

9.3. Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy - post-exhibition report

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ATTACHMENTS	1. Draft Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy - March 2026 [9.3.1 - 6 pages] 2. Submissions Table [9.3.2 - 76 pages]
CSP LINK	<p>Outcome 3 – An active community with space for everyone to exercise and enjoy the outdoors</p> <p>O2. Maximise the capacity of our existing open spaces and recreational facilities</p> <p>O4. Manage our open space and recreational facilities to ensure that they are well maintained and shared</p> <p>Outcome 8 – An effective, accountable and sustainable Council that serves the community</p> <p>G5. Exercise regulatory compliance responsibilities diligently to protect the environment and support our community</p>

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the result of public consultation associated with the exhibition of the draft *Commercial and Group use of Open Space Policy* and seek endorsement of the Policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- The Draft Commercial and Group Use of Public Open Space Policy establishes a framework to manage organised and commercial activities in North Sydney’s parks and reserves while maintaining equitable access for casual community use.
- North Sydney has one of the lowest levels of public open space per capita in the Sydney metropolitan region, with current provision estimated at 10.53m² per resident and an open space deficit projected to increase to 69.95 hectares by 2036.
- Council currently has no formal policy framework to regulate commercial operators, large group activities, or operational use of parks by organisations, limiting Council’s ability to manage impacts, address complaints and protect public assets.
- Community consultation undertaken between 5 September and 6 October 2025 generated significant engagement, with 201 submissions received reflecting a range of views including concerns regarding fees for school use and support for charging commercial operators who generate income from public space.

- The Draft Policy introduces a transparent approval and permit system, enabling Council to better manage competing uses of limited public open space, regulate commercial activities, and protect park infrastructure and community amenity.
- If adopted, the Policy will support sustainable management of public open space, improved governance of organised activities, and fairer cost sharing for maintenance of Council's parks and reserves, reducing reliance on general rate revenue.
- In response to submissions, refinements to the proposed approach are recommended to better reflect differing levels of demand across the open space network. Commercial and large group use of public open space are recommended to be subject to fees on a sliding scale based on location, while permit requirements for large group use will apply only to the parks and reserves identified in this report and its attachments.
- In response to submissions, it is recommended that commercial kayaking operations at Quibaree Park, Blues Point, and Milson Park be managed through a competitive Expression of Interest (Eoi) process to ensure safe operation, protect local amenity, and provide transparent management of commercial use of these foreshore locations.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. THAT** Council endorse the Commercial and Group use of Open Space Policy as amended at attachment 1 to commence 1 July 2026 following the adoption of fees and charges.
- 2. THAT** appropriate signage be erected at relevant locations to ensure enforceability of this policy position, in accordance with the requirement of Section 632 of the Local Government Act 1993.
- 3. THAT** provision of a licence for the commercial kayaking operations involving watercraft from Quibaree Park, Blues Point Reserve, and Milson Park be determined by way of Expression of Interest for an initial two-year period. That such a licence be limited to one operator only per site.
- 4. THAT** fees and charges be developed in accordance with the pricing principles contained within this report and be presented to Council for endorsement prior to public exhibition.
- 5. THAT** Council endorse the hierarchy of parks and reserves contained within this report for the purpose of drafting fees and charges.
- 6. THAT** within the Draft fees and charges, the following parks continue to be free for groups up to 60 people: Anzac Park, Brennan Park, Green Park, Primrose Park, Milson Park, St Thomas Rest Park, Tunks Park (excluding the foreshore), Warringah Park, and Waverton Park.

Background

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- ensure the sustainable use of public open space while providing equitable access for general community use and commercial and organised activities
- reduce and manage the potential impact of commercial and organized activities on public assets
- encourage and support the utilisation of public open space for health and recreational pursuits

In doing so it will address three key pain points currently experienced by Council and the community, including:

1. Low levels of open space available in the Local Government Area

The Open Space and Recreation Study undertaken in 2024 reviewed the provision of public open space within the North Sydney Local Government Area (LGA) and found that when comparing the current open space provision in North Sydney against the current and projected population growth, the provision of open space remains in deficit for all population growth increments (2024 until 2036). The current deficit of open space is 58.7 hectares and is projected to increase to a deficit of 69.95 hectares by 2036 (without the development of additional open space).

