

**SIRA AGM JANUARY 22, 2012**  
**RESIDENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM COUNCIL**

**Questions from Jenny Cullen**

**TOTAL FEES**

*Have Council or SIRA set any limit on the combined boat/carparking fees? Since PoM states that all figures are indicative only, at what point will a final cost be determined?*

The commencement carpark sticker fee has been established via the adopted Plan of Management (PoM) and Fees & charges process and has been introduced. This fee is for use of the carparking areas covered by the Church Point carpark scheme and recognises the benefit to residents using this Crown Reserve and adjoining areas for extended regular parking.

Similarly the Commuter pontoon wharf is used for extended regular berthing of resident vessels and as agreed, once the capacity of the facility has been increased a user fee will also apply as identified in the PoM. The recommended start up user fee is \$285pa .

**PONTOON**

**Logical sequence**

*Why are we spending half a million dollars right now on pontoon design, requiring it to be moved out and curved to be in line with proposed large infill of road, before deciding whether we want two storey carpark and hence want, or even can afford, the large infill? Why not spend a smaller amount now by extending current pontoon, and then do final pontoon design when road design is settled?*

The adopted PoM includes an adopted Masterplan which shows the scope of the upgrades to this precinct. The Masterplan includes realignment of the start of McCarrs Creek Road to a curved alignment. This provides a safer road alignment as well as a new carpark area on the inner side of the bend in the road. The outer edge is supported by a seawall.

The alignment of the expanded commuter pontoon is on this same curved alignment. Given that a pressing need is to address the multiple stacking of boats tied up to the commuter pontoon it is not practical to await the road realignment works. Hence the pontoon works to provide additional capacity have been brought forward and to be consistent with future road works is to be built to accommodate the new curved alignment as per the PoM. Further, in order to provide increased long term berthing capacity the pontoon is to be located further out so that both sides of the pontoon can continue to be utilised for berthing even when the future road widening is installed. This may obviate the need for a number of the proposed fingers if a suitable access bridge connection that allows vessels to pass underneath can be achieved.

The options put to tender are in essence sub-sections of the final curved alignment that will eventually be achieved over time. It then becomes a decision as to which segment to do first taking into consideration whole of asset life implications, including remaining life/maintenance escalation associated with existing pontoons.

The commuter wharf pontoon will eventually link to the Thomas Stevens Reserve via a boardwalk/deck extension which will obviate the need for the roadside access to the main carpark

**Lifespan of current pontoon**

*Please explain expected lifespan of current commuter pontoon. Why was the plan to remove it entirely until a few residents protected?*

The current pontoon was installed in the early 1980s and was added to (extended in the mid 1980's). This makes it between 25 to 30 years old. It may have a further 10 year life span and as it further ages it requires additional and escalating maintenance expenditure, particular the connections and buffers. In embarking on the PoM outcomes it was a view that the existing be replaced with new on the new alignment. Alternative options that retain all or part of the existing pontoon have also been considered. What it comes down to is the optimum asset life cycle timing of the replacement of the existing structure and its salvage value if there is an alternative use

### **Approval for loan of carpark funds**

*Who has approved the loan of \$300,000 of accumulated parking fees to be used for the new commuter pontoon? If so, on what basis does this person(s) have that authority without asking us? Why were residents not given any opportunity to meet and discuss proposed pontoon designs and costs? Unless we responded, as a few of us did, to Mark Eriksson's display of the one plan which then was actually withdrawn from consideration, only the committee were made aware of any other options. How are those of us who want a much lower boat parking fee and a much cheaper solution being represented?*

The carpark sticker user fees are only part of the income collected. Other income is from Pay & Display and fines. Income received is held in a specific fund for works associated with the Church Point Masterplan. The carpark sticker arrangement and fees are a user fee for use of the Crown Reserve which can be subsequently used for carpark improvements, in particular the provision of additional carparking and carpark amenity.

The initial pressing upfront needs at Church Point in terms of priority outcomes were/are improved lighting and pavement repair at the carpark and to address the multiple stacking of vessels at the Commuter pontoon. An internal 'loan' from the carpark fund for the commuter wharf upgrade is a sensible approach to assist with financing this outcome, in particular to provide matching funds for current grant fund opportunities, with this amount to be repaid to the carpark fund from the commuter wharf user fees to be introduced. This maintains the integrity of the outcomes and funding sources.

