recreational boaters and fishers. I know the boating community would be outraged if the location of the bridge resulted in the loss of the existing boat ramp facilities, circulation roadways to the boat ramp facilities or loss in any of the existing off street parking for cars and boat trailers at the facility.

c). Types of vessels that use this boat ramp include trailered vessels to 8m (recreational, sports fishing and trailer/sailer type vessels). The air-draft of these vessels can in some cases be greater than 8m. Also with the popularity of paddle type craft we are seeing an increase in the use of this ramp by these users launching and retrieving their watercraft. It is also common for Emergency Services to use this ramp for operational launching and retrieving.

d). Currently the 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 3 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.

In relation to Silverwater Bridge Boat Ramp, it has the capacity for car and boat trailers to be parked in 22 marked bays. However, commonly these bays are being used by heavy vehicles as an overnight rest stop. Reducing the available parking space numbers down to sometimes as low as five. This is a single lane boat ramp suited only to smaller trailer type vessels due to its shallow water entry. This ramp has a timber style pile type wharf that is not user friendly in regards to recreational use, due to it being a potentially hazardous type surface with oysters, slime, (slippery surface). This ramp does not have a fish cleaning table.

In relation to the John Whitton Bridge Boat Ramp at Rhodes, it has the capacity to park 13 cars and trailers in marked spots. However, it is commonly used by commercial operators for the loading and unloading of building materials by barge, reducing its parking capacity. It is also one



## Submission - Ermington Boat Ramp

lane and has a reasonably shallow entry and does not have a toilet or fish cleaning facilities.

e). Ermington/Wharf Rd Boat Ramp geographically services the largest proportion of recreational and fishing type boat users in Western Sydney. If recreational boat users were to experience a loss of access to the Ermington/Wharf Road Boat Ramp, the other ramps mentioned could not sustain the increased number of users nor have the facilities to offer. To highlight the popularity of this boat ramp it is not uncommon to wait up to 30 mins to launch/retrieve your boat due to the large amount of users.

**From the paddling sector**, I have this advice: there is a small number of paddlers who use that ramp regularly who would be interested in offering comment. Much of the additional comment has to do with the steps needed to clean the waterway in order to achieve the target of a swimmable river by 2025. The amount of pollution coming down Duck Creek is a major contributor.

Finally, regarding aircraft: As mentioned, a Thompson 8 (big trailerable with a high aspect rig) can have a mast height of 13.5m from the sheer so air draft could go to 15m. That would mean any bridge planning should be at least 20m from MHWM.

The BIA commend TCS for the opportunity to provide our input.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr Neil Patchett, Co General Manager, on e. [neil@bia.org.au](mailto:neil@bia.org.au) or m. 0418 279 465 on this matter.

*Issue date: 10 September 2021*