Current levels of core open space equate to only 10.53m² of Council-managed open space per North Sydney resident. When looking at individual planning catchments within the LGA, it is evident that open space is not evenly distributed across the catchment areas. The areas with the lowest provision of open space per person are Crows Nest and St Leonards (3.87m²), Kirribilli (7.27m²), and Neutral Bay and Kurraba Point (9.87m²), all of which are projected to reduce into the future.

Given the importance of open space to community wellbeing, using research from the study, Council's *Open Space and Recreation Strategy* was developed and adopted in February 2025 with clear objectives to deliver 'an active community with space for everyone to exercise and enjoy the outdoors'.

Strategic Direction 4: 'Manage our open space and recreational facilities to ensure that they are well maintained and shared' includes the following actions:

4.2 Prepare a policy to ensure that events and large gatherings in public open space, particularly in prime harbour foreshore parks, do not undermine the condition of our parks or inhibit general recreational use by the community. The policy shall also include consideration of fees and charges.

4.3 Prepare a policy for use of public open space in North Sydney by personal trainers.

4.4. Consider developing an appropriate model for use and individual user agreements with schools who use North Sydney's parks for general recreation and informal sports and games.

2. Lack of policy and regulation

Council currently has no formalised policies in place to effectively manage and balance the use of our limited public open space areas between commercial operators, large groups and casual users.

There are currently no formal courses of action available to staff, nor rules that can be enforced to ensure that these areas are equitably used and not misused or damaged, nor reasonable commercial arrangements in place for those who use public open space for financial gain.

Council has increasingly received various complaints over time about fitness trainers, kayak users, dog walkers, organised commercial picnics, weddings, and other uses in open space areas. Complaints range from "hogging" space, ropes tied to assets/trees for resistance exercises, loud music, monopolising pathways and stairs, inappropriate use of the war memorial, blocking off parking spaces, and other issues.

3. Increased maintenance and renewal costs due to intensification of use

At present, the maintenance and renewal of public open space in North Sydney is funded through rating revenue. Unlike neighbouring councils such as Mosman, Lane Cove, Willoughby, and the City of Sydney, North Sydney Council does not receive any income from commercial use of public parks.

Council's financial position is well documented, including the pressures associated with maintaining and renewing infrastructure such as parks and open spaces.

In 2025, Council made application to IPART in a bid to secure the council's financial sustainability and in doing so asset renewals were funded, service levels were maintained and the future needs of the community considered. In refusing the application, IPART requested that further consideration be given to alternatives to rating increases. This Draft Policy provides an alternative to rate increase through the use of user charges and fees.

At its meeting held 11 August 2025 Council resolved:

- 1. THAT Council endorse the attached draft Commercial and Group Use of Public Open Space Policy.*
- 2. THAT the draft policy be placed on public exhibition for comment in accordance with the North Sydney Community Engagement Strategy.*
- 3. THAT the results of the public exhibition be presented to Council along with a schedule of recommended fees that should be associated with application of the policy.*

Report

In accordance with Councils resolution, community consultation was undertaken between Friday 5 September 2025 and Monday 6 October 2025. The consultation included:

- ‘Your Say’ website
- Surveys
- FAQs
- Precinct E-News
- Social media

The following indicates the frequency of views and engagement with the process:

- ‘Your Say’ website views - 3,548
- FAQs views - 646
- Quick Poll Tool – 139 responses
- YourSay submissions - 130
- email submissions - 72
- Precinct eNews 5 September – 9 October – viewed 599 times (not all necessarily unique).

The survey was available online through Council’s ‘Have Your Say’ web page. 130 completed responses were received through this method, including 26 responses from outside the local government area.

Contributors could also comment directly via email but outside of the “YourSay” platform. Council received 72 submissions via this method.