It should again be noted that the carpark fund is not just sticker user fees but also Pay & Display and fines income. The use of these funds as a loan for the improvements to the Commuter Wharf was discussed with SIRA and Western Foreshore associations and there was agreement that this was an acceptable interim use of these funds with a pay back requirement.

### **Steps in tender selection**

*Please outline the steps from here in selection of pontoon design. How are residents to be informed and have any input to the option chosen for the pontoon redevelopment?*

Following Council's decision in December, the invitation to tender was sent to the recommended EoI respondents with a tender close end of January. The Tender included 3 x options. The tender assessment and the recommended choice of Option to proceed to detail design and construction will be included in a report to Council at its.....February Meeting. At this stage, being part of a tender process, this is commercial in confidence.

## **Boat size**

*Why has the PoM based the pontoon size on a boat size of 2.1m? Or is it 2.5m? My 3.85m tinnie is 1.5m wide and there are some narrower than mine. So the average should be somewhere maybe around 1.8m. By inflating the width, this artificially increases the amount of pontoon space we are said to need. We need incentives for small boats, could we please have a reduced sticker price for boats below a certain size? And also a designated area for these smaller boats so they are not damaged and jammed by much heavier boats?*

A 2.4m 'berthing space' width as an average has been chosen to estimate the conservative design capacity of the facility - this is different to an actual boat width. There will always need to be some added tolerance between boat size and berthing space to be able to manoeuvre in and out of spaces. Also like the carpark the capacity will to some extent be a function of the efficiency of tie ups by individuals. Some people park closer together than others.

After the upcoming round of pontoon installation and the introduction of associated fees for use we will monitor the usage and demand which will provide useful information for consideration of future upgrades and its extended capacity if required. This will enable a further assessment/prediction of future fees. It should be noted that a pay back of the \$300,000 internal loan over 10 years by dinghy wharf contributors will in itself generate a need for a minimum fee of without provision for a sinking fund for further improvements

## **Stage 2 design**

*Please explain the rationale for Stage 2 of the commuter pontoon design. Why:*

- *face all the boats into the swell and wind of the nor-easter?*
- *Why have 600mm walkways dividing the space into two boat berths of 2.1m each, thus preventing smaller boats from using space efficiently and taking up lots of space with walkways?*
- *Will we still be able to park on shore side of pontoon if full infill goes ahead?*
- *Do you really have approval to go out that far? What about barges and boats using Cargo?*

*If you can go out that far, why was the H design of adding onto existing commuter pontoon with a matching one further out not considered for tender? With this design ¾ of all space is sheltered.*

The Stage 2 design currently includes a series of 'fingers' - this was on the basis that the inner face of the new pontoon would not be utilised for berthing once the infill was installed. Moving the alignment of the new pontoon slightly further out will enable the continued use of the inner face and as such the extent of finger extensions may be able to be reduced - again we will monitor the usage and projected need following the upcoming round of upgrades.

There is an issue with the proximity of the current private moorings and as such the suggested reuse of the existing pontoons as finger extensions has been removed from the intended Stage 1. The suggested H - design is not supported.

## **Pontoon at Rostrevor**

*The least obtrusive place to put a pontoon would be straight out from Rostrevor Reserve. It would also be more sheltered than going further out into Pittwater. While Holmeport would of course object, this does not mean it could not proceed. Was this considered? Could it be considered for a medium term option to work towards? If approved later, pontoon could be moved there if it was straight.*

Discussion did take place between Council, Department of Lands with Holempport about the potential for use of that site and its surrounds but this reached an impasse and did not progress. Subsequently Lands issued a long term lease and the adopted PoM for Church Point has been achieved. High priority outcomes established in the PoM are being

progressed. In particular a high priority is the need to improve the safety and amenity of the commuter pontoon wharf to reduce the multiple stacking vessels.

### **Ongoing consultation**

*As far as I know, and as far as Bill and Cass have been able to tell me, there has never been any meeting where we actually voted on any aspect of the current PoM. People gave general support mainly to achieve the legal right to park. We were told that there would be consultation on the detailed designs of each step as we proceeded. Yet that did not happen with the first works to be implemented, the pontoon design. Why not? How will this process be improved for other work?*

The Plan of Management and associated Masterplan were developed through a very extensive process that involved a range of inputs and consultation steps. This involved key stakeholder groups, relevant government agencies, specialist consultancies, quantity survey of works and associated costs, long term financial modelling and Business Case including cost of works, income sources (user fees, grants, land sales, loans and rates), user fees, specialist peer review, community association Working Party, broader community input, legislative process and adoption by Council and the Department of Lands.

