



PROPOSAL FOR NEW LAUNCHING FACILITIES AT SARATOGA PENINSULA

Background

Saratoga Sporting Precinct is home to Saratoga Sailing Club (SSC), Deepwater Dragon Boat Club (DDBC), Saratoga Tennis Courts and the Saratoga Oval. The precinct is close to Saratoga Island Reserve and has northerly views across Brisbane Water, which is used by SSC and DDBC for sailing boat racing, dragon boat racing and training activities. There are a number of issues that require urgent attention:

1. High tides causing degradation of the foreshore boat access, and saltwater ingress to Saratoga Oval, which is rendering the Oval unfit for purpose for its primary use, cricket.





2. Low tides making water access difficult, requiring dragon boats to be manually dragged over mud, and larger sailing boats to require pulling out by 4WD vehicles, which further damages the foreshore.

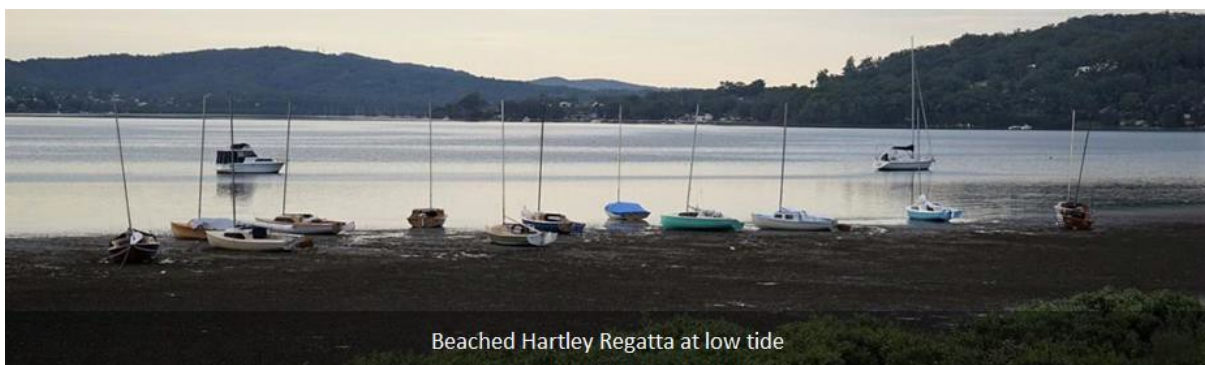




Sailing and dragon boat racing is therefore often restricted to those with the physical strength and ability to haul boats across mud and pull themselves into boats from deeper water. It is not unusual, for example, for less than half the Hartley fleet to race when the tide is out.

The closest boat ramp on Centennial Avenue, some 2.5km away, is in disrepair. The road is narrow and not designed to allow sailing boats to rig and launch and there is insufficient parking for all club boats. It is too far to take dragon boats by road. This is not suitable as an alternative.

These challenges at low tide limit regattas and other events that would otherwise attract people to the area.



This proposal is for:

1. Reinforcement and repair of the current sea defences to prevent water ingress onto the oval;
2. New launch facilities comprising a raised turning area sited on reclaimed land and concrete boat ramp;
3. Improved access road to the turning area; and
4. Clear separation of the water access area from the oval with sandstone blocks that would also provide seating options for spectators.



Benefits include:

- Access:
 - Enable easier access to the water at low tides for those who are less mobile, or just don't want to wade through mud.
 - Save the 1.5km round trip to the nearest slipway.
 - Allow much wider use of the facility for larger Dragon Boats, canoes and the general public.
- Social:
 - Take pressure off the Centennial Avenue launching ramp which is in disrepair and unusable at less than half tide.
 - Provide facilities that can enhance use of the area and provide facilities for hosted regattas.
- Environmental:
 - Constrain launching to a narrow area of the shore and eliminate environmental impact from boats currently launching over a wide area of the mud and sand.
 - Avoid damage to any seagrass.
 - Stop saltwater ingress to the oval and allow area to dry and recover in the future.

The work proposed

1. *Reinforcement and repair of the current sea defences to prevent water ingress onto the oval*

There is currently a sandstone wall along much of the water front, which has gaps in places where water has penetrated and washed earth away. At the beach area where boats are currently launched, waves have eroded the foreshore.

- **A reinforcement is proposed that would fill the gaps with gravel and earth, and raise the level of the wall by adding another layer of sandstone blocks, which would extend from the beach along the eastern foreshore as far as the residential boundary.**

2. *New launch facilities comprising a raised turning area sited on reclaimed land, and concrete boat ramp*

The sandy bay between the oval and the water has suffered from erosion over recent years, largely due to high tides and waves. Additionally, heavy rainfall causes the oval to become waterlogged and further weakens this area. Run-off has resulted in channels forming where rainwater flows north into Brisbane Water. This is the best area for boat launching as the sand extends about halfway to the low-water mark making it firmer for trailers at most tidal states. Nevertheless, at low tide the water's edge is across a further 20m of mudflats and until shallow water is reached. At this point seagrass predominates.

