



# Consultation Outcomes Report

## Church Point Commuter Wharf Feasibility Study

Northern Beaches Council

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**Advisian**  
Worley Group

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# 1 Introduction

Advisian Pty Ltd (Advisian) was engaged by Northern Beaches Council to undertake the Church Point Commuter Wharf Feasibility Study (Feasibility Study). The purpose of the study was to assess different options aimed at alleviating overcrowding at the existing Commuter Wharf facility.

## 1.1 Document purpose and scope

The purpose of this document is to present the outcomes of engagement undertaken with stakeholders regarding the Feasibility Study. This includes key stakeholders engaged and outcomes of engagement activities.

## 1.2 Engagement objectives

The objectives of the targeted stakeholder engagement were to:

- Communicate details of the options assessed and preferred option, prior to the inclusion of stakeholder considerations, along with the option ranking criteria: environmental impacts, planning, accessibility, impact on coastal processes, cost, and stakeholder engagement.
- Capture and report on any constraints, issues and opportunities identified by stakeholders.
- Facilitate the consideration of stakeholder views and feedback as a part of the Feasibility Study.

## 1.3 Guiding regulations and principals

Stakeholder engagement for Feasibility Study was guided by relevant government and council regulations and guidance, for example, the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, Local Government Act 1993, and the Northern Beaches Community Engagement Framework.

## 1.4 Project background

The Church Point Commuter Wharf is an important transport hub for the local offshore community. The offshore community comprises residents from Scotland Island and the Western Foreshores of Pittwater (Elvina Bay, Lovett Bay and to a lesser extent Morning Bay, Coasters Retreat and Great Mackerel Beach).

Residents with private vessels may use the Commuter Wharf to access the mainland if they have a permit. At present the wharf can accommodate up to 120 boats. With 300 boat permits currently in possession and 21 residents on the waiting list for permits, the existing facility is unable to accommodate demand and experiences frequent overcrowding.

The existing Commuter Wharf is located on the shores of Pittwater, off McCarrs Creek Rd adjacent to the Church Point Ferry Wharf within the Northern Beaches Local Government Area (LGA) (Figure 1-1). It provides a vital connection to the mainland and facility for vehicle parking, local services, and a social meeting place.

The commuter wharf was upgraded in 2012 and construction of an additional two-level carpark adjacent to the wharf completed in 2018. The carparking facility comprises approximately 120 parking spots with 60 permits available for offshore residents.

To obtain an understanding of the usage of the Church Point Commuter Wharf as well as key stakeholder issues and suggestions for improvement, the Northern Beaches Council undertook a

Church Point Community Wharf Survey in 2021. This was completed by 222 stakeholders, with the majority of respondents residing on Scotland Island. The survey revealed that the majority of participants (86%) support the Council investigating ways to address overcrowding on the existing Church Point Commuter Wharf.



Figure 1-1 Current Site Location

## 2 Engagement Methodology

Stakeholder feedback was an essential part of the options assessment process and formed one of the option ranking criteria.

To obtain input into the options being assessed, Advisian held four targeted workshops with key stakeholders directly impacted or with a vested interest in changes to the existing commuter wharf facility.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health restrictions, these workshops were held online via Microsoft Teams on:

- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 9:30am-11am with Council and Government representatives
- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 5-6:30pm with representatives of offshore residents, e.g. Scotland Island Residents Associations and West Pittwater Community Association
- Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 9:30-11am with representatives of onshore residents, e.g. Bayview Church Point Residents Association and Church Point Community Projects
- Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 1:00pm-2:30pm with Government and local business representatives.

The key options assessed as a part of the Feasibility Study were presented at the workshop by the Advisian Senior Coastal Engineer using PowerPoint. Following the presentation, stakeholders were provided the opportunity to provide their comments on each option assessed, including any benefits or concerns regarding any of options presented. Stakeholders were also invited to share any comments about current usage of the wharf and alternative suggestions to address overcrowding at the Church Point Commuter Wharf Facility.

