

Watsons Bay Wharf redevelopment

Saving the Sydney Game Fishing Club





What's at stake

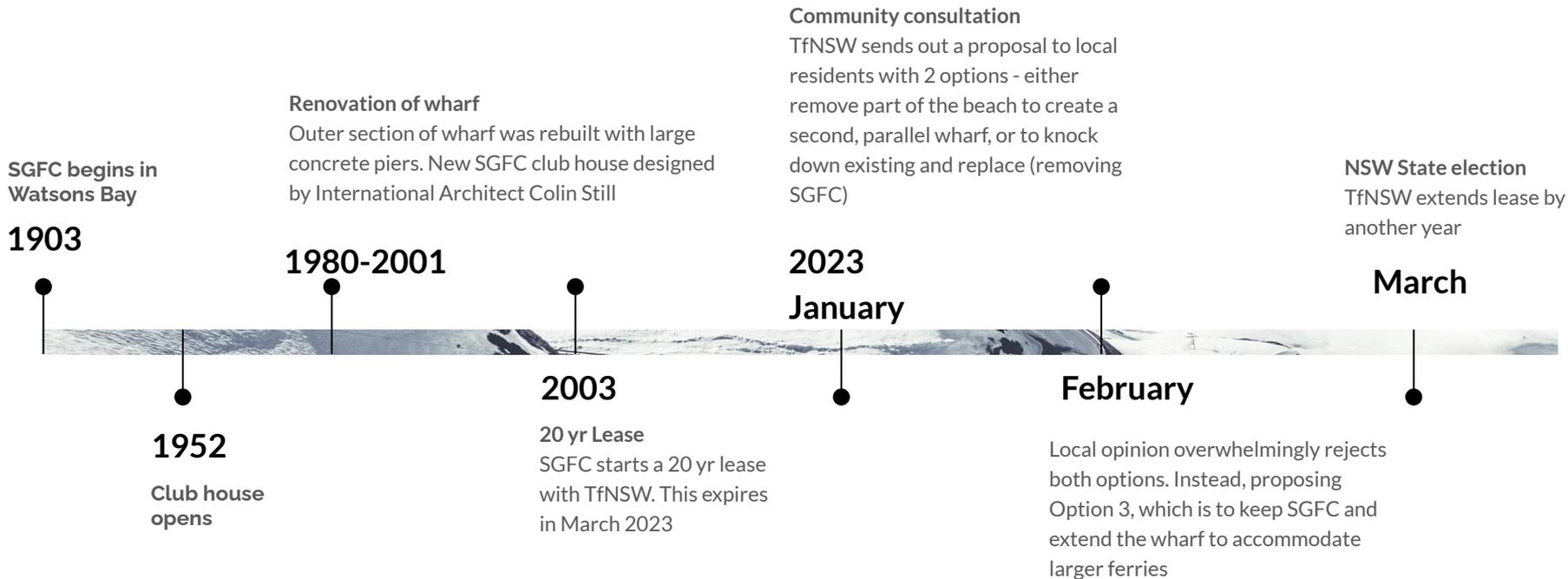
Sydney Game Fishing Club is the oldest game fishing club in Australia. We're based on the wharf at Watsons Bay, where we've been since 1903. Our current club house was opened in 1952, and renovated in 2001.

Now, Transport for NSW has proposed to demolish and replace the wharf, which also means destroying our club.





Timeline of Key events





TfNSW Consultation process

Sending out two poorly considered options is not consulting with the community. Demolishing our clubhouse means demolishing our club.

Comment from TfNSW analyst: "Can't you just launch your boats from the boat ramp?"

A: There is no boat ramp. And most of our game fishing boats are too large for a boat ramp.



What's driving this change?

Disabled access

Currently there are steps to access ferries.

Increased visitor traffic

Currently the wharf is congested on busy days, with long loading times.

