

Executive Manager's Report No. WK56/11
Works Division
Date of Meeting: 21/09/2011

19 PROPOSAL FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A PONTOON AND MOORING / BERTHING FACILITY AT DANGAR ISLAND PUBLIC WHARF

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposal to upgrade the public wharf at Dangar Island dates back to 2004. At that time, Council first applied to the NSW Maritime Authority for a Better Boating Program (BBP) Grant to assist in constructing a commuter pontoon with provision for some casual boat moorings. While this application was unsuccessful, Council recognised the need to provide improved access for people with disabilities and casual mooring capacity, and re-applied in 2005, 2006 and 2010 with various modifications of the initial proposal. These proposals unfortunately were not successful.

NSW Maritime advised Council after its unsuccessful 2010 application that the proposal would better fit within the BBP funding guidelines if a berthing/mooring facility of a type recently proposed to them by the Dangar Island League were incorporated.

Council's Works Division has since consulted with the Dangar Island League and has now developed a combined proposal that should comply with the BBP Guidelines. The estimated cost for this proposal is \$570,000. The public component (wharf extension and pontoon) costing \$270,000 is proposed to be funded by Council/NSW Maritime on a 50/50 basis while the Dangar Island residents via a Co-op would fund the \$300,000 for the private berthing/mooring portion of the project.

Subject to Council approval in principle for the project concept and endorsement of the Proposed Course of Action for the project implementation, Council through the Works Division has applied to NSW Maritime for a BBP Grant for the proposal in accordance with the proposed funding.

PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

This report provides information to Council about the proposed pontoon and mooring/berthing facility at the Dangar Island Public Wharf. The pontoon is part of Council's proposal to provide access for people with disabilities at this public wharf and the mooring/berthing facility is a proposal from the Dangar Island League to provide berthing facility to interested members of the community as a privately operated facility.

The report also seeks Council's approval in principle for the proposal and endorsement of the Proposed Course of Action for the implementation of the project.

BACKGROUND

This project in various forms has been proposed by Council's Works Division since 2004.

A brief summary of the development of this project since that time is as follows:

Need for a Facility Improvement

While the existing jetty and wharf provide an adequate level of service and are in good structural condition, the following limitations exist:

- Steps are used for access to ferries and other water craft. Council's Access Committee has identified the elimination of these as a priority to improve access for people with disabilities. This need was a prime driver for Council's 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2010 BBP applications.
- The wharf requires the use of a long gang plank. This requirement is due to the increased separation of the space between the ferry and the access stairs as a result of the installation of fender piles required to protect the wharf structure from impact of larger commuter ferries. The impact from these craft has in the past caused significant damage to the wharf, however the fender protection has had the consequence of increasing access problems for some commuters.
- There is virtually no short term mooring available for island residents and visitors at the public wharf.
- There is no long term resident mooring/berthing facility on the island for a large number of residents who have no suitable waterfront access.

Council's previous Proposals

In 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2010, various configurations and variations of the public wharf upgrading were submitted to NSW Maritime seeking grant funding. NSW Maritime offers annual grants for financial assistance towards the provision of waterway infrastructure on NSW waterways.

This is normally on a 50% basis with Council. Currently, this program is known as the Better Boating Programme (BBP).

The proposals in these applications were essentially to provide for the need identified by Council's Access Committee to provide for access for people with disabilities and also for short term mooring facilities for Dangar Island residents and visitors. While NSW Maritime was supportive of this type of upgrading, it indicated that a greater boating community benefit was required to enable the project to fully comply with the BBP funding guidelines.

Although Council's 2010 application was unsuccessful, NSW Maritime indicated that if the Council's pontoon proposal could be combined with a mooring/berthing component such as that recently proposed to them by the Dangar Island League, the BBP funding guidelines would be more closely matched. NSW Maritime also suggested to Council that it may wish to consider the submission of an application for the combined facility.

