



Submission

Scarborough Boat Harbour

ISSUE: Scarborough Boat Harbour Master Plan

SUBJECT: 2021 Initial Public Consultation

INTRODUCTION: The Qld Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is preparing for development of a Master Plan for Scarborough Boat Harbour. In September 2021, TMR called for feedback on what people value about the harbour, how it's currently used and how the public could use it in the future.

Now is a chance to provide TMR with ideas to help the precinct realise its potential to meet contemporary demands, such as further opportunities for access, and growth within commercial and recreational maritime activities.

The project webpage is at <https://www.yoursay-projects.tmr.qld.gov.au/scarborough-boat-harbour>

The online survey can be completed on an individual basis or as part of a group response, closing on 11.59pm pm Sunday 24 October 2021.

SUMBISSION

The Boating Industry Association Ltd (BIA) is the peak body in Australia that represents the interests of recreational and light commercial boating. BIA is an advocate for boaters and the boating lifestyle and supports safe, responsible, and enjoyable boating.

The boating economy generates significant social benefits through employment, much of which is supported by family businesses. In 2021 the industry reported a turnover of \$8.835 billion, directly employed more than 27,630 people with more than 10,000 contractors¹. Seventy-five per cent are in small businesses, employing local workers and supporting local communities.

There are more than 925,000 registered vessels and a countless number of craft (such as paddle craft) which do not require registration or licensing. New boat registrations number more than 18,000 a year².

Boating is also a significant contributor to the economy that spans metropolitan, rural and regional Australia.

¹ [2021 BIA Industry Data report card](#)

² [2021 BIA Industry Data report card](#)



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The Opportunity:

Scarborough Boat Harbour has the potential to deliver a world-class boating destination achieving national and international recognition. The outer boat harbour offers a green field site, a unique opportunity in the fast-growing SE Queensland region. The boat harbour is ideally located on Moreton Bay, providing the potential to promote and protect the environment and ecology of the area.

- The BIA represents the boating industry who are tenants in the Boat Harbour as a place of land-based work but also water-based work which includes the marinas; moorings; boat yards; marine services which includes support for a range of activities such as commercial vessel operations.
- All these activities not only support jobs and the economy but also social benefits.
- While modern practices in vessel service and repair, and waste management, can help deliver environmental benefits.
- Boating has proven to be a standout choice in leisure activity through the pandemic. The combination of no international travel, the staycation phenomenon, flexible work practices and the need to be COVID Safe have seen interest in getting out the water ramp up significantly.
- A boat is like an island where you choose where to go, when and who with, and its supports compliance with social distancing.
- Not only that but it is good for your body and mind. Work in social science has shown that on a boat, feel-good hormones like dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin go up, while stress (cortisol) goes down.
- The boom in boating has created unprecedented demand for access to our waterways, and the State Government has a key role in ensuring our land-water interface keeps in step with the changing times.

Aspirational goals:

The State Government through its maritime regulator and maritime property landlord (TMR) in partnership with the boating sector, delivers a Boat Harbour Master Plan that achieves the following:

- 1) A world-class boating destination and maritime precinct, and valuable safe haven, for the northern end of Moreton Bay, attracting boaters from Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast, and Australian and International boat owners cruising or visiting the east coast of Australia.



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- 2) A maritime destination with marina village incorporating cafes, restaurants, retail, boardwalks, and public space.
- 3) A well-equipped vessel servicing, storage, and launching location serving the regional boating community, and visiting boat owners.
- 4) An internationally recognised, safe and protected boat harbour environment attracting the wider cruising community.
- 5) A convention facility for marine focused training, boating lifestyle events, and community waterfront festivals.
- 6) A Boat Harbour Master Plan that delivers **economic benefits** including:
 - a) A sustainable maritime industry supporting career pathways for skills and trades in the maritime sector.
 - b) TMR to incentivise investment to enable the private sector to support government and the public good through the delivery of appropriate land-water interface infrastructure into future. This requires security of tenure and sustainable rents for maritime infrastructure such as marinas and boat yards. This should be cognisant of the relatively high operational and capital costs associated with managing new and improved infrastructure on and by the water, particularly salt water.
- 7) A Boat Harbour Master Plan that delivers **social benefits** such as:
 - a) The waterfront and the land-water interface should be a place of maritime infrastructure that supports public access as much as possible. For example, built infrastructure such as jetties or marinas should have public access as part of their configuration. As an example, a marina/ boat yard could be given rent reduction incentives to provide public good such as access to fuel, sewage pump out, toilets, waste collection, café/ kiosk, courtesy berth etc. The more the public good they provide, the better the rent reduction.
- 8) A Boat Harbour Master Plan that delivers **environmental benefits** including:
 - a) The State Government supported innovation in areas such as coastal hazard adaption due to factors including sea level rise and extreme weather arising from Climate Change. This is a critical issue with management opportunities at the land-water interface. For example, supporting floating structures (eg., floating pontoon marinas) allows public facilities to mitigate risks associated with changes in sea level.