Larger Ferries, recreational boat traffic conflict

All of these issues are addressed by the community proposal of Option 3



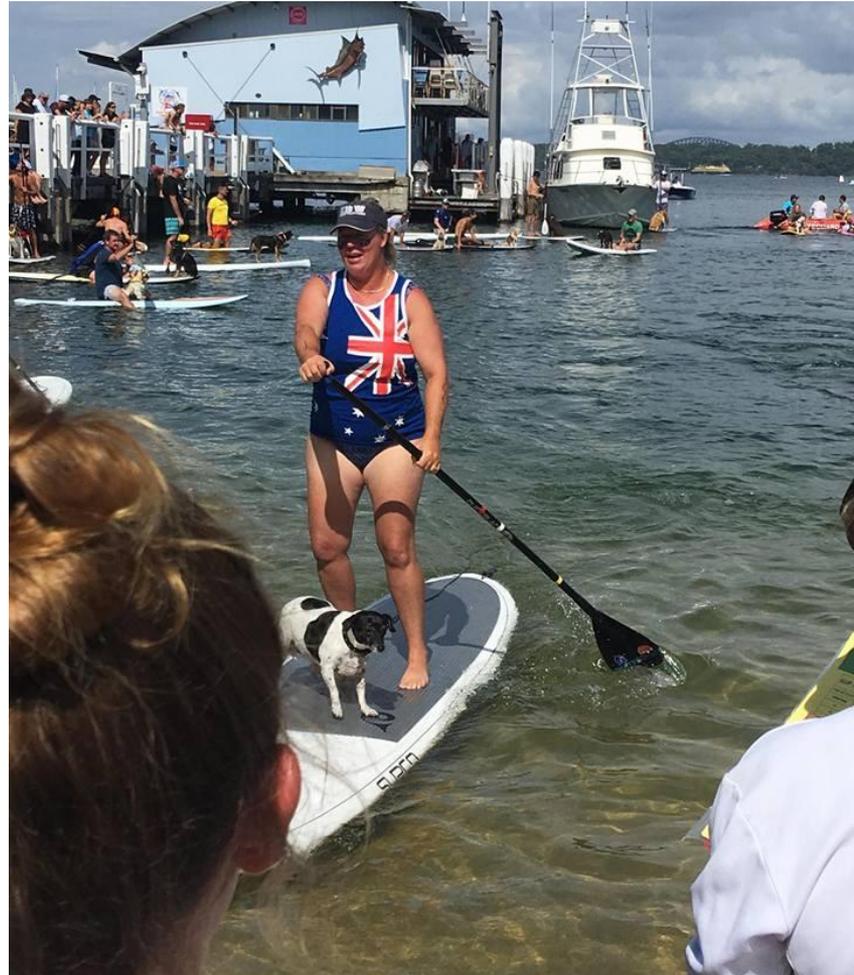


Community Sentiment

Our local community has been strongly in favour of keeping the SGFC club, and specifically Option 3.

Our club house is a community club, designed, built by and used by locals. SGFC maintains a strong relationship with local residents through regular community events.

It would be a great loss to the local community to see SGFC forced from its home on the wharf.



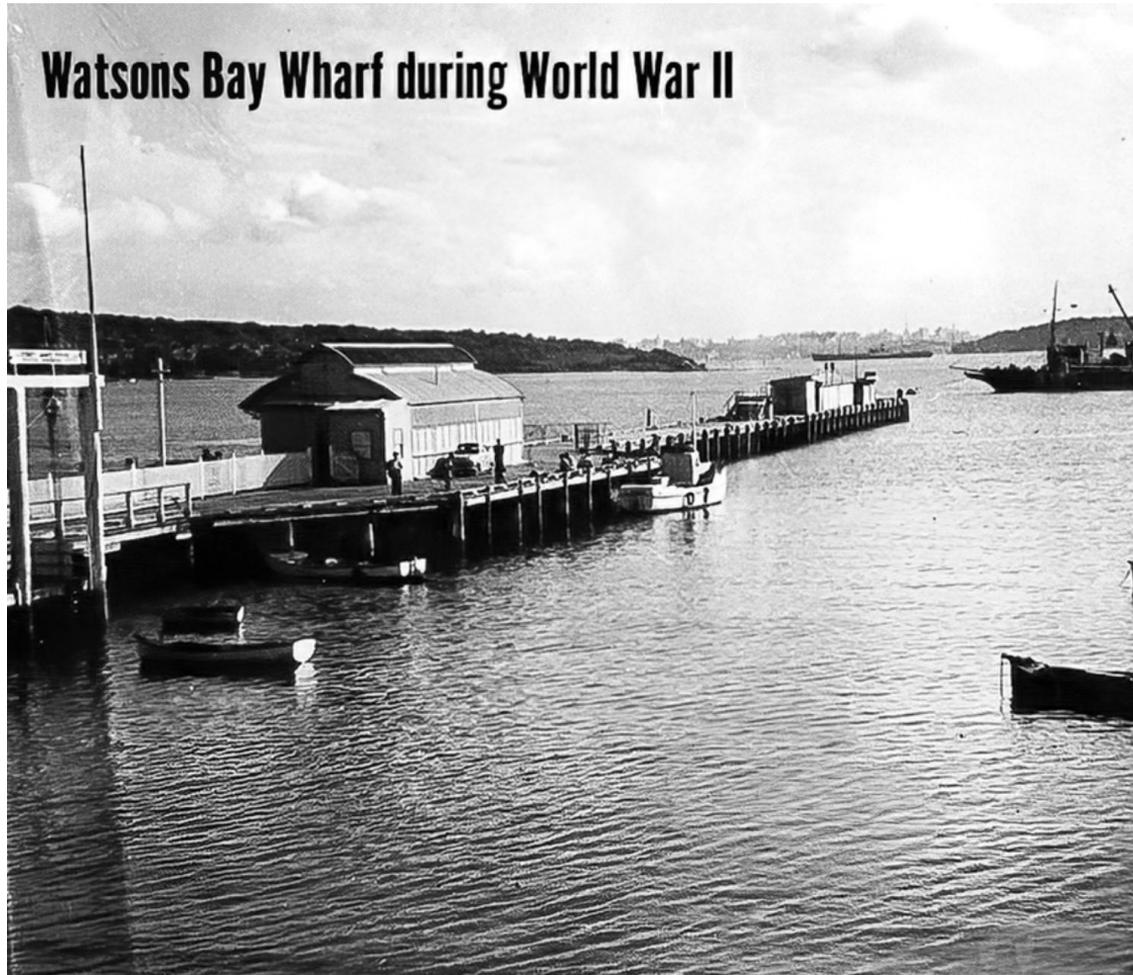


Option 3

Option 3 is the community proposal. This involves keeping the existing wharf structure (including SGFC), but extending it out further to allow larger vessels easier access.