The results indicated direct support for the proposal of around 20%. It is noted that of the 201 submissions received, 97 of these objected to schools being charged a fee to use public open space. 59 of these were “template” type submissions. It is notable that 21 submitters were broadly in support for the Policy direction but had an issue with component(s) of the proposal. These are not included as “direct” support in the figures below. In summary:

Submissions		Number	Percentage
Not support	School related	97	48%
	other	42	21%
Direct Support*		41	20%
Conditional support/other		21	11%
Total		201	100%

**This excludes support from the two Precinct Committees identified below.*

Two Precinct Committees (Neutral and Wollstonecraft) are included in the submissions above (but counted as single submissions). Neutral (11 attendees) and Wollstonecraft Precincts (41 attendees) supported the draft Policy unanimously, and Lavender (19 of 25 attendees) and Stanton Precincts (no vote # recorded) also supported the draft Policy at their meetings. This equates to a minimum (noting numbers were not provided for Stanton) of 70 residents in support of the draft policy position over and above the figures in the above table.

It should be noted that separate to the consultation period for the Draft Policy, representative research was undertaken in August 2025 to understand community preference for charging new and/or additional fees and charges for commercial/large group park use. The results of this research were that 77% of respondents were somewhat supportive, supportive or very supportive of such a strategy.

Submission themes

The following outlines the themes captured by submissions received and ordered in terms of frequency of issues raised. A full summary of submissions is attached to this report.

1. Opposition to levying fees and charges for school use of open space

Submissions noted the following points in support of free access by schools to open space:

- health and well-being of students especially in highly dense environments
- outdoor education is important for children
- fees not included in the policy for non-Government schools
- some parents already pay rates
- equity and fairness
- significant contributions already made by the school (e.g., development levies).

It is noted that a significant number of submissions were made by or on behalf of Marist Catholic College, whose students regularly use St Leonards Park as part of school activities.

Response

Council officers acknowledge the important health and wellbeing benefits for children spending time outdoors and recognises the role that public open space can play in supporting this. However, the regular and intensive use of public parks by large groups of students can place additional pressure on Council's open space assets and increase maintenance and operational costs.

In recent years, Council has observed an increasing reliance on nearby public parks by some schools for operational purposes. This is often associated with school developments or expansions that are constrained by site size and therefore provide limited on-site playground space. As a result, nearby public open spaces are used to accommodate outdoor recreation, including lunch and recess breaks for students.

In effect, this can result in the displacement of school playground functions onto publicly owned open space. While Council supports outdoor recreation for children, the use of public parks to accommodate operational needs that would otherwise occur within school grounds can create ongoing maintenance, operational, and amenity impacts that must be managed and funded by Council.

The concentrated and frequent use of parks by large groups of students can result in measurable impacts on turf condition, waste management requirements, and general park maintenance. For example, the cost to undertake remediation works such as aeration,

decompaction, and topdressing of turf areas is approximately \$5 per square metre. At St Leonards Park, approximately 8,000 square metres of turf are regularly used by nearby schools. Due to the intensity and frequency of this use, these areas require remediation works at least annually. This represents an estimated annual maintenance cost of approximately \$40,000 associated with maintaining these areas of turf. Waste management requirements at this location have also increased by approximately 30% following increased student use during passive breaks.

Council officers note that schools do not pay Council rates. Some submissions referenced developer contributions paid by certain schools as part of development approvals. These contributions are required for developments of a particular scale and fund public infrastructure identified in Council's *Development Contributions Plan*, such as open space expansion and community facilities. Importantly, development contributions do not fund ongoing operational costs such as park maintenance, turf remediation, waste management, or complaints management.

Some submissions questioned the distinction in the proposed policy between government and non-government education institutions. Council recognises the important role that both government and non-government education institutions play in supporting education and community wellbeing.

Government education institutions (public) provide universal access to education within their local catchment or enrolment framework and are funded primarily through government sources. Their use of local public open space can be considered an extension of publicly funded community services, with both local government and public education supported through taxation. Council also notes that it has not received complaints nor observed instances of unapproved operational use of parks by government (public) education institutions to date.

