



Noorton Pty Ltd

PO BOX 1026, STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
phone: 02 9583 1199 fax 02 9529 5092

11 September 2020

Project Leader
Pymont Peninsula Review
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Dear Sir/Madam

On behalf of Manly Fast Ferry, a wholly owned entity of the National Roads and Motorists' Association Ltd (NRMA), I write in response to your request for feedback on the draft *Pymont Peninsula Place Strategy* ("the Strategy").

Since 2009 we have operated transport and tourist operations on Sydney Harbour, with a current fleet of 31 vessels. Our scheduled services include the Manly to Circular Quay Fast Ferry which continues to operate under COVIDSafe controls, as well as Manly to North Sydney, King Street Wharf and Pymont (currently suspended due to COVID-19). We also operate a fleet of water taxis and small transfer vessels carrying from 16 to 30 passengers which can be operated as on-demand or scheduled connections to any of the harbour wharves.

Premise – Ferry services are a transport solution that the Pymont Peninsula needs

Having reviewed the draft Strategy we believe that there is a significant opportunity for ferries to play a much greater role in transport and tourism to and from the Pymont Peninsula than currently indicated. Currently, the only significant proposal in the draft Strategy for ferry services/infrastructure is to upgrade Cadi Bay Wharf (to all weather access).

Ferries as a transport mode are not subject to many of the geographical, cost, congestion and mobility constraints that other modes have (metro rail, light rail, bus, taxi/ride share, private car, cycling), and therefore can be implemented very quickly. Improved ferry services can and should be incorporated as a major tourism and transport solution in the finalised Strategy.

With these considerations in mind, we wish to raise the following matters for your consideration.

1. Innovative service (route/destination) offerings

Manly Fast Ferry Position

The Strategy should consider the opportunity to encourage innovation and alternative transportation services in and around the precinct, including provisioning access for continuous hop on, hop off services that provide a moving footpath around the Pymont Peninsula. Stops could include Pymont Bay Wharf, Casino Wharf, Jones Bay Wharf, Hollies Wharf, Cadi Bay Wharf and Blackwattle Bay (new Sydney Fish Market).



Noorton Pty Ltd

PO BOX 1026, STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
phone: 02 9583 1199 fax 02 9529 5092

These services should provide connections to other adjacent nearby precincts such as Barangaroo, White Bay Cruise Terminal and Circular Quay to provide greater connectivity and tourism opportunities around the harbour.

Rationale

Existing ferry services to and from Pyrmont are limited and largely cater for a traditional Monday-Friday commuter peak travel pattern. Improved services that stop at more peninsula wharves, are easy to access, avoid road network congestion delays, and connect the adjacent precincts to Pyrmont destinations would be highly attractive to both residents and work/leisure visitors. The full potential of ferry services as a public transport mode can be realised. For the Harbour City, ferries are of great value in servicing the needs of residents and work/leisure visitors, including tourists. Proper planning for these passenger markets will enhance the livability and work balance of a combined leisure and commercial (office) precinct. With this need in mind, the transport and leisure access focus for the Pyrmont Peninsula should be changed to match the actual needs of the area

The current draft Strategy simply notes the existing F4 cross harbour ferry service – with only one stop on the peninsula itself (Pyrmont Bay Wharf) – and the currently on-hold Bays Precinct on-demand trial – limited to Barangaroo, Pirrama Park, Sydney Fish Market, Blackwattle Bay only. There is room for considerable improvement and innovation.

2. White Bay Cruise Terminal connections

Manly Fast Ferry position

Direct ferry connections should be provided for between White Bay Cruise Terminal and the Pyrmont Peninsula, increasing tourist cruise ship visitors to the Pyrmont Peninsula and boosting the local economy.

Rationale

Related to point 1 above, at present there are no direct ferry connections between Pyrmont Peninsula and the White Bay Cruise Terminal despite it being a visible destination that is only a short distance away. Many inbound cruise ship passengers would not even be aware of Pyrmont as a destination in itself. The possible exception is Sydney Fish Market – which cannot be easily accessed via water from White Bay.

Increased tourism expenditure would greatly benefit the Pyrmont economy and a ferry service connection to White Bay Cruise Terminal could form part of the hop on, hop off proposal referenced in point 1 above. It would also provide a more convenient way for non-cruise visitors to access White Bay Cruise Terminal for work/leisure purposes.

Additionally, if the White Bay Cruise Terminal has public access, it will also open a transport link for Balmain residents to access Pyrmont Peninsula attractions such as the Sydney Fish Market and entertainment precinct without having to walk or drive over Anzac Bridge, which is difficult for them to access.

