



Submission: Ermington Boat Ramp – Sept '23

ISSUE: Ermington Boat Ramp

SUBJECT: Consultation on Stage 2 amendments for the Parramatta Light Rail Project which impacts on Boating Access to Parramatta River and Sydney Harbour

INTRODUCTION:

Transport for NSW is seeking planning approval to construct and operate the second stage of Parramatta Light Rail. They say:

‘The project will connect the Parramatta CBD and the first stage of Parramatta Light Rail to Camellia, Rydalmere, Ermington, Melrose Park, Wentworth Point, Sydney Olympic Park, and the Carter Street precinct in Lidcombe, adjacent to Sydney Olympic Park.

‘Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 will connect local communities in Greater Parramatta to the Olympic Peninsula and bring the vision of a ‘30-minute city’ closer to reality. It will also connect to the future Sydney Metro West, heavy rail in Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park, and ferry services at Rydalmere and Sydney Olympic Park.’

Feedback on the amendments close 11.59pm, Sunday 3 September 2023 via email to parramattalightrail@transport.nsw.gov.au

BACKGROUND:

10 September 2021: BIA made a [submission](#) to Thompson Clarke Shipping who were engaged by Transport for NSW to conduct a survey of vessels using Parramatta River as part of considering a bridge between Archer Point and Ermington for the Parramatta Light Rail. No formal response to concerns was received.

December 2022: According to media reports: The state government expects it to take until 2031 before the second stage of Parramatta’s multibillion-dollar light rail line opens to passengers, about five years later than originally planned.

An environmental assessment of the project also shows that construction of two bridges over Parramatta River for the light rail line will disrupt ferry services for months due to temporary closures of navigational channels. Hundreds of on-street car parks in fast-growing suburbs will also be permanently removed.



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While the project is still subject to planning approval, the report by Transport for NSW reveals the agency anticipates construction to start in 2025 and take as long as six years to complete. The bridges will each take three years to build.

The two bridges are planned to be built over the river between Camellia and Rydalmere, and between Melrose Park and Wentworth Point.

Their construction, under current publicly available plans, will force the closure of car parking at Rydalmere wharf and Ermington Boat Ramp for three years. While the wharf will remain open, the boat ramp will be closed for about three years. The EIS describes the project use as 'full occupation' of the Ermington Boat Ramp.

9 December 2022: BIA raised concerns about the lack of direct engagement with key stakeholders such as the boating sector regarding the EIS.

16 December 2022: BIA made a [submission](#) to a revised deadline for consult on the EIS.

3 September 2023: BIA is to make a submission to the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 amendments.

Submission

BIA stands by and refers to its previous submissions dated 10 September 2021 and 16 December 2022.

Disconcertingly, BIA continues to wait for any formal written response by the project team to issues raised in earlier submissions. The latest call for comment on amendments therefore means all our previous concerns articulated in the 10 September 2021 and 16 December 2022 remain unanswered and relevant.

Furthermore, the project details outlined in the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 amendments do nothing to address the previous two BIA submissions, which suggests the Project Team are uninterested in, or dismissive of, the concerns by the boating industry and its public. We remind the Project Team that almost 1 in 5 homes in NSW has a boat or some form of watercraft, and that it is estimated more than 2 million people go boating each year in the State.

BIA asks the Project Team to advise why, that in all this information in expensive project communications, there is nothing that addresses our key concerns that the current project description will:

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- prevent people for approximately three years (or more with any project overrun) 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 usage flowing from Ermington;
- force people to tow further afield adding to congestion, stress, access and parking issues elsewhere;
- 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 and/ or offices, and/ or project car parking, and/ or bridge construction/ assembly works at a high-value waterfront location;
- threaten jobs in marine businesses supporting the catchment for this boat ramp, which includes west and northwestern Sydney; and
- likely lead to people who have bought boats who live in the ramp 'catchment' to catch fish for their families and or sell their boats.

And why with all the resources at disposal to Transport has there been no evidence of a strategy or plan put forward to the boating community to:

- ensure alternative and adequate launching facilities are identified or provided that will accommodate the range and quantity of vessel types, with appropriate access and parking space
- ensure there are appropriate traffic management plans in place at Ermington Boat Ramp and any alternate boat ramps which incorporate the following:
 - access and parking appropriate to accommodate increased use due to restrictions at Ermington Boat Ramp
 - an appropriate funded and sustained education campaign to raise awareness amongst the impacted public
 - an appropriate compliance approach which enables people to access and park in and around these sites

And why is Transport going to allow one of Sydney Harbour's more significant public boat ramp facilities to be used for site sheds, car parking and work site by the waterfront, whilst banning it from use by the people it was designed and built for. People who from all walks of life from the ramp 'catchment', which includes western Sydney, to access the best harbour in Australia and arguably the world?



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RECOMMENDATION:

That the Project Team (NSW Government & Contract Builder) note the above and

1. respond in writing to the concerns, questions and recommendations from all previous submissions by the BIA on this project; and
2. as a priority, to work with BIA to develop an appropriate strategy to inform the boating industry and its public of what is being done to mitigate the significant disruption, dislocation and distress this project could have on the boating industry and its public.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr Neil Patchett, General Manager Government & Public Relations, e. neil@bia.org.au or m. 0418 279 465 as necessary.

Issue date: 3 September 2023