Ironically, this is similar to the solution that was used during WWII, which you can see here. The wharf was extended to accommodate large navy ships.

Watsons Bay Wharf during World War II





Community engagement

The Sydney Game Fishing Club has been a key element of the Watsons Bay community. SGFC supports the local community with a range of events.

- The most popular is our “*Gone Fishin*” Days. Club members work with local schools and community groups to learn about sustainable fishing
- Recreational boat training courses where local children learn how to gain a recreational boating licence. Teaching boating safety is critical for our sport, since at sea help may not be nearby, and conditions are frequently dangerous.
- Our annual Christmas party for the Sydney Children’s Hospital Randwick. This is a wonderful occasion where sick kids and their families experience an exciting day away from hospital.
- Marine studies excursions for local schools
- Our seniors group operates a *Zumba* class 3 times a week at the club house, highly valued by the local community.



Scientific research

A number of government agencies, as well as marine research institutes, collect fisheries data from Sydney and NSW waters. But the contribution of active, informed game fishers adds considerably to their research by being skilled observers 'on the water' frequently and in significant boat numbers.

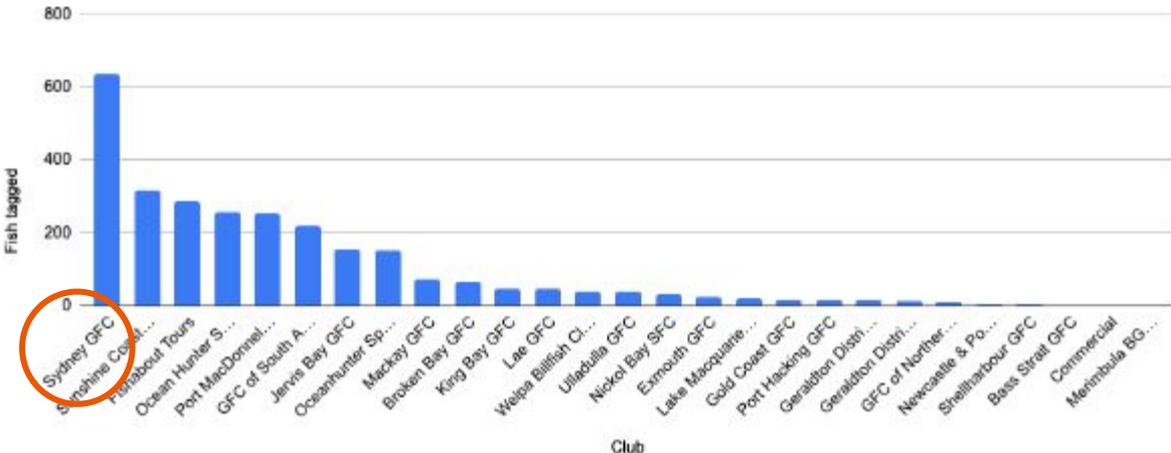
This valued and voluntary contribution is provided at no cost.

- SGFC is actively involved with several post-graduate programs, collecting organisms such as parasites, tissue samples and even eyeballs for PhD candidates at Macquarie University. These post-grad students visit the club for presentation nights to outline to members how their samples are used and what their research is revealing. Training is also provided to SGFC members on sample collection and preservation techniques.
- School students are regular visitors. SGFC supports several Marine Science education programs. Students join our boat crews to learn about marine ecology, ranging from sea birds to coral and fish.
- SGFC is planning to expand its involvement with several public schools to host these excursions and Marine Science sessions.

Scientific research

SGFC members catch thousands of fish each year, most of which are released with a tracking tag inserted just behind the fin. The size, location and health of the fish is recorded, and sent to NSW Fisheries/ DPI. The DPI fish tagging program is the largest saltwater tagging program of its kind, and has been running since 1973. This [data is then used for research and data modelling](#) to assess how much of a particular species can be harvested each year by commercial fishermen. The movement and health of large pelagic species is also an indicator of currents, smaller bait fish, and most importantly, valuable data on climate change.

DPI Top tagging boats and anglers by Club - 20/21



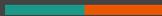
SGFC anglers contributed more than twice as much tag data during the last reporting period



Is there another option?

The “fallback” option would be to move SGFC to the Old Pilot Station. This is currently leased to the Boating Industry Association, but is only used a few times a year. This wharf is excellent for our larger boats, and there is an existing building that could be used as a club house.

Old Pilot Station

A horizontal bar with a teal segment on the left and an orange segment on the right, positioned above the section header.

Proposed solution

We'd prefer to stay where we are.
We would like to work with TfNSW in
improving the transport network.
We'd like to be part of the conversation.

Thank you.