Follow up consultation has been through the continuation of the Working Party which has considered the carpark upgrades and the upgrades to the Commuter Wharf. We have relied upon the Associations on behalf of their communities to seek to accommodate their specific needs noting their day to day experiences. With the commuter wharf there has been discussion on the average width of vessels, the environmental impacts, amenity issues, etc Council is not in a position to seek comment from individuals at every step of the way and has a mandate through the adopted PoM, particularly when there is an urgency to address safety concerns and a way forward has been mapped out.

## **CARPARKING**

### **General public parking**

*Council has stated that they would like to provide more parking to enable general public to come and enjoy Church Point. Since anyone can purchase parking ticket, why are we paying as user-pays to build carparks for the public, and how do we know we'll actually end up much better off in ten years? Mary's booming waterfront store business will certainly benefit!*

The current specific purpose sticker based parking provides an annual exemption from the alternative to use P&D. There is no guarantee of a space nor are there allocated spaces. Casual visitors would probably not purchase an annual sticker and would park on the basis of P&D. The additional carparking area is primarily geared to sticker based parking and the key stakeholders support this outcome under the adopted PoM..

### **Assumption of growth**

*In Bill's articles and various conversations, it is stated that we need to provide for growth in offshore parking needs, but what is the basis for this assumption? Unlike all other areas, we know there will be no further subdivisions, new blocks or medium density development.*

*There are in fact reasons to suspect some level of decline in car numbers:*

*More part-time and occasional residents - My observation around my area is that more and more waterfronts are occupied by quite occasional owners – of the 17 waterfronts in a row from Tennis round to Yamba, only 4 are permanently occupied.*

*Aging population – as more people are semi-retired or retired, they can often move to one car per couple whereas younger families with two workers and children need two cars.*

*Working from home – technology is allowing more people to work from home, again enabling couples to manage with one car.*

*Rather than working just from number of blocks, why don't we find out how many permanent and part-time residents we have, and how many cars, before committing all of us to pay for big infrastructure which is available for the whole general public anyway?*

Demographics and technology will play a part in the carpark demand profile over time. Demographics and occupancy patterns also go through cycles. Retirees may well be replaced by younger families again as the cycle of life continues. Trends will continue to be monitored. It is a fact however that the carpark and surrounding streets are currently full at peak times. This is a continuing concern to on-shore residents who have their streets 'parked out' and are seeking some relief as well.

The decked carpark is a further option to increase carpark spaces and to also defray the total cost of the additional carpark works. This is on the basis that spaces on one level of the carpark would be leased for a much higher annual fee which in turn would permit an allocated space to be issued. The added income from this arrangement would not only pay for its construction and ongoing servicing/maintenance/depreciation but also significantly contribute to the cost of the reclamation works and hence provide a subsidy to keep the cost of the general sticker parking to a lower relative amount.

### **Holmeport solution long-term**

*The only place I think a two storey carpark could be considered without blighting the landscape is on the Holmeport site. The lease comes up again in a bit more than 15 years. Could we work towards this as the final solution?*

This suggested option can be further considered in the future should the opportunity arise, however there is no guarantee that this outcome will eventuate. The adopted PoM has provided a confident way forward now (following decades of uncertainty) without waiting another 15 years for action and this is what is being progressed through the adopted PoM.

### **The David Naylor/Peter Altona alternate plan for Precinct 1**

*Please present, or allow Steve Crosby to present the David Naylor plan for Precinct 1, which is the previous Peter Altona plan extended along the cliff edge to now provide for 60-62 cars. Those of us who have looked at this in some detail think it is worth considering as there is much less infill, and the rest of the community should know it exists as a plan supported by both onshore resident groups.*

General comments are that the various widths shown and suggested number of spaces are optimistic. Widths would need to be increased, spaces would need to be removed, many of the spaces are immediately adjoining and parallel to the unstable cliff face, improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities would be required and it eliminates the opportunity for a second tier of carparking. This plan is beyond the existing road edge and as such it also requires reclamation and a new seawall - and as most of the cost is in the seawall construction it is far better to achieve an optimum seawall alignment that affords the best range of potential opportunities as detailed in the adopted PoM.

