
From: Darren Vaux
Sent: 4/03/2025 7:02:52 AM
To: Council Northernbeaches Mailbox
Subject: TRIMMED: DA2024/1216 - Submission of Support for the Marina Improvement Plan - North Harbour Marina

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed marina improvement plan at North Harbour Marina, which seeks to enhance both safety and functionality while maintaining a responsible approach to environmental and community considerations. Well-planned marina infrastructure plays a critical role in supporting safe and sustainable access to the water, promoting economic activity, and enriching the well-being of the local community. The proposed improvements will address key challenges currently affecting the waterway while ensuring a better and safer experience for all water users.

A key component of this plan is the removal of 10 swing moorings to create a 50-meter-wide safe navigation channel. Currently, the bay is overcrowded with swing moorings, creating congestion that poses safety risks for boaters and passive water users alike. The establishment of a clear and unobstructed navigation channel will significantly improve safety, particularly for small craft, including dinghies, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards (SUPs). With the increasing popularity of non-motorised water recreation, it is essential to provide safer passage for these users while reducing potential conflicts with larger vessels.

Additionally, the plan reconfigures the existing marina to create nine new berths without extending further into the waterway. This is a well considered and efficient way to increase capacity while minimising impact and preserving the natural character of the waterway. The marina is a key piece of local infrastructure, serving as a hub for maritime activity, supporting recreational boating, and contributing to the local economy. Well-maintained and appropriately scaled marinas are essential for fostering a thriving waterfront community and are essentially privately funded and operated publicly accessible infrastructure.

An exciting part of this proposal is the replacement of the existing redundant slipway with modern dinghy and kayak storage racks, which aligns with contemporary environmental standards. This will provide a safe, organised, and accessible space for watercraft storage. Encouraging participation in paddle sports and other low-impact water activities enhances community engagement with the marine environment while fostering a deeper appreciation for waterway stewardship in a safe and accessible way.

Furthermore, the proposal also includes reasonable limitations on commercial activity, with kiosk operating hours restricted to 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM, a maximum of 20 patrons, and a no-alcohol policy. These measures respond to stakeholder feedback and ensure that the marina remains a community-friendly space, supporting the local community while preventing excessive noise, or disruptions to the peaceful waterfront setting.

Beyond infrastructure and safety, the proposal supports broader community well-being by facilitating access to water-based activities that contribute to physical and mental health. The *Blue Mind* theory, as described by marine biologist Dr. Wallace J. Nichols, highlights the profound psychological benefits of being in, on, or near water. Studies show that proximity to

water reduces stress, enhances cognitive function, and fosters a sense of calm and happiness. Marinas serve as gateways to these experiences, providing a safe and welcoming environment for people to connect with the water—whether through boating, paddling, or simply enjoying the view.

By improving the marina's infrastructure and accessibility, this proposal supports not only safe and efficient waterway use but also the broader social, environmental, and economic benefits of a well-maintained waterfront. With a maximum berth length of 15 meters, the marina remains in scale with its surroundings while accommodating a range of recreational and commercial boating needs.

I strongly encourage the approval of this proposal, which will lead to a safer, more efficient, and more sustainable marina for all users. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further insights or support regarding this matter.

Darren Vaux
Chairman
Empire Marinas Group

President
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