Non-government education institutions operate independently, with funding derived from a combination of government support and private fees. Enrolment is not limited to a local catchment and is generally subject to the capacity of families to pay fees and acceptance by the institution. As privately operated organisations delivering education services, the organised use of public open space by non-government education institutions represents the use of a publicly funded asset for operational purposes.

Applying fees in these circumstances helps ensure that the costs associated with maintaining and managing public open space are not disproportionately borne by the broader community. It also supports equitable access to parks by recognising that organised and regular group use can place additional pressure on these spaces and may reduce availability for the general community.

Requiring a contribution from non-government education institutions assists Council to sustainably manage these shared community assets while ensuring that public open space remains available and well maintained for the wider community.

2. Support was received for charging commercial users who generate income from use of the public space.

Submissions noted the following points in support of fees and charges for commercial users:

- space is effectively monopolised
- public access is reduced
- environmental damage
- noise
- litter, or amenity impacts occur.

Response

The support is noted and reflects the purpose of the draft Policy in recognition of Council's relatively low levels of available public open space when combined with the high demand of such space.

3. Concern about negative impacts on small business

Submissions noted concerns about the impact of fees and charges on the viability of small businesses which rely on the use of public open space including:

- dog walkers;
- personal trainers; and
- community fitness groups.

Respondents argued that these businesses provide health, social, and local economic benefits and suggested that they primarily serve local residents.

There was some support for exemptions or very low-cost permits for low-impact, resident-based operators.

Response

These concerns are noted. Council officers recognise that these activities can provide positive health, social, and economic benefits for the community and often support residents in maintaining active and connected lifestyles.

However, Council must also ensure that public open space is managed fairly and sustainably for the benefit of the whole community. While these activities may provide community benefits, they are undertaken as commercial enterprises and involve the use of publicly owned land to generate private income. It is therefore reasonable that operators contribute to the costs associated with maintaining, managing and renewing these shared public assets.

In most industries, businesses incur costs associated with the premises or locations from which they operate. The use of public open space as a place of business is unique in that it involves a shared community asset that is publicly funded and maintained. Introducing a permit and fee framework helps ensure that commercial operators contribute in a fair and proportionate way to the upkeep of these spaces.

Unregulated or intensive commercial use of parks and open spaces can also place additional pressure on these areas, including increased wear on turf and facilities and reduced availability for casual community use. Introducing a permit and fee framework enables Council to better manage these activities, maintain equitable access to public spaces, and ensure transparency and consistency in how commercial use is authorised.

It is noted that charging commercial operators for the organised use of public open space is a common practice across local government. Neighbouring councils including Lane Cove, Mosman, Willoughby, and the City of Sydney all have permit systems and associated fees for commercial activities such as personal training, group fitness, and other business activities conducted in parks and open spaces.

Council officers have sought to balance these considerations by proposing pricing principles that support a proportionate fee structure that recognises the scale and impact of activities occurring in public open space. Opportunities for lower-cost permits or streamlined arrangements for smaller, low-impact operators will be considered to ensure that local resident-based businesses are not unreasonably disadvantaged while maintaining the principle that commercial use of public assets should contribute to their upkeep.

Should the Draft Policy be adopted as a result of this report, the draft fees and charges will be finalised. The community will have further opportunity to provide feedback on the level of fees and charges.

4. Support for fees and charges

Submissions noted support for fees and charges particularly in the following circumstances:

- groups are large;
- areas are reserved exclusively; and/or
- use causes measurable wear and tear.

Response

Council officers acknowledge these views and note that public open space in North Sydney is both highly valued and in relatively limited supply. North Sydney has one of the lowest levels of public open space per capita in the Sydney region, meaning existing parks and open spaces experience high demand from residents, visitors, and organised groups.

The introduction of a permit and fee framework recognises that some activities involve organised, large group or exclusive use of public space and may contribute to increased maintenance requirements or reduce availability for general community use. In these circumstances, it is reasonable that a contribution is made toward the costs associated with maintaining and managing these spaces, rather than those costs being borne solely by the broader community.

This approach supports the equitable use of open space while helping to protect the quality, sustainability, and accessibility of these spaces for the wider community.

