

Maria Poulos - address to Council in support of Motion 18/19 - from Cr Said – Update on opposition to proposed passenger cruise ship terminal

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today.

Thank you Councillors Said and Da Rocha for proposing and seconding this motion.

Thank you Mayor Nielson and all the Councillors here tonight who have stood by the community every step of the way in the fight to save Yarra Bay.

Mayor Neilson we thank you for recently writing to NSW Government Ministers for Transport and Investment and requesting meetings with them and with Peter Collins.

Following the NSW State election, it's now more important than ever for our local community to speak out strongly against the proposed cruise ship terminal at Yarra Bay.

Machinery of Government changes have consolidated power in a few powerful portfolios and the Department of Environment and Heritage has been abolished. This has taken out a layer of accountability and protection that will make opposing this development that much more difficult.

We need to work together and let NSW Government Ministers but also the Federal Government know that the people of the South-Eastern suburbs do not want a cruise ship terminal in our community.

When Peter Collins and the cruise industry reference group recommended Yarra Bay (as a third option after Garden Island West and North-East Garden Island), they clearly stated that consultation with Indigenous and local community representatives should be carried out.

The government has now completed its strategic business case. Recent statements to the media by the Port Authority of NSW suggest they may have commenced work on a final detailed business case.

Yet we are still waiting for those promised consultations. The local indigenous community, the longest-established community in metropolitan Sydney who have called Yarra Bay home for thousands of years have been left in the dark.

This issue has been hanging over the community's head for almost a year now – leaving us in a permanent state of uncertainty and anxiety about the future.

Look at the people here tonight – they are worried they are going to lose their homes. These are the people that helped build the community – they pay rates, they work to protect the area, they have built their homes and contributed to the community in many ways.

The big end of town – that corporate juggernaut of foreign cruise industry, developers, construction firms and institutional investors that Gladys represents – think it is acceptable to hold this ticking time bomb over our community. To keep us waiting and wondering what the future holds while they decide whether there is a good business case to rip the heart out

of a community, destroy the environment, take away our public space and callously disregard cultural heritage for profits.

We support this motion for Council to write to the Premier and relevant Ministers. We commend this initiative to invite them to attend a meeting of Council.

We now have a Minister for Public Spaces. Council must persuade him of the need to protect our beaches. There are 12 beaches in the Eastern Suburbs, nine of them in Randwick City. In a city growing as rapidly as Sydney is, and getting hotter by the year, the open space and recreational value of those beaches is precious; we cannot afford to have any one of them compromised. Council must protect our beaches (and our only sailing club).

We need a formal opportunity to present our objections to the key decision maker, the new Minister responsible for Roads and Maritime, as well as Transport, Andrew Constance as well as the Premier. We need to show them the traffic chaos in the area and how this cruise terminal would be a dangerous and costly imposition on our busy port, as well as for residents.

Look at the truck movements on Bumborah Point where they propose to stick the terminal. The NSW Ports Masterplan has projected that truck volumes in the roads surrounding Yarra Bay will increase from 3900 to between 6300 and 6900 trucks per day in the next 20 years. A cruise terminal would add thousands of trucks and buses to the heavily congested (often gridlocked) area. The chaos that would result if 8000 tourists per day were to be transported along Foreshore Road, Botany Road and adjoining major roads in morning and evening peaks would be disastrous for the port as well as residential communities in the area.

We would suggest adding the Treasurer and Investment Minister to the motion for good measure as they will be responsible for any Public Private Partnership. What we want to say to these Ministers is – what a waste of taxpayers' money when there are so many other critical infrastructure needs in the area. An independent review showed that accommodating cruise ships at Garden Island would cost \$143 million. And yet taxpayers are being asked to spend over half a billion dollars on an ill-conceived cruise ship terminal at Yarra Bay. A terminal that the cruise industry apparently has ruled out contributing towards.

Finally, we ask Council to consider seeking the formal release of documents through a GIPAA request. We have a right to know.

It's high time for Governments, both Federal and State, to listen to the people, and for all of us to have our say loudly and clearly: 'SAVE YARRA BAY'.

We commend the motion to Council.