Development of Current Proposal

Council were approached by the Dangar Island League in June 2011 with a proposal to combine Council's proposed pontoon with a mooring/berthing facility. The League had prepared sketch plans and some preliminary estimates for the proposed combined facility.

They also indicated that they had canvassed and obtained a commitment from enough island residents to fund the berthing/mooring part of combined facility.

On this basis, Council's Works Division advised that it was prepared to consider the combined proposal but the League would have to refine certain aspects of its proposal and provide solid evidence of a commitment to be able to fund the mooring/berthing pontoon of the facility. The current proposed facility is a result of these refinements.

DISCUSSION

Details of Current Proposal

To meet all the above identified needs and the BBP Grant guidelines, a viable combined facility is required. Council's Works Division, in consultation with the Dangar Island League, has developed a concept sketch for this combined facility. The project location and concept sketch are presented in Appendix A.

The Dangar Island League has been very active in canvassing support for the project among island residents. The letter from the League is presented in Appendix B. This letter summarises these efforts and confirms both the level of support among residents for the facility and a commitment from them to fully fund and run a proposed Dangar Island Berthing Co-op (DIBC).

A public meeting was held on Dangar Island by the League on 31 July 2011 to gain agreement for the combined Council/Dangar Island League facility. This meeting indicated that financial commitment to the proposal was still strong. The outcome of this meeting and draft rules for the DIBC operation are presented at Appendix C. Council's Works Division staff and the Dangar Island League representatives met on 2 August 2011 to discuss the results of the 31 July meeting. A Course of Action to advance the proposal was agreed to during the meeting.

Current Status of the Proposal

Following the 2 August 2011 meeting, Council through the Works Division submitted an Application to NSW Maritime for a BBP Grant for the public component of the proposal.

This application is now with the NSW Maritime for its consideration. A copy of Council's application is on file. The outcome of grant applications is usually announced in January of the following year and in this case would be in January 2012.

The estimated costs for the proposal are:

- Feasibility and Preliminary Design \$ 0,000
- Design and Tendering \$ 90,000
- Construction of Council Components \$160,000
- Construction of Berthing/Mooring Facility \$300,000
- Project Management \$ 10,000
- Total \$570,000

The funding for the proposal is:

- BBP Grant \$135,000
- Council Funds \$135,000
- Dangar Island Residents \$300,000
- Total \$570,000

It is intended that Council's Works Division staff will manage the project.

PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION

Subject to Council's approval in principle for this proposal, the Works Division proposes to undertake some necessary preliminary activities as a prelude to the detailed design and construction of the facility in 2012.

These actions will not commit Council to any significant expenditure other than staff time but are important to have the project ready to proceed in January 2012, should Council be successful in obtaining the BBP Grant.

1. Extension to Council's Permissive Occupancy at Dangar Island Wharf.

Arrangements to extend Council's current Permissive Occupancy (PO) for the Dangar Island Public Wharf is necessary, as the new facility will occupy more area than the existing wharf.

2. Development of a Joint Operational Agreement

The development of an Agreement with the Dangar Island League for the Joint Operation of the Facility will be necessary. This agreement will formally define the rights and responsibilities of each party as well as operational matters such as maintenance funding and expenditure over the life of the facility. Legal advice in formulating this agreement will be necessary.

3. Preparation of Design Brief

A brief for the design of the facility will be prepared by Council's Works Division. Quotations to prepare the feasibility and preliminary design, followed by detailed design and associated documentation for the facility will then be sought from selected specialist consultants.

The acceptance of quotation and formal engagement of the consultant would only occur after the outcome of Council's BBP Grant Application is known.

4. Review of Environmental Factors (REF)

Council's Planning Division has advised that the NSW Department of Planning Infrastructure SEPP Clause 48 permits the construction of facilities such as those proposed without a Development Application. An REF is, however, required and Council's Works Division will undertake to prepare the REF with a view to having it completed by January 2012.