5. Concern current threshold (21 people) is too low.

Some submitters raised concerns regarding the threshold level for group gatherings and may capture casual birthday parties etc. Submitters argued that the threshold creates increased red tape and administrative burden.

Suggestions were made that consideration should be given to a higher threshold number, or that sliding scales be considered based upon size, duration, location, and season.

Response

Council officers note concerns that the proposed threshold of 21 people may capture informal gatherings such as birthday parties or casual social events and acknowledges the strong community expectation that parks remain free, accessible, and inclusive spaces.

At present, groups of up to 60 people may use public open space throughout North Sydney without the need for a permit or fee. While this approach has enabled flexible use of parks, it has also, at times, resulted in large, organised gatherings monopolising popular areas of public open space, creating additional maintenance demands for Council.

North Sydney is a highly urbanised local government area with comparatively low levels of public open space per capita. As population density increases and demand for parks continues to grow, it is increasingly important that these shared community assets are managed in a way that ensures equitable access for all users.

In response to feedback, Council has reviewed the application of permit requirements and identified a number of parks where informal gatherings of up to 60 people may continue without the need for approval or fees. These locations have been selected based on their size, capacity and ability to accommodate larger gatherings without significantly impacting other park users.

These parks include:

- Anzac Park
- Brennan Park
- Green Park
- Primrose Park
- Milson Park
- St Thomas Rest Park
- Tunks Park (excluding the foreshore)
- Warringah Park
- Waverton Park

In addition, a number of smaller pocket parks across the local government area will continue to accommodate informal community use without the need for permits or fees. It is recommended that this is included within the draft fees and charges policy to be developed.

The permit framework is intended to assist Council in managing organised or higher-impact activities in parks, rather than regulating everyday social gatherings. This approach aims to balance the community's expectation of open and accessible parks with Council's responsibility to manage high-demand spaces fairly and sustainably.

In addition, Council is implementing a booking system which will automate the booking process to reduce the administrative burden and improve the user experience when compared to current booking processes.

6. Cost of living pressures and perceptions of privatisation of public space. Open Space should be free for all.

Submissions raised concerns that fees may add to cost-of-living pressures, discourage spontaneous community use of parks, and create perceptions that public open space is becoming less accessible or increasingly privatised.

Response

Council's intention is not to limit casual community use of parks or introduce barriers to residents enjoying public open space. Public parks will continue to remain free and accessible for everyday use, including informal gatherings, family picnics, and spontaneous recreational activities.

The proposed permit and fee framework is primarily intended to manage organised activities that involve larger groups, exclusive use of an area, or commercial use of public open space. The framework does not represent a privatisation of public space, but rather a mechanism to ensure that shared community assets remain available, fairly managed, and sustainable for the benefit of all users.

Council officers also recognise the importance of maintaining inclusive and accessible public spaces for all members of the community, particularly during periods of increased cost-of-living pressures. The framework has therefore been designed to balance this principle with Council's responsibility to manage limited open space resources and ensure that activities placing greater demand on parks contribute appropriately to their upkeep.

In this way, the permit framework helps ensure that public open space remains accessible to the wider community and is not unintentionally dominated by organised, exclusive, or commercial activities.

7. Skepticism regarding revenue intent. Frequent references to North Sydney pool project, perception of revenue raising rather than cost recovery.

Response

The proposed permit and fee framework is intended to support the fair and sustainable management of public open space. Where organised activities involve larger groups, exclusive use of areas or commercial use of public land, additional management, maintenance, and

administrative resources may be required. Introducing fees helps ensure that these costs are shared appropriately rather than being borne solely by the broader community through general rates.

Organised use of public open space by commercial and large groups can place additional pressure on Council resources, including increased maintenance requirements such as turf rehabilitation, waste management, and general upkeep. In a local government area with limited public open space and high demand for parks, it is important that these impacts are managed in a sustainable way.

While the framework will generate some revenue, this is intended to support the ongoing maintenance and management of public open space and reduce reliance on rate increases to fund these activities. In this way, those who derive a commercial or exclusive benefit from the use of public land contribute toward the upkeep of these shared community assets.

