

9.4. Review of harbour foreshore carparks - response to Council resolution

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ATTACHMENTS	Nil
CSP LINK	Outcome 4 – A connected LGA where safe, active and sustainable travel is preferred T3. Ensure a fair allocation of assets, parking and road space to promote sustainable travel options and prioritise access for those who need it most

PURPOSE:

This report responds to the Council resolution of 17 November 2025 in relation to reviewing harbour foreshore parking areas regarding consideration of measures to ensure equitable use of parking adjacent to public open space, and the use of Council's foreshore parks for overnight use by travellers/campers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- On 17 November 2025, Council resolved to review harbour foreshore parking areas and consider measures to ensure equitable use of free parking adjacent to public open space, with particular regard to overnight use by travellers/campers.
- Since the resolution of 17 November 2025, local community members have also raised concerns regarding camping at Grasmere Reserve, Brightmore Reserve, and parked vehicles obstructing pedestrian access to Primrose Park.
- Night-time occupancy surveys were undertaken in December 2025 and January 2026 at key foreshore car parks (Primrose Park, Tunks Park, Blues Point Reserve, and Balls Head Reserve) to assess parking demand and the presence of camping vehicles during peak periods.
- Survey results indicate that general parking occupancy did not reach levels that require demand-management interventions at night, with Primrose Park car park at Young Street being the only surveyed car park that recorded over 40% occupancy and with a significant proportion of campers.
- Overnight use at Blues Point Reserve was over capacity and Tunks Park recorded over 30% occupancy, however the surveys did not record evidence of camping at these locations.
- The implementation of a No Camping restriction at Primrose Park car park at Young Street is recommended to stem the increase in camping and the promotion of the area as an available camping area on social media sites.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. THAT** Council note the report and outcome of the surveys.
- 2. THAT** Council resolve to install signage stating “No Camping Fines Apply under Section 632 of the Local Government Act 1993” in Primrose Park car park, Cremorne at Young Street (and within Primrose Park more broadly), Grasmere Reserve, and Brightmore Reserve.
- 3. THAT** Council note that public amenities in Primrose Park and Brightmore Reserve will be locked each evening and reopened each morning.
- 4. THAT** Council note that Denos and Matora Lanes, Cremorne will be monitored for campervan parking.
- 5. THAT** Council note that notices will be placed on social media sites advising that camping is prohibited in North Sydney Council’s foreshore parks, should the promotion of camping at these locations become known to Council.
- 6. THAT** No Stopping signage be installed within the Primrose Park car park, Cremorne at Young Street, between the points 10 metres and 12 metres south of the end of the car, with an associated painted island to facilitate pedestrian access between the car park and Primrose Park.

Background

At its meeting on 17 November 2025, Council resolved as follows:

- 1. THAT in alignment with Council's adopted Integrated Transport Strategy, Council conduct a review and report on our harbour foreshore parking areas/carparks - including potential measures - to ensure equitable and fair use of free parking adjacent to public open space.*
- 2. THAT such a review pay particular attention to areas where camping and/or overnight parking are identified and address prolonged, overnight use of Council parking spaces by travellers/campers.*

Subsequent to the above recommendation, community members have also raised concerns regarding camping at Grasmere Reserve, Brightmore Reserve, and parked vehicles obstructing pedestrian access to Primrose Park at Young Street, Cremorne.

Report

Council considers parking matters in accordance with its Integrated Transport Strategy and Parking Management and Enforcement Policy, the latter having been adopted to ensure the equitable use of the limited parking across the Local Government Area (LGA).

Public car parks are available for use by any member of the community, and any restrictions to access or use apply equally to all users. Parking restrictions are generally implemented as a demand management tool to encourage turnover and ensure equity of parking. Where a safety issue is identified, Council may also consider prohibiting access to a car park or adjustment of hours as an appropriate risk mitigation measure.

It is important to note that Transport for NSW's road safety policies support a safer road environment by allowing drivers who may be fatigued to safely pull over and rest if required. The enforcement of people parking for the purposes of 'resting' as opposed to 'camping' in this context becomes a challenging area for Council's compliance team. It is also recognised that some people sleeping overnight in vehicles are not 'camping' and maybe parked overnight for other reasons including homelessness or avoiding domestic violence situations.

Notwithstanding the above, concerns have been raised by the community in relation to unregulated or 'free camping' in Council's foreshores parks and its potential proliferation are noted.

