

## Careel Bay Pittwater Protection Association (CBPPA)



The application to develop Careel Bay Boatshed into a major commercial marina has been submitted to the Department of Planning.

The application bypasses Pittwater Council and the Minister for Planning will be the approval authority because marinas are now described both as "state significant developments" and "designated developments". Rezoning would not be required for either the hardstand or the marina berths.

The D.A. includes construction of a concrete hardstand built on piles over the water, a 75 tonne ship lift, the largest in the Broken Bay waterway, two significantly larger new buildings, (one being two storeys) to accommodate marina offices, shop/coffee shop, chandlery, boat brokerage, and a number of workshops for maintenance services. This facility will be approximately **80m x 40 metres**, about two thirds the size of a football field.

The application includes 37 floating marina berths, extending into the Bay alongside the 7a(1) Waterways Environmental Protection Zone which is there to protect the seagrasses and the wetlands ecosystem. The proposed marina development extends well within the 50 metres buffer zone recommended by the Department of Fisheries and Pittwater Council between seagrass and any activity.

The berths would accommodate 12 metre, 14 metre, 16 metre and 18 metre (60 feet) power boats and three yachts up to 12 metres. The berths and the facility would stretch over 200 metres into the Bay.

This number of power boats with their huge propellers, bow and stern thrusters and powerful engines is not characteristic of boats now using the Bay and will inevitably have a negative effect on the sediment and water quality.

CBPPA believe the shallowness of the Bay and its highly sensitive and valuable marine ecology is simply unsuitable for this type of development. Pittwater

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Council, the Department of Planning and the general public should not allow a development of this scale and environmental impact.

Careel Bay is a valued natural resource and must not be exploited, unsustainably, for the commercial benefit of a few.

If this development is allowed to occur, the environment, physically, culturally, visually, recreationally, and ecologically will be changed deleteriously forever.

### **CBPPA's main issues of objection are:**

- **the threat to the marine ecology** caused by the location, size and extent of activities of the marina, constructed immediately beside the sea grasses. These sea grasses are protected for their ecological importance to the fish and invertebrate species in Pittwater and the Broken Bay marine environment. The sea grasses provide an essential nursery for the young of many of these species. They play a vital role in containing the sediments washed from the land, helping to maintain water quality and in filtering and processing the nutrients. They also help to reduce the wave energy that reaches the shore, so reducing erosion.

The grasses themselves, however, are very sensitive to water quality. Reduction in water quality or clarity caused by the increased activity and the huge boats proposed, could lead to the destruction of these important sea grasses, and consequently lead to the breakdown of the whole wetland system, with serious impacts on Pittwater and beyond.

- **The total change in the character** of the Bay's environment **from** having a small boatshed operating for mainly small boats and yachts, **to** having a major commercial operation dominating the visual and physical landscape.

The marina berths would have 24/7 access, and the land-based operation with would have a greatly increased capacity, including repairs, maintenance, mechanics, spray painting and anti fouling, with increased potential for noise, air and waterborne pollution.

The Department of Environment and Conservation (formerly the EPA) would be the regulatory authority.

- **The threat of spreading the noxious seaweed, *Caulerpa taxifolia* which has** already spread to Careel Bay and is a major threat to the sea grasses. Both the Departments of Waterways and Fisheries warn not to allow power boats near the weed as their propellers can cut and disperse it thus greatly advancing the weed's infestation and making it impossible to control.

The size of the proposed power boats, including 60 foot boats in the marina berths and up to 25 metres (82 foot) using the hardstand, pose a very significant threat. Experts have also pointed out that large boats travel very

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long distances and are a major cause of spreading caulerpa taxifolia and potentially other noxious marine pests.

- **Alienation of public open space** on the waterway for a commercial use which benefits only a small number of people, displacing the long term traditional community users of the Bay. The trailer boat ramp has been closed. Boat access to the public wharf would be affected by the marina structure. General public access to the Bay along George Street would become even more difficult with excessive generation of traffic to an expanded marina. Current parking problems would become even worse.

- **Creation of a visual eyesore, a wall of large, tall power boats** blocking views of the Bay now enjoyed from the public wharf and nearby road. The visual landscape from all sides of the Bay will be scarred for residents and visitors.

- **Removal of 37 of the 96 swing moorings** now leased mainly by small boat owners at a relatively low cost to be replaced at higher cost by vastly larger vessels, not currently common in Careel Bay, and potentially damaging to the ecology. Austral Monsoon Industries indicated in their advertising material and Development Proposal that they would be targeting large boats.

- **Insufficient parking, access, and increased traffic and noise.** The proposed parking and street access would not be able to cope with the increases in activity from the marina:

- increased work activities
- 24 hour access to the berths (including potential for parties/drinking etc late at night)
- larger boats would mean an increase in the number of visitors to the marina.

The Proposal claims to provide thirty nine car spaces. There would be only eighteen off-street parking spaces with the remaining 21 cars parked on the hardstand in peak periods. As the hardstand is where up to seven boats could be stored and worked on seven days a week, it is difficult to see how cars could be parked there.

This proposal does not seem to satisfy the parking needs of the owners of the private moorings, as well as residents and an increased marina workforce. If only a few of the 60 foot boats are entertaining visitors, traffic and parking could become gridlocked at peak times.

- **The effect of the marina**, its piles, 37 large power boats, floating boardwalk and marina berths, on the adjacent Careel Creek outflows.

- **The disturbance of contaminated sediment** on the bed of the Bay at and around the site (as identified in the EIS) during construction and use of the facility.

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- **The impact on migratory birds.** The Federal Government is committed to protecting migratory birds at Careel Bay through international agreements, which underline the ecological importance of this environment.
- **The threat to the birds and sea horse species,** protected under section 248 of the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act
- **The increase in boating traffic** to support such an expanded facility. The proposed marina is a major commercial facility, and would be capable of lifting huge 75 tonne boats for servicing. This facility would have the largest shiplift in the Hawkesbury, catering to the largest boats in the Pittwater/Hawkesbury system and beyond.

**This Development Proposal is an unsustainable overdevelopment of an extremely sensitive site.**

**It must be rejected.**



**Careel Bay Pittwater Protection Association**