Council has also undertaken significant work in recent years to improve financial sustainability and operational efficiency. A detailed Performance and Improvement Plan, reported to Council in January 2026, outlines the organisation's productivity improvements, cost containment measures, and opportunities to diversify revenue sources. These actions demonstrate that Council has taken substantial steps to improve efficiency and manage costs before seeking additional revenue sources.

In this context, exploring modest alternative revenue sources - such as fees for organised, commercial or large group use of public open space - forms part of Council's broader effort to maintain financial sustainability while limiting pressure on rate increases. Community research undertaken in August 2025 also indicated that a majority of residents supported the introduction or increase of fees for commercial or large group use of parks as an alternative to rating increases.

The introduction of a permit framework also provides greater transparency and clarity for both park users and Council officers. A clear permit system allows authorised officers to manage activities in accordance with defined conditions and helps ensure that public open space is used safely, fairly and in a way that protects these shared community assets for all users.

Overall, the framework supports responsible financial management and ensures that the costs associated with maintaining high-demand public open spaces are shared fairly, while protecting the broader ratepayer from bearing the full cost of organised, exclusive, or commercial use of community assets.

8. Greater transparency on how revenue would be used and exploration of alternative funding approaches.

Response

Council has significant responsibilities in maintaining and managing its network of parks and public open space. North Sydney currently spends approximately \$7.3 million per year on the

maintenance and upkeep of parks and gardens, including turf management, cleaning, mowing, weed control, irrigation, lighting, and structural maintenance. While not all of this expenditure is directly attributable to organised or commercial use of public open space, it highlights the substantial and ongoing investment required to maintain these community assets.

Any income generated through the proposed permit and fee framework would contribute toward the ongoing maintenance, management, and sustainability of Council's open space network. The revenue expected from the policy is modest relative to Council's overall expenditure on parks and open space but will assist in ensuring that those who derive a commercial or exclusive benefit from the use of public land contribute toward its upkeep.

Council has also considered alternative funding approaches as part of its broader financial sustainability work, including operational efficiency improvements, cost containment measures, and exploration of additional revenue sources. The introduction of modest fees for organised or commercial use of public open space represents one such measure to help ensure that the costs associated with maintaining these shared community assets are not borne solely by the broader ratepaying community.

This approach supports greater transparency in how public space is used and helps ensure that Council's open space network can continue to be maintained and enjoyed by the community.

9. Strong preferences were submitted for the following:

- targeted, proportionate fees
- clear exemptions (schools, children, not-for-profit, low-impact use)
- activity-specific regulation (e.g., kayaking, large events).

Response

Council officers agree that the management of activities in public open space should be proportionate to the scale and impact of the activity.

It is recognised that different activities may have varying levels of impact depending on their scale, frequency, and location. The pricing framework will be considerate of this. The permit system provides a mechanism for Council to manage these activities in a way that supports public safety, environmental protection, and the sustainable use of shared community assets.

Council received a number of detailed submissions regarding the operation of commercial kayak tours within North Sydney's foreshore parks. In particular, submissions referenced activities occurring at Lavender Bay (Quibaree Park), Blues Point, and Milson Park in Kirribilli, which are currently used by a number of commercial operators for kayak tours and hire activities.

These activities represent a more specialised form of commercial use of public open space and can give rise to specific operational and amenity considerations. Submissions, together

with previous complaints received by Council, have raised concerns regarding noise, parking pressures, impacts on public amenities and facilities, and general amenity impacts associated with these activities. Council is also aware that since the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a noticeable increase in such activities along parts of the foreshore.

Foreshore parks within North Sydney are among the most constrained and highly valued public open spaces in the local government area. Their proximity to residential areas and their popularity with both residents and visitors means that competing demands for these spaces require careful management to ensure that local amenity and equitable public access are maintained.

Given the operating hours of many tours, including early morning and evening departures, and the proximity of these locations to residential areas, it is appropriate that these activities are subject to clearer management and regulation. At present, Council has limited mechanisms to regulate or manage the number and behaviour of operators using these foreshore locations, which can result in multiple operators commencing activities with little coordination or oversight.