### **Questions from Paul Smith**

#### ***Angled Carparking Pasadena***

*The Pasadena has now been taken over by the banks and WILL be sold. We have no idea who or what sort of business will be involved and how this will impact on our parking situation. The scenario may include a restaurant or night club.*

*This will seriously impact on our parking ability.*

*As well I believe we are losing 20 car spaces at the end of the carpark. Combine this with the 4 hour spots, bike parking, disabled parking, additional bollards, etc we have seriously*

*reduced our parking over the past few years. We have paid close to \$580 and all we have received is reduced parking and street lights which are available at no cost to other residents.*

*Why are we not seriously looking at angled parking which could allow 5 one way tracks? A very low cost and easily achievable option.*

Any new development of the Pasadena would require carparking under for residential development but would have some dependence on the general carpark for its function centre.

Motor bike parking has been provided as an alternative to car use. Whilst taking up initial car spaces it takes the opportunity to provide a more efficient form of transport. Note: the area as developed is now extensively used.

The current carpark layout is both the most effective and safest for use.

### **Carpark**

*Have Council or SIRA set any limit on the combined boat/carparking fees? Since PoM states that all figures are indicative only, at what point will a final cost be determined? Is there going to be provision for struggling families? We are horrified at the gentrification of the area, which is destroying the diversification of our community and watering it down to the wealthy.*

*Between Tennis and Yamba there are only 5 permanent residents in 20 hours and only 2 of those households use Church Point for parking, the others use Newport or Bayview. Why are you going to such huge expense to provide space for mainlanders and visitors to use?*

Fees will generally be as per the PoM.

With over 700 offshore dwellings and only 380 spaces available, the need for increased parking will always be an issue.

### **Questions from Paul Kinnison**

*At a recent meeting Mark said that since the pontoon was only used by the offshore community it would be rebuilt on the "user pay principle". If this is the case why does it look likely that we are going to probably get the most expensive option of a brand new curved pontoon when the existing pontoon has many years life left?*

Existing pontoon is over thirty years old and whilst the floating structure may float for another 10 or 20 years, fittings and fixtures need constant replacement and Council needs to manage assets to enable ongoing replacement before failure.

*The Council paid three expert consultants to review the Church Point PoM. Their view was that precinct one was unenvironmental, too expensive and too much infrastructure. Why were their views dismissed?*

The independent panel report was reviewed and considered by Council staff and the Senior Management Team prior to adoption of the PoM.

*Both Pittwater Council and its predecessor the Warringah Council have not allowed any major development on the shores of Pittwater for the last thirty years. The proposed developments at the Pasadena, the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club and Currawong have all been fought. Does the approval of Precinct 1 signify a shift of Policy of the Pittwater Council? Does the Council really not expect a large public outcry against it?*

All projects are considered on their merits and assessed against adopted policies of Council and adopted Council directions. Works at Church Point are in accordance with the masterplan which was adopted by both Council and the Department of Lands.

*Costs for the project appear to be “rubbery”. If fewer people take up the double storey carpark or the pontoon or there are major over runs in the cost of building (and there always are) who will pick up the tab?*

All costs for the project have been reviewed by an independent Quantity Surveyor and an independent engineering firm. Whilst costs at the time of review were accurate and correct, every year there will be increases in costs due to CPI/building cost increases. SIRA has previously undertaken surveys of the possible uptake which were positive.

*The only thing I have seen remotely “green” so far is the bike rack near the bus stop. The Church Point PoM seems to encourage big boats and more cars. Why are there not more green facilities such as bike lockers and a commuter wharf for non motorized boats?*

In relation to sustainability, Council has installed low power LED lighting to the carpark, encouraged and supported the GOGET car scheme (now ceased due to lack of support) and increased and improved facilities for both motor cycles and push bikes.

*Out of the roughly 500 offshore building blocks only about 30 have not been built on. Since roughly 94% of blocks have been built on and more and more waterfronts are being bought as vacation homes, do you really think there is going to be any significant increase in population or will there be a drop as more seniors stay on and their offspring move off?*

With over 600 residences offshore (normal allowance of two cars per household), there could be a possible carpark generation of 1,200 cars. Parking at Church Point currently only caters for 380 cars. From the start there is a well recognised shortage of spaces within the precinct to cater for offshore residents. Further cars unable to park at Church Point Reserve generally end up in the back streets of Bayview which impacts upon the amenity of local residents in local streets. Even without any great increase in the existing population, the current problem needs to be solved.

*How can SIRA take money from the carpark and put it on the pontoon when many drivers do not have boats? It appears to me that this is probably unethical and unlawful without it going before the offshore community to vote on.*

The \$300,000 utilised from the Church Point carparking fund has been proposed as an internal local to be paid back by fees generated from the dinghy facility.