- **A new turning area is proposed to be located on an area of land to be reclaimed, currently a circular sandy area that extends approx. 20m from the shore. The turning area would be reclaimed using fill +/- piles, and elevated to 1m above high water. The surface would be concrete to support car and trailers.**
- **A new 3.5m wide Boat Ramp is proposed which would extend from the turning area to the mean low water mark (or beyond with additional permissions). The ramp would be constructed from concrete.**



A secondary issue is the need for boats to be tied up temporarily whilst sailors retrieve trailers from the shore.

- **A number of posts will be sunk so that boats can be tied up**

An alternative location for the boat ramp, immediately in front of the SSC Club House is not recommended as this area does not allow sufficient room for rigging, manoeuvring 4WD vehicles and trailers.

3. *Improved access road to the boat ramp.*

The dirt road that allows access to the sandy launch area is prone to waterlogging after heavy rain and needs repair to allow access at all states of weather.

- **It is proposed that the dirt road is repaired with a layer of dirt and gravel, compacted to be level with the surrounding grass to allow uninterrupted drainage, and that this is extended to the new turning area.**

The alternative of using concrete as the base material is not recommended as this would disrupt natural drainage and likely lead to greater erosion. It would also be more expensive.

4. *Clear separation of the water access area from the oval with sandstone blocks that would also provide seating options for spectators.*

Improvements to access will increase the appeal of the precinct to sailors and other water users. This will likely result in an increase in traffic, which can be limited by restricting access to SSC and DDBC members. However, it will be necessary to protect oval users from this traffic, as well as prevent sea water ingress to the area behind and west of the boat ramp.

- **Sandstone blocks are already in place, provided by Council.**



Site plan

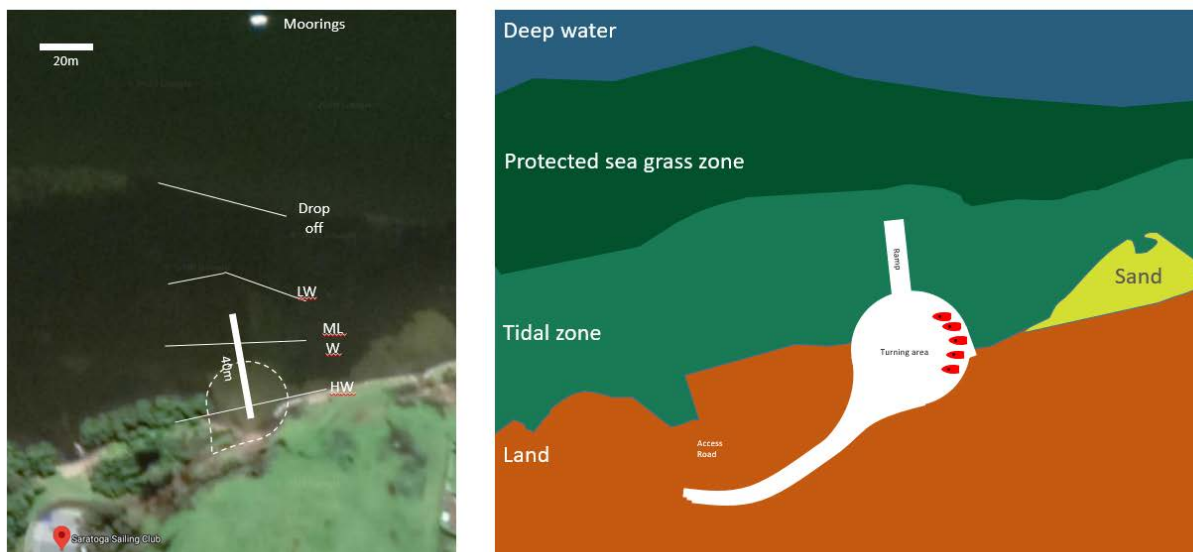
The drawings here are for illustration only to give a visual impression of the proposed structures. A key consideration is the outer limit of the Oval, which currently cannot be determined due to marsh plant growth. We note that Ovals can be 135m to 185m long and 110m to 155m wide, with the preferred senior oval size being 165m x 135m to provide the greatest flexibility to cater for all standards of play ([https://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/support-and-advice/facility-management/developing-facilities/dimensions-guide/sport-specific-dimensions/football-\(australian-rules\)](https://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/support-and-advice/facility-management/developing-facilities/dimensions-guide/sport-specific-dimensions/football-(australian-rules))). However we also note that the size of Saratoga Oval may be smaller than this. The positioning of the construction in the images may need to be amended to facilitate the actual oval size.

Location of reclaimed turning area and ramp





Extent of sea grass in relation to construction



Approximate locations of LW and MLW marks



Next steps

Council have provided support for this proposal, with advice from Fisheries. We are now seeking a Boating Now grant for the design stage.

This proposal has been developed by members of Saratoga Sailing Club Management Committee and is endorsed by that Committee and the Deepwater Dragon Boat Committee.

For further information in relation to this proposal please contact:

- Wayne Butler, Commodore, Saratoga Sailing Club; or
- Robin Mann, Development Committee Chair, Saratoga Sailing Club

Contact can be made via the web form at <https://www.sarasail.org.au/contact-us>, or by phone or email via <https://www.sarasail.org.au/about-us-1/our-team>