



# Snapper Island – Exhibition of Discussion Paper and Draft Conservation Management Plan Consultation Outcomes Report

## Background

Over the period 18 November 2020 to 12 February 2021, the Harbour Trust invited feedback about Snapper Island. The exhibition material comprised:

- Discussion Paper
- Draft Conservation Management Plan

The Discussion Paper provided interested organisations and stakeholders with background about Snapper Island, as well as providing background to the draft (non-statutory) Conservation Management Plan (draft CMP) for the Island. The draft CMP provided a historical background of the Island, as well as an assessment of the significance and condition of the buildings and structures that remain in place.

The purpose of the exhibition was to seek community feedback to inform planning for Snapper Island.

Stakeholders were invited to make a written submission (via hard copy / post or by email to [consultrust@harbourtrust.gov.au](mailto:consultrust@harbourtrust.gov.au)). Stakeholders were also given the opportunity to complete an online survey via the Snapper Island website (<https://www.harbourtrust.gov.au/en/community/snapper-island-discussion-paper-survey/>). Some submitters chose to provide feedback via both channels.

This summary provides an outline of issues raised in submissions and how these were addressed in the Harbour Trust's consideration of these matters.

## Public Exhibition

### Notification

The exhibition material was placed on public exhibition from 18 November 2020 to 12 February 2021. Relevant documents were available for inspection on the Harbour Trust's website, in the Harbour Trust's office at Mosman and on Cockatoo Island. The exhibited documents are available at: <https://www.harbourtrust.gov.au/en/community/snapper-island-discussion-paper-survey/>.

The public was advised of the exhibition through a range of channels, including:

- Information was uploaded to the Harbour Trust website on 18 November 2020
- Over 200 individuals and organisations including members of the Community Advisory Committee, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee, government bodies and community

groups were notified by email of the exhibition on or around 18 November 2020. Stakeholders were again notified of the exhibition on 16 December 2020 (highlighting an extension to the exhibition period);

- Notices appeared in hard copy versions of the *Daily Telegraph* and *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Daily Telegraph* on Thursday 18 November 2020; a further advertisement was placed in the hard copy version of the *Telegraph* and *Sydney Morning Herald* on 9 December 2020; notices were also available in the *Daily Telegraph* (online version) from 18 November 2020;
- Information was included in the Harbour Trust e-newsletters which were distributed on 19 November 2020, 26 November 2020 and 22 January 2021;
- Google Adwords and social media advertising (from 18 November 2020); and
- Organic posts across all Harbour Trust social media channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter – from 18 November 2020).

### Submissions Received

A total of 206 responses were received during the exhibition period, comprising 196 survey responses and 10 submissions from interested organisations and individuals (sent via post or email). Several stakeholders responded via multiple channels.

Overall, 153 (78%) of the 196 survey submissions, and 7 of 10 of written respondents, indicated the Outcomes developed for Snapper Island are still relevant, despite the current condition of the site and the changing needs of the community.

All responses received were considered by the Harbour Trust as part of this consultation process. A summary of issues raised in feedback received is discussed further below.

### **Next Steps**

The draft CMP and community feedback will inform consideration of the potential transfer of Snapper Island to the Harbour Trust from the Commonwealth Department of Finance. Subject to the transfer proceeding, this will also inform the preparation of a future statutory Management Plan made in accordance with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and *Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act 2001*.

## Consultation Summary

### Key Issues Raised

Issue Raised	Further Details	Discussion
<p>Outcomes for Snapper Island</p>	<p>Many submissions and 78% of survey responses supported the Outcomes in the Harbour Trust's Comprehensive Plan (published in 2003, when it was anticipated Snapper Island would soon be transferred to the Harbour Trust). Some submitters did not provide comments about the Outcomes.</p> <p>Some submitters expressed their support for the Harbour Trust entering into partnerships with particular organisations (as suggested in the Comprehensive Plan), and also suggested suitable uses for the Island.</p>	<p>Support for the Outcomes in the Comprehensive Plan is noted.</p> <p>If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, the Harbour Trust will prepare a statutory Management Plan, in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> and the Comprehensive Plan. The community would be consulted regarding the draft Management Plan which would identify outcomes for Snapper Island, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.</p>
<p>Len Forsythe and maritime history</p>	<p>Many submitters expressed strong support for recognising the legacy of Len Forsythe (the founder of the Sydney Training Depot and museum on Snapper Island).</p> <p>Some submitters suggested the TS (Training Ship) Sydney could be reestablished on/return to Snapper Island, or the Australian Navy/cadet community could again be involved in activating/using Snapper Island.</p> <p>Some submitters expressed disappointment the cadet facility was no longer in operation, and the Snapper Island Museum had been removed from the site and the collection dispersed.</p> <p>Some submitters provided feedback regarding the content of the Discussion Paper and draft Conservation Management Plan.</p>	<p>Support for recognition of the legacy of Len Forsythe and the TS Sydney Museum is noted. The legacy of Mr Forsyth and the Navy League Cadets is recognised in the citation of the Commonwealth Heritage Listing of Snapper Island.</p> <p>The museum opened in around 1952. Artefacts from the museum were removed from Snapper Island in around 2006 and relocated to other collections on Spectacle and Garden Islands.</p> <p>If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, then the Harbour Trust would prepare a management plan for the site, which would include opportunities for interpretation of the Island's history.</p>
<p>Remaining buildings</p>	<p>Some submitters expressed concern at the current condition of those buildings that remain on Snapper Island – some submitters felt they should not have fallen into disrepair.</p>	<p>Concern about the condition of buildings on Snapper Island is noted.</p> <p>The island is currently owned by the Department of Finance, which is responsible for</p>