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- b) Deliver infrastructure that is not only climate change and sea level rise appropriate but does not create barriers to the land-water interface; rather, infrastructure should enhance the land-water interface and the public's experience and access to the water.
 - c) Plan for drinking water refill stations to alleviate the need for single-use plastic water bottles. Ensure any hospitality tenants are required to use non-plastic takeaway food and drink containers and cutlery. Provide waste recycling containers split by type (recyclable/ general).
 - d) Planning to accommodate alternative fuels such as electric, hydrogen etc.
- 9) A Boat Harbour Master Plan that delivers **cultural benefits** including:
- a) Deliver real opportunities for indigenous people to be engaged, participate and be recognised. This could materialise in the built environment/ infrastructure design and or build; and employment;
 - b) A recognition of the multi-cultural maritime/ boating history of the site and region.
- 10) Delivery of a Boat Harbour Master Plan that supports a balanced approach to social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits in a maritime context.

Benefits to be received:

- Marine/ boating tourism for the Moreton Bay Region promoting the area.
- Small business and employment opportunities for the regional economy.
- Maximising the purpose of the harbour as one of only two small boat harbours in Brisbane.
- The creation of a notable boating destination for local and international vessels.
- Making Scarborough Harbour into the jewel of the Redcliffe Peninsula.
- Be a complement to other boating-oriented developments in the area such as North Harbour and Newport Quays.

We recommend extensive industry and stakeholder consultation to achieve these goals.

Furthermore:



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- Governments often raise the importance and value of 'green space' such as parks and reserves when engaging the public in planning decisions.
- We must however value 'blue space' as much as 'green space'; both are valuable public areas. We recommend adopting an overall 'green/ blue' approach so that we work to build not just green spaces, which gives a sense that they are land based and independent from one another, but to consider a "Green Blue Grid" where the aim is to connect, integrate, enable and care for these land-water interface locations.
- TMR should adopt such a strategic approach to its portfolio of boat harbours and create a Green Blue Destination where the public land-water interface is designed to accommodate the maritime/ boating industry as well as the 'sea change' demographic trend along with COVID-inspired regional decentralization. The boating economy generates significant social and economic benefits through employment, much of which is supported by family businesses. This would help supporting jobs and economic opportunities for our regional communities; to better support our boating and marine assets; youth groups and clubs; improve security and duration of tenure over land, so that the organisations who add so much to our communities have a stable base from which to grow and thrive.
- A strategic Green-Blue-Grid concept could include the following:
 - Conserve, improve and expand the strategic network of land-water interface opportunities that are the harbours of Qld. Connecting built environments, integrating transport and connecting residents, workers and visitors with a diversity of open space, public facilities, and commercial and recreational opportunities.
 - Safeguard and plan the Green Blue Grid infrastructure in parallel with the strategic planning of the State's other infrastructure. Promoting the multifunctional nature of the cultural, environmental, social and economic benefits open space offers.
- Strengthen and support evolving community connections - We would also draw attention to Professor Ralf Buckley of Griffith University and the International Chair in Ecotourism Research and his work to put a public health value on open spaces. His work published in 2019 revealed Australia's national parks are worth \$145 billion to the economy from the improved mental health of people who visit them, according to peer-reviewed research. This highlights the need for urgent



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consideration as to how we can provide safe integrated and well-planned access to both the outdoor 'green' and 'blue' spaces for our collective physical and mental health.

Develop a Green Blue economic benefit study and consider engaging Prof Buckley to quantify these outcomes and assist in shaping priorities, policy and strategies re., social benefit. This would be of considerable value to the wider issue of strategic planning for opportunities around the land-water interface across QLD.

We recommend TMR adopt a Green Blue Grid approach to support resilient, sustainable and prosperous communities across QLD. This would not only support the aims of the Boat Harbour Master Plan but a quadruple bottom line approach of social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits. It would also recognise that boating is a way of life for many Australian families; it is estimated that 2 million people participate in some form of boating each year in QLD. The vast majority of which occurs in family runabouts and small sailing and paddle craft. Also, Australians are collectively wealthier, living longer and better educated than ever before; and are settling in coastal areas for the lifestyle benefits which includes being on, in, under and by the water. More than 85 per cent of the population live within 50km of the coast and almost 1 in 5 households can have a boat or watercraft.

The BIA commend Transport and Main Roads for the opportunity to provide our input.

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

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