Following the workshops, onshore and offshore resident representatives provided additional feedback regarding the Feasibility Study and the overcrowding issue at the Church Point Commuter Wharf via email. An additional meeting with a local boating service was also undertaken to discuss the potential impacts of one of the options on navigational safety. Further meetings with TfNSW were held by Council to discuss the various options and any potential impacts.

The feedback obtained by stakeholders is documented in this report and has been considered in the Feasibility Study assessment.

### 3 Stakeholders Engaged

Stakeholder identification and analysis for the Feasibility Study was completed through consultation with Northern Beaches Council and a review of the existing social context to understand which stakeholders could be directly or indirectly, positively and negatively, affected by the Project.

Key stakeholders of interest were selected to participate in the four targeted Feasibility Study workshops. In total 31 stakeholders were engaged in these workshops.

Stakeholder groups which attended the workshops and key interests raised are presented in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1 Stakeholders engaged

Stakeholder group	Key areas of interest
Internal teams within Northern Beaches Council – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coast and catchments</li> <li>• Parks and recreation</li> <li>• Community engagement and communications</li> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Transport and Civil Infrastructure</li> <li>• Major Infrastructure Projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental impacts, including protection of seagrass and national parks</li> <li>• Navigational and community safety</li> <li>• Stakeholder preferences</li> </ul>
State Government, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Planning, Industry and Environment</li> <li>• NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).</li> <li>• Transport for NSW (TfNSW)</li> <li>• NSW Office on Environment and Heritage- National Parks and Wildlife</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental impacts, including protection of seagrass and national parks</li> <li>• Relocation of swing moorings</li> <li>• Navigational safety</li> </ul>
Offshore community associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scotland Island Residents Association (SIRA)</li> <li>• West Pittwater Community Association (WPCA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Amenity</li> </ul>
Onshore community resident associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bayview Church Point Residents Association (BCPRA)</li> <li>• Church Point Community Projects</li> <li>• Church Point Friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Holistic development of Church Point</li> <li>• Amenity</li> </ul>
Pittwater Waterway operators e.g. water taxis, ferry operators, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church Point Ferry Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigational safety</li> <li>• Impact to business</li> </ul>
Local Business, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holmeport Marinas</li> <li>• The Waterfront Café and General Store</li> <li>• Pasadena</li> <li>• Barrenjoey Boating Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location</li> <li>• Navigational safety</li> <li>• Impact to business</li> </ul>

## 4 Engagement Outcomes

This section summarises the collective feedback received by stakeholders, during the four targeted workshops, as well as the additional feedback provided by residents following the workshops, on the options assessed as well as additional suggestions to the set options.

At the workshops, stakeholders were presented on the following options considered as a part of the Feasibility Study:

- Option 1a- Perpendicular arms existing wharf
- Option 1b- Curved arm existing wharf
- Option 2a- Rostrevor Reserve
- Option 2b- Church Point Reserve
- Option 3a- Rowland Reserve
- Option 3b- McCarrs Creek
- Option 3c- Bayview Baths

Stakeholders were informed that whilst Option 1a was considered initially, it was removed from further consideration as it would not provide a substantial increase in the number of berths and would potentially impact adjacent swing moorings. Stakeholders were requested to provide comments on all other options presented.

In addition to feedback on the assessed options, stakeholders provided a number of additional suggestions to be considered by Council to address the issue of the overcrowding at the commuter wharf. This feedback has been collated and is presented as additional suggestions in Section 4.7.

Key elements stakeholders considered important to any plans to address the issue of overcrowding at Church Point Commuter Wharf were:

- Location- selected options would need to consider distance from Scotland Island, consider disability access and ease of use
- Holistic development and use of the Church Point area- i.e. addressing wharf overcrowding, potential parking constraints and community use of the area as a whole
- Parking- numerous stakeholders noted that parking in the Church Point area is an ongoing issue. As result Council may need to consider undertaking a parking study for some options
- Permitting arrangements- including the consideration of permit time limits (e.g. 3 hour limits up to 48-72-hour limits), the future need for additional permits, permits allowed per household and permits for smaller vessels. Noting that currently, most offshore residents have one permit per household.
- Navigational safety- It was also noted that over the last 12 months there had been an increased use of barges in the Church Point area and that as a result navigational safety is important to consider with any option.
- Swing moorings- a number of options presented may require the movement of swing moorings. Pittwater has the longest waitlist for private and commercial moorings in the state. As a result, any changes to moorings would result in concessions for private and/or commercial/ industry users and could be a lengthy process.