Car Park Occupancy

To understand occupancy, an overnight parking survey of Council's foreshore carparks at Primrose Park, Tunks Park, Blues Point, and Balls Head was undertaken on consecutive Saturdays, on 27 December 2025 and 3 January 2026 between 10pm and midnight. The results of the survey are shown in the table below.

The occupancy rate of each car park was well below levels which would justify changes to general parking restrictions in these car parks solely for the purposes of parking equity, potentially with the exception of the southern end of Blues Point Road. However, most of the vehicles that were parked at Blue Point Road displayed resident parking permits.

During the survey there was no evidence of camping or camping vehicles. However, information supplied by the community does provide evidence of this activity on other occasions.

Car Park Location	Number of Spaces	Number of Vehicles	Percentage Occupancy
Primrose Park – Young Street	27	11	41%
Primrose Park – Denos Lane	15	0	0%
Primrose Park – Matora Lane	52	2	4%
Tunks Park – Brothers Avenue	95	33	35%
Blues Point Road	19	30	160%
Balls Head Reserve	29	2	7%

It should be noted that existing restrictions are in place in Tunks Park at Brothers Avenue, Blues Point Road, and Balls Head Reserve in the form of No Camping restrictions, timed parking restrictions, and evening No Parking restrictions respectively.

Given the remaining capacity in car parks, the parking surveys in of themselves do not justify changes to timed parking restrictions.

It should be note that overnight camping times often overlap with times other users want to use Council’s foreshore parks. Therefore, changes to parking restrictions need to be carefully considered to avoid unintended impacts for members of the local community who use these car parks, particularly in the early mornings or evenings for activities such as jogging, walking, and fishing.

Other Regulation Options

Council officers have made contact with other Councils facing the issue of camping in car parks. Advice received indicates that there are no regulations in the Local Government Act nor the NSW Road Rules 2014, which specifically address people sleeping in vehicles that are parked in accordance with posted signage. Council could serve orders; however, this would be highly ineffectual for vehicles parked for a single night.

Council is able to prohibit camping in foreshore reserves and parks using Section 632 of the Local Government Act 1993. It should be noted that this would not apply to people sleeping in vehicles in car parks adjacent to foreshore reserves and parks.

Other measures

Council has become aware that some of Council’s foreshore parks have become popular locations with campers through promotion on social media sites advertising the availability of facilities including toilets. Council could look to place messaging on the relevant social media platforms advising that camping is prohibited in North Sydney Council’s foreshore parks.

Council can lock toilet facilities overnight to reduce access to overnight campers. Again, this may have unintended consequences for community users and would need to be monitored and adjusted as required, particularly sporting clubs using parks.

It should be noted that Balls Head Reserve has a “Restricted parking area No Parking 10pm-6am” restriction in place, and Brothers Avenue at Tunks Park already has a Camping Prohibited sign and timed permit parking restrictions are in place at Blues Point Road. These measures would appear to have been effective in deterring camping at these locations.

Proposed Measures

Following is a summary of the proposed measures to prevent camping at each location.

Location	Measures Proposed
Primrose Park – Young Street	No camping signage inside around the perimeter of the car park at the end of Young Street. Continue to monitor parking areas for on-street camping. Locking of amenities in the evening.
Primrose Park – Denos Lane	No camping signage inside park. Continue to monitor parking areas for on-street camping. Locking of amenities in the evening.
Primrose Park – Matora Lane	No camping signage inside park. Continue to monitor parking areas for on-street camping.
Tunks Park – Brothers Avenue	No changes proposed.
Blues Point Road	No changes proposed.
Brightmore Reserve	No camping signage inside park. locking of amenities in the evening.
Grasmere Reserve	No camping signage inside park.

Parked cars obstructing access to Primrose Park

Council has also received concerns about parked vehicles in the Primrose Park car park on Young Street obstructing pedestrian access to the park by parking in front of the gap in the fence.

To address this issue, it is proposed to remove one parking space from the car park to provide painted hatched line marking and associated “No Stopping” signs to clarify to drivers that vehicles should not obstruct the access to the park.

Consultation Requirements

Community engagement is not required for this report.

Financial/Resource Implications

The proposed measures will be funded through existing operational budgets.

Legislation

NSW Roads Act 1993

The NSW Local Government Act 1993