



20 December 2023

Church Point Commuter Wharf Feasibility Study'
Northern Beaches Council,
PO Box 82,
Manly NSW 1655

The Church Point Ferry Service has been operating a service from Church Point since 1958. We are part of the NSW Transport infrastructure and operate the service under contract for Transport for NSW. It is an essential service, and is the only public transport option available for offshore residents. We begin our day at 6.20 am and our last drop off is at 7.30 pm. We are reliable, environmentally friendly and are the first Public Transport Operator in NSW to offer a fully carbon offset ticket.

The lack of commuter vessel parking availability has been due to an increase in private vessels, and we believe that this is due to the lack of transport to and from the island outside of our operating hours. Over the last few years, the water taxi service has been unreliable, as well as not operating after 8pm. This severely curtails the life of any off shore resident that does not own a boat. It means that without your own boat, you can't go out for dinner, or play a sport, go to the theatre, or have any activity that requires that you come home after 8pm. Thus, most residents have had no choice but to buy a boat, as they have no other option. This causes knock on problems such as overcrowding on wharves, as well as safety issues with small boats and less experienced skippers.

We would be very open to discussing an after hours on demand ferry service from 7.30pm to midnight. We have run a short simple survey and found that all respondents would like to see an out of hours service, and that 45% of respondents would sell a boat, if this service was available, thus reducing the demand for wharf infrastructure.

If the demand for commuter vessel parking was decreased it would avoid the construction of extra wharves, which would mean no further damage to aquatic biodiversity, no change to the landscape character or visual amenity.

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Less reliance on small water craft, and more reliance on qualified skippers would lead to an increase in safety. People would have a transport option that would avoid operating a boat whilst under the influence of alcohol.

It will take time for demand to increase to a self-sustaining level, and we believe that a subsidised contract should be put in place at least for a significant initial period to provide certainty of service to the community.

We are prepared to discuss all options to provide this enhanced service. As an initial proposal, we would see it operating with our existing vessels on demand, to the public wharves we currently operate to.

With thanks for your attention,

Penny Gleen

Church Point Ferry Service

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