The preference for particular options varied significantly across the different stakeholder groups depending on their interest and concerns. A number of stakeholders expressed a preference for a combination of options to address the issue of boat overcrowding at the commuter wharf, such as additional ferry services and changes to the structure of the permitting system. Stakeholders also suggested that some options could be partially developed, such as Option 2a, to minimise the visual impact and cost of addressing boat overcrowding.

Despite the variations between stakeholder group preferences, only a few of the options assessed were considered viable overall. These were:

- Option 1b- Curved arms existing wharf
- Option 2a- Rostrevor Reserve
- Option 3a- Rowland Reserve

A summary of engagement outcomes for each option is presented in Section 4.1 to Section 4.6.

## 4.1 Option 1b- Curved arm existing wharf

This option involves an extension to the existing commuter wharf, would result in an extra 119 berths and would have minimal environmental impact. The key points raised by stakeholders in relation to this option are presented in Table 4-1.

*Table 4-1 Engagement Outcomes – Option 1b- Curved arm existing wharf*

Theme	Key points
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed that this was the best option for offshore residents as it was located close to parking, shops, and the post office.</li> </ul>
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed that extending the existing facility could encroach on the existing channel potentially causing navigational issues.</li> </ul>
Swing moorings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option would involve the movement of swing moorings, which could take a long time, therefore a staged approach of a combination of the design of option 1b and 2a may need to be considered. Alternatively, further investigations, to assess whether moving the swing mooring could be avoided, could be undertaken if this was selected as the preferred option.</li> </ul>
Car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car parking at Church Point, can be an issue at time (e.g., weekends) as a result a parking study may be required if this option is selected to assess the adequacy of existing parking.</li> </ul>

## 4.2 Option 2a- Rostrevor Reserve

This option proposed an additional berth at Rostrevor Reserve. Initially it was proposed that this would result in an extra 64 berths for stage 1 and a further 64 berths at stage 2. Following conversations with local boating services the design and number of berths proposed under this option have been revised due to potential navigational safety impacts. This option would have minimal environmental impact. The key points raised by stakeholders in relation to this option are presented in Table 4-2.

*Table 4-2 Engagement Outcomes – Option 2a- Rostrevor Reserve*

Theme	Key points
Location and amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a number of positive aspects regarding the location of this option including its proximity to the existing wharf, offering an easy overflow wharf facility. The location also offered easy access to the bus stop (located at entry to Holmeport Marina). It was also noted as a site sheltered from the wind and on a reserve, making it convenient for families if they need to wait there. It would also have low visual amenity impacts on Pittwater.</li> <li>Potential issues with pick up and drop offs; noise impacts and previous commitments regarding a permanent wharf at this location would need to be investigated further by Council.</li> <li>The proposed location is close to the high use cargo wharf and would need to consider pedestrian activity and safety; boat parking may also be an issue</li> </ul>
Navigational safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navigational safety is a potential risk in this area, particularly around increased interaction between commercial and private vessels.</li> <li>Larger boats navigating to Holmeport Marina may be impacted if the full stage 2 wharf structure was to proceed; if only stage 1 proceeded navigational issues between the cargo wharf and Marina may be avoided.</li> <li>It was noted by stakeholders that when the temporary wharf was in place there were limited impacts to cargo wharf operations.</li> </ul>
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although there is no mapped vegetation for this location, it was recognised as a low impact option in terms of fish habitat.</li> </ul>
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders suggested a staged approach to the development could be considered, to minimize potential navigational impacts; a stage approach would need to consider cost benefit scenarios.</li> <li>Stakeholders noted that the onshore infrastructure is already in place for this option which could reduce costs associated with the development.</li> </ul>
Swing moorings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TfSNW commented that swing moorings would need to be relocated for this option if both stages were developed. If the proposed structure was smaller than the option presented, swing moorings may not be impacted.</li> </ul>