5. Resident Funding for Facility

In consultation with the Dangar Island League, Council through the Works Division will confirm the funding arrangements for the project and formal documentation to ensure the funds is available to make progress payment once the construction phase is commenced will be prepared.

BUDGET

The current estimated cost for the project is \$570,000. This has been broken down into component costs and funding sources as set out above.

This project was included in the Delivery Program, under the Foreshore Facilities

Upgrading Program for 2012/2013, as part of Council's successful Rate Increase application to IPART. An extract of this section of the Delivery Programme is presented at Appendix D.

This project's inclusion assumed that BBP Grant funding would be available. Should this not eventuate, Council would need to consider funding for this component from its own sources.

This additional expenditure could be considered as a phase up in the 2012/13 budget, should it be required and Council decides to proceed with the proposal.

POLICY

The upgrading of the Dangar Island Public Wharf to allow easier access for people with disabilities will conform to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

CONSULTATION

This project has been developed in consultation with the Dangar Island League, NSW Maritime and staffs from Council's Works and Planning Divisions.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE (TBL) SUMMARY

The TBL summary for this proposal is as follows:

· Working with Our Community

There is a high level of support for this project from local residents, the boating community as well as NSW Maritime. There is an identified need for additional temporary and permanent mooring capacity and improved access, particularly for people with disabilities, to ferry facilities. The Dangar Island League considers that this project is warranted and overdue.

· Conserving Our Natural Environment

The proposal will reduce congestion at the public wharf and reduce waiting times for boat and other marine craft. This will mean less idle time for visitors and therefore help to reduce fuel usage and emissions generally. The reduction in running times will enhance the amenity of the island foreshore.

· Contributing to Community Development through Suitable Facilities and Services

The proposal will improve conditions for the boating community by reducing both congestion and the risk of boat accidents. It will also help improve boating safety by providing an improved public environment. The pontoon in particular will greatly enhance access for all users of the ferry and boating services.

· Fulfilling our Community's Vision in Planning for the Future of the Shire

The proposal will provide a necessary enhancement to the existing environment and is in keeping with the size and scale of similar pontoons and facilities that operate elsewhere in the Hawkesbury River. The facility will result in improved access to boating activities considered to be a major outdoor activity by a significant section of the community.

· Supporting Our Diverse Economy

The proposal will have a positive effect on economic development of the surrounding area and add to local employment prospects.

· **Maintaining Sound Corporate and Financial Management**

Once constructed, the facility will require ongoing maintenance. While this facility increases the number of Council's maintainable foreshore assets, it will be partly offset by a reduction maintenance required for the public wharf due to the much reduced use this will be subject to. All maintenance for the DIBC portion of the facility will be fully funded by the Co-op.

The proposal will extend the life of the public wharf asset, increase the service potential of the foreshore facilities and help retain the underlying value of the assets. The proposal will not impact on the proposed Council budget for 2012/13 unless BBP funding is not available.

· **Other Sustainable Considerations**

The facility is not intended to attract significant additional boating traffic to Dangar Island. The facility is primarily intended to address current demands; not future growth.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The responsible officer is the Asset Engineer, Mr Alan Boyd, telephone number 9847 6672.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. Council approve in principle the project concept and endorse the proposed course of action for the implementation of the project.
2. Subject to this approval, the BBP Grant of up to \$135,000 be accepted by Council if offered by NSW Maritime.
3. Subject to this approval, the project be identified for consideration as a phase up in the 2012/13 budget should Council be unsuccessful in its application for the BBP Grant.

MAXWELL WOODWARD

Executive Manager
Works Division

Attachments:

1. Appendix A - Project Location and Concept Sketch for Pontoon and Facility Proposal
2. Appendix B - Dangar Island League Letter
3. Appendix C - Dangar Island League Public Meeting Minutes held on 31 July 2011
4. Appendix D - Extract of Delivery Program for Foreshore Facilities Upgrading Program

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