

The Daily Telegraph



Demand proves moor is merrier

- **Henry Budd**
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Place to park the boat ... an artist's impression of Sydney Boathouse at Rozelle Bay / Pic: Markham Corporation

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IN the Harbour City it's everybody's dream to have a boat moored near home.

Demand for prestige positions on the Harbour has placed that dream beyond the grasp of all but the very wealthy.

More than 2000 inquiries have been received for just 215 dry berths at Sydney's newest dry-stack marina - despite a \$1000-a-month cost and the fact it hasn't even been built.

Construction of the Sydney Boathouse at Rozelle Bay is due to begin early next week and it is hoped the new facility will ease some of the pressure on the Harbour's 1200-person mooring waiting list.

The wait for a public mooring in highly coveted areas can be more than a decade.

The first stage of the \$90 million development will include a 24-berth marina, a warehouse with space to store 265 boats, office and retail space, and a 165-space carpark. It should be finished by mid-2011.

Fifty dry berths will be available for sale. More than 2000 boat owners have registered their interest in leasing one of the remaining 215 dry berths.

Demand for office and retail space has also been strong.

Prices for dry storage would be on par with traditional marinas east of the Harbour Bridge, project chief executive James Markham said.

A fixed berth for a 9m boat at d'Albora Marina at Rushcutters Bay costs from \$1100 a month.

A consortium of investment companies is behind the development, with a second stage that will include a multi-storey carpark and a second warehouse capable of storing a further 384 boats scheduled for completion the following year.

The warehouse will accommodate boats between 6m and 12m, with forklifts used to transport vessels to the from the water. Dry stacking is already fairly common in the US where it usually commanded a premium over a wet berth.

"Dry stack storage has proved popular because it is more secure and boats are kept out of the water so there's no need for anti foul," Mr Markham said.

The development, which was approved by then planning minister Frank Sartor in 2007, was met with resistance from Leichhardt Council and dragon boating associations, who feared the development would increase the number of boat movements in the bay.

The boat industry was hit hard by the financial crisis, which influenced the decision to delay construction until now.

"2009 was sort of disastrous [for the boating industry]," Mr Markham said.

"A lot of the boat brands [and] a lot of the guys we deal with went broke."

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