### 4.3 Option 2b- Church Point Reserve

This option involves additional berths at Church Point Reserve and would result in an extra 180 berths however it is located close to highly sensitive fish habitats and within the vicinity of protected seagrasses- Posidonia and Zostera. The key points raised by stakeholders in relation to this option are presented in Table 4-3.

Table 4-3 Engagement Outcomes – Option 2b- Church Point Reserve

Theme	Key points
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders noted that the additional proposed berths are located in an ecologically sensitive zone with extensive threatened seagrasses present- Posidonia and Zostera. DPIE seek to avoid impacts ( e.g., propeller wash, dredging) to ecologically sensitive areas and as a result it is unlikely this option would be approved for development.</li> </ul>
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders noted that as the water in this area is shallow, dredging may be required. Whilst dredging is not prohibited in the Pittwater region, there would need to be significant public benefit to justify it.</li> </ul>

Theme	Key points
Swing moorings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of this option may involve the relocation of swing moorings.</li> </ul>
Location and amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The wave climate and the capacity of boats to travel in this area require further investigation should the option be selected as preferred.</li> </ul>

#### 4.4 Option 3a- Rowland Reserve

This option involves additional berths at Rowland Reserve and would result in an extra 32 berths. It is noted as having a potential impact to aquatic vegetation ( Zostera seagrass) and sensitive fish habitats. This location is located 3.5km from Scotland Island. The key points raised by stakeholders in relation to this option are presented in Table 4-4.

Table 4-4 Engagement Outcomes – Option 3a- Rowland Reserve

Theme	Key points
Location and amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed that the additional proposed berths would be located on community land, close to the dog beach and trailer users. Competing uses of the area and potential safety issues would need to be considered, particularly during weekends.</li> <li>As this option is located 3.5km from Scotland Island it would not be convenient for offshore residents, particularly in bad weather.</li> <li>Speed restrictions in Bayview Channel, which need to be maintained for safety reasons would limit the speed of the service.</li> <li>The location was noted as far from amenities; stakeholders suggested the development of a private bus route between the reserve and Church Point to address this issue.</li> <li>The area is quite isolated at night, as a result additional lighting and /or security would need to be considered for this to be a viable option.</li> <li>The location would be ideal for when shopping at Mona Vale., some also thought it could assist in alleviating parking pressure at Church Point.</li> </ul>
Car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some stakeholders expressed a preference for the development of an option away from the main Church Point area due to the existing parking and traffic issues at Church Point.</li> <li>Stakeholders suggested that parking could be expanded at Rowland Reserve, through the development of a one-story carpark or relocation of existing SES facilities to allow for more parking.</li> </ul>
Ferry services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to the distance offshore residents would have to travel to this location, which could be an issue in bad weather, it was suggested a ferry service could operate between Scotland Island and Rowland Reserve. Cost implications on the existing ferry service would need to be investigated.</li> </ul>

#### 4.5 Option 3b- McCarrs Creek

This option involves additional berths at McCarrs Creek and would result in an extra 32 berths. It is noted as having a potential impact to aquatic vegetation ( Zostera seagrass and mangroves) and sensitive fish habitats. This location is 2.3km from Scotland Island. The key points raised by stakeholders in relation to this option are presented in Table 4-5.