Noorton Pty Ltd

PO BOX 1026, STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
phone: 02 9583 1199 fax 02 9529 5092

3. Pyrmont wharves access

Manly Fast Ferry position

Private sector ferry operators need the NSW Government to allow them to access wharves on the Pyrmont Peninsula to deliver improved public transport connections.

Rationale

There is no provision for private sector ferry operators to access the Pyrmont Peninsula wharves and deliver innovative service improvements like those proposed in points 1 and 2. Currently, access is restricted to the existing NSW Government-contracted Sydney Ferries operator (Transdev).

4. Introduction of environmentally sustainable (including electric) vessels

Manly Fast Ferry position

The Pyrmont Peninsula and surrounding precincts provide a key opportunity to introduce environmentally-friendly electric vessels for public transport services on Sydney Harbour. This should be a priority.

Rationale

The marine operating environment at Pyrmont Peninsula and its surrounding precincts (such as Barangaroo, White Bay, Blackwattle Bay) are low speed, low wash zones. The Strategy provides an opportunity to promote the use of modern, clean environmentally sustainable vessels that are more viable for these short-distance journeys. The availability of suitable electric motors now means many marine vessels, including those used for ferry services, can be electric.

Use of electric vessels to service Pyrmont (a first for Sydney Harbour) would be an attraction in itself and in turn promote visitation to the Pyrmont Peninsula. Local residents would also find this attractive as an environmentally-friendly public transport option. Learnings from operational experience could also be used to facilitate the introduction of environmentally sustainable vessels on other Sydney Harbour routes.

5. Pyrmont wharf infrastructure upgrades

Manly Fast Ferry position

All Pyrmont Peninsula wharves should be upgraded to facilitate the introduction of hop on, hop off moving footpath services, with defined timetables for upgrades and expansions to accommodate future water transportation movements between precincts. Future-proofing infrastructure by providing charging facilities for electric vessels will also be an important consideration for the future viability of the strategy.

Rationale

The draft Strategy, as noted above, currently only has one single wharf infrastructure upgrade proposed – upgrading Cadi Bay Wharf to all-weather access.



Noorton Pty Ltd

PO BOX 1026, STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
phone: 02 9583 1199 fax 02 9529 5092

In order to use ferries to deliver the public transport solutions proposed in this submission, all wharf-side infrastructure must be capable of supporting their operation, as well as providing passengers with a comfortable and safe travel experience. Additionally, the provision of charging facilities for electric vessels at key wharves will facilitate the uptake of these vessels for services to, from and around Pyrmont Peninsula.

6. Vessel traffic management around the new Sydney Fish Market

Manly Fast Ferry position

Wharf facilities at the new Sydney Fish Market location should include time-limited pick up and go loading zones for private vessels wishing to pull in, pick up their seafood and depart, separate and distinct from wharf facilities used for public transport ferry services.

Rationale

The new Sydney Fish Markets will be a significant tourist attraction as it has always been for nearby residents and visitors to the area, with the redevelopment providing new and alternative ways to arrive at the site.

In order to capture the greatest possible tourist spend (and drawing on experience from existing operation of the site) is that planning needs to be put in place to allow private vessels to head in and visit the Sydney Fish Markets and experience the activity. This can be achieved with time-limited "pick up and go" zones.

Additionally these zones need to be put in place without interfering with the passage of public transport ferry services, such as those proposed in this submission. The experience of the existing Fish Markets site has revealed issues where overstaying private vessels have caused congestion problems for ferries that are using the same wharf.

7. Back of house facilities for existing commercial vessel berthing

Manly Fast Ferry position

The development of the Blackwattle Bay area will impact the existing use of the waterfront for the supply and service of working harbour vessels. This activity needs to be incorporated into the final Strategy and designs, integrating residential focus with working harbour infrastructure.

Rationale

Sydney Harbour lives with the operation of commercial vessels on and around the Harbour. Blackwattle Bay currently provides important infrastructure that supports the operation of many commercial vessels in the surrounding bays and beyond.

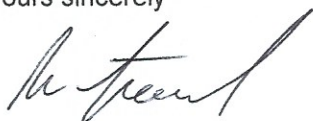
Successful planning principles to best permit the enjoyment of residents, visitors, workers and operators needs to be captured in the planning and future development of the precinct.

Noorton Pty Ltd

PO BOX 1026, STRATHFIELD NSW 2135
phone: 02 9583 1199 fax 02 9529 5092

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. Should you require further information I invite you to contact Sam Giddings, NRMA Senior Manager – Partnerships on 0439 133 300 or Sam.Giddings@mynrma.com.au

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Ford", is written over the typed name.

Richard Ford
Chief Executive Officer
Manly Fast Ferry