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	<p>Some submitters encouraged the Harbour Trust to conserve the existing buildings plus the seawall on Snapper Island, and rebuild some or all of those that had been removed or demolished/fallen into disrepair.</p> <p>On the other hand, some submitters suggested all remaining buildings should be removed from Snapper Island, and it be returned to its natural state, and not be inhabited or used.</p>	<p>maintenance of buildings and the natural environment.</p> <p>The Harbour Trust’s vision for Snapper Island is set out in the Comprehensive Plan, which identifies the need for repairs and rehabilitation of the island and its buildings, and its reuse, with maritime training activities particularly encouraged.</p>
<p>Potential new uses for Snapper Island</p>	<p>Many submitters proposed a range of new uses for Snapper Island including those that could encourage/support visitation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maritime training (including return of the Naval cadets)</li> <li>• Sailing/base for sailing events</li> <li>• Indigenous interpretation</li> <li>• Navy/military interpretation</li> <li>• Navy/military museum</li> <li>• Boat building/maritime skills for young people</li> <li>• Mens Shed/Womens Shed</li> <li>• Arts and crafts</li> <li>• Food and beverage</li> <li>• Accommodation for homeless people</li> <li>• Tourist accommodation</li> <li>• Day trips (picnic facilities and playground to be provided)</li> <li>• Food and beverage (kiosk/café/function centre)</li> <li>• Showcase for sustainable building practices</li> <li>• Activities/tours that collaborate with Cockatoo and Spectacle Islands</li> </ul>	<p>The range of potential uses for Snapper Island is noted.</p> <p>If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, a management plan would be prepared that would consider potential suitable uses for the site.</p> <p>Suitable uses would address relevant legislation (including the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> and <i>Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act 2001</i>), and the Harbour Trust’s Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>The community would be invited to provide feedback on any draft management plan.</p>
<p>Water-based recreation activities</p>	<p>Some submitters suggested Snapper Island could be a base for water-based recreational activities (and supporting infrastructure be provided), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kayaking</li> <li>• Sailing</li> <li>• Fishing</li> </ul>	<p>The range of potential water-based recreational uses for Snapper Island is noted.</p> <p>If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, a management plan would be prepared that would consider potential suitable uses for the site.</p>

Issue Raised	Further Details	Discussion
	Some submitters stated fishing (and visitation generally) should not be permitted.	<p>Suitable uses would address relevant legislation (including the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> and <i>Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act 2001</i>), and the Harbour Trust's Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p>The community would be invited to provide feedback on any draft management plan.</p>
Partner organisations	Numerous submitters nominated organisations that may be suitable for the Harbour Trust to partner with, if Snapper Island become accessible to the public.	<p>The Harbour Trust's Comprehensive Plan identifies the repair and rehabilitation of the island in partnership with maritime and naval heritage organisations as a desired outcome.</p> <p>If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, the Harbour Trust would explore these types of opportunities.</p>
Access to Snapper Island	<p>Various submitters suggested methods to facilitate public/private access to Snapper Island, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public/private ferries</li> <li>• Private vessels (suggest minimal administration/costs for private vessels to berth)</li> <li>• Kayaks (mooring/storage facilities to be provided)</li> <li>• Guided tours to Snapper Island (potential to collaborate with tours to Cockatoo and Spectacle Islands)</li> </ul>	If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, the Harbour Trust may explore these types of opportunities. Improvements to current infrastructure would be required to facilitate access to Snapper Island.
Public ownership of Snapper Island	Several submitters expressed very strong views that Snapper Island should remain in public (Commonwealth) ownership.	Snapper Island is currently owned by the Department of Finance. Feedback received during the exhibition will inform the Commonwealth Government's consideration of the potential transfer of Snapper Island to the Harbour Trust.
First Nations and Naval Heritage	Some submitters encouraged the Harbour Trust to engage with (local not generic) Traditional Owners and specialist/expert Naval Historians when examining the future of Snapper Island.	If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, advice from First Nations peoples and heritage experts will inform future planning for the site.
Public access to Snapper Island	Some submitters suggested Snapper Island be open to the public for unrestricted/limited access. Some submitters suggested an admission fee should	Noted.

Issue Raised	Further Details	Discussion
	<p>be charged; others stated entry to Snapper Island should be free.</p>	
<p>Natural environment</p>	<p>Some submitters noted the poor condition of Snapper Island, and substantial efforts will be required to reduce the current seagull population, improve vegetation coverage and manage impacts for sea level rise on the seawall.</p> <p>Some submitters noted if public access is to be implemented, measures will need to be developed to manage any impacts from vessels (eg spill kits to be provided on the wharf, management of waste from vessels and visitors).</p>	<p>Comments regarding the condition of the natural environment are noted.</p> <p>If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, works would be required to improve the condition of the seawall, and new infrastructure would be required to facilitate public access.</p>
<p>Next steps</p>	<p>Some submitters enquired as to the next steps regarding the future of Snapper Island (noting it had been many years since the Naval Cadets and Museum had departed the site).</p>	<p>Snapper Island is currently owned by the Department of Finance.</p> <p>Community feedback and the draft CMP will inform consideration of the potential transfer of Snapper Island to the Harbour Trust.</p> <p>If Snapper Island is transferred to the Harbour Trust, the Harbour Trust would prepare a statutory management plan, in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> and Comprehensive Plan. The community would be consulted regarding any draft Management Plan.</p>