Table 4-5 Engagement Outcomes – Option 3b- McCarrs Creek

Theme	Key points
Location and amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders expressed a number of concerns regarding the location and existing infrastructure at this option, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited access to public transport</li> <li>Limited infrastructure – additional lighting and public footpaths would be required</li> <li>Long distance from Scotland Island, including through areas harder to navigate which could present issues, especially at night.</li> <li>Long distance to drive to wharf location</li> </ul> </li> <li>Proximity to national parks and potential impacts would need further consideration</li> <li>The reserve is a popular recreational area, used for picnicking, fishing, swimming and loading/unloading watercraft, additional boats could impact the reserves amenity.</li> </ul>
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the water is very shallow in this area, dredging may be required which could be an issue due to the presence of Zostera seagrass.</li> </ul>

## 4.6 Option 3c- Bayview Baths

This option involves additional berths at Bayview Baths and would result in an extra 32 berths. It is noted as having a potential impact to aquatic vegetation ( Zostera and Posidonia seagrass, and mangroves) and sensitive fish habitats. This location is 2.3km from Scotland Island. The key points raised by stakeholders in relation to this option are presented in Table 4-6Table 4-5.

Table 4-6 Engagement Outcomes – Option 3c- Bayview Baths

Theme	Key points
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mangroves and mapped seagrass exist within the vicinity of the baths and dredging may be required, as a result DPIE would need to issue permits to address issues with the sand spit migration and ongoing sedimentation.</li> <li>Whilst no seahorses are currently on the baths structure this would need to be investigated further.</li> </ul>
Location and amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders suggested that a small facility at Bayview Baths would allow for cycling to the beach and baths and would be a good option to get to Mona Vale.</li> <li>The distance would potentially be an issue for offshore residents.</li> <li>Potential impacts to the redevelopment of Bayview Baths would require further investigation.</li> </ul>
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders noted that location has major existing issues with parking and as a result was not considered a viable option.</li> </ul>

## 4.7 Additional suggestions

During the workshops, stakeholders expressed a number of additional suggestions for Council to consider, to address the issue of boat overcrowding at the existing Church Point Commuter Wharf Facility. These are summarised and presented in Table 4-7.

Table 4-7 Additional suggestions

Theme	Key points
Review of permit system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed that despite lockdown approx. 25 boats remain at the wharf. Although some could be emergency workers, it could also mean that those parking their boats there are not commuters or have multiple permits. It was suggested that Council investigate whether people are parking at the wharf without permits, have multiple permits or are parking for a longer amount of time. Additional suggestions include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The implementation of some short-term boat parking ( i.e. 3 hours) to allow people to do their shopping and return.</li> <li>– Permits for smaller boats, e.g. rowing boats.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Increased Council monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed that, at times larger boats use the commuter wharf as a marina, limiting spaces available for commuters. It was suggested that Council increase monitoring of the wharf to prevent this issue.</li> <li>• Drop off areas within the existing wharf were also noted as an issue and further monitoring by Council was requested.</li> </ul>
Other locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders suggested that other locations, in addition to those already included in the Feasibility study could be considered for additional berths. Locations suggested were Taylors Point and Saltpan. Newport Wharf, in terms of an extended pontoon from the existing fixed wharf in an easterly direction under 'The Newport Hotel', could also be investigated.</li> <li>• It was also suggested that the option to park boats under the existing boardwalk be investigated.</li> </ul>
Bridge to Scotland Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders expressed that a ferry or a bridge to Scotland Island or the foreshore could be investigated as a possible option.</li> </ul>
Ferry and Taxi services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders suggested additional ferry and taxi services could be investigated. This includes a ferry, from the east side of Scotland Island to Rowland reserve; increased number and expanded timing of existing services; incentives for increased use of ferry services and subsidisation of water taxis.</li> </ul>

## 5 Conclusion

The feedback provided by stakeholders for the Church Point Commuter Wharf Feasibility Study will form an important part of the ranking criteria of the options assessed as a part of the study. The additional suggestions provided by stakeholders will be also be considered as a part of the study and by Council for the ongoing monitoring and management of the commuter wharf facility.

The Feasibility Study will be made available for public exhibition in June 2022 on the Council's 'Have Your Say' webpage. Additional stakeholder feedback received during the exhibition stage will be considered by Council for future development of the commuter wharf.