For these reasons, Council considers it appropriate to more proactively manage commercial kayak operations at key foreshore locations. The proposed approach is to undertake an Expression of Interest (EoI) process to identify one suitably qualified operator per site to conduct these activities in a safe, sustainable, and well-managed manner.

An EoI process would enable Council to establish clear conditions of use, including matters such as operating hours, maximum group sizes, noise management, equipment storage and the behaviour of participants. It would also provide Council with a direct regulatory relationship with an approved operator, enabling more effective monitoring and management of impacts on local residents, park users and public infrastructure.

In addition, the EoI process will ensure that the commercial use of highly valued public foreshore land is transparent and subject to appropriate oversight. It will also allow Council to test the market and ensure that a reasonable return is achieved for the use of these public assets.

It is proposed that Quibaree Park, Blues Point, and Milson Park be identified as locations where commercial kayak activities may be subject to an Expression of Interest process under the proposed framework.

This approach will assist Council to better manage amenity impacts, ensure safe and sustainable operations and protect the long-term use and enjoyment of these foreshore parks by the broader community.

10. Support for increased regulation including noise limits, waste controls, vehicle access restrictions

Response

This support is noted. The current lack of policy framework makes maintaining levels of amenity, impacts, and public expectations on the use of public spaces, difficult to enforce.

11. Suggestions for future investment including all-weather sporting surfaces and multi-use facilities to reduce pressure on grassed areas.

Response

Council adopted its *Open Space and Recreation Strategy* in early 2025, which identifies a range of actions aimed at improving the capacity, resilience, and usability of the open space network. This includes consideration of infrastructure and design approaches that maximise the use of existing open space and reduce wear on natural turf areas where appropriate.

Community research undertaken in August 2025 by Micromex also indicated strong support for this approach, with 80% of respondents agreeing that Council should seek to maximise the use of existing open space. This feedback aligns with the strategic direction outlined in Council's adopted strategy.

Acknowledging the limitations of Council's financial position, an application has been made to IPART for a Special Variation to rates to address the financial and infrastructure challenges facing the organisation and the community. If approved, the additional revenue will assist Council in maintaining and renewing existing assets and will place Council in a stronger position to explore future investments that improve the capacity and resilience of public open space.

Together, these initiatives recognise the increasing demand being placed on North Sydney's limited open space and seek to balance improved infrastructure with effective management of how these shared community assets are used.

These matters will continue to be considered as part of Council's long-term planning and delivery of the *Open Space and Recreation Strategy*.

Conclusion

The exhibition of the Draft Commercial and Group Use of Public Open Space Policy generated strong community interest and highlighted the importance residents place on protecting North Sydney's limited and highly valued open space. Submissions reflected a range of views, including concerns regarding the application of fees to schools, support for charging commercial operators, and broader suggestions regarding the management of parks and recreational areas.

North Sydney has one of the lowest levels of public open space per capita in the Sydney region while demand for these spaces continues to increase. In this context, a clear policy framework is necessary to ensure that public open spaces are used equitably, impacts on park infrastructure are appropriately managed and that those who derive commercial or operational benefit from the use of public land contribute toward its upkeep.

The Draft Policy introduces a transparent and consistent framework to manage organised and commercial use of public open space while maintaining free and accessible parks for casual community use. It represents an important step in ensuring that North Sydney's parks and open spaces remain sustainable, well maintained, and available for the benefit of the wider community.

This policy will assist Council to responsibly manage increasing demand on its limited open space while ensuring that the costs of maintaining these shared community assets are distributed fairly and sustainably.

Proposed Fees and charges

Should Council adopt the Draft Policy, it is recommended that the following principles guide the setting and application of fees for the organised use of public open space.

1. **Fairness to the community**
Fees will ensure that the costs associated with organised, exclusive, or commercial use of public open space are not borne solely by the broader ratepaying community.
2. **Proportionate to impact**
Fees will reflect the scale, frequency, and impact of activities on public open space, with higher-impact uses contributing more toward the management and maintenance of these shared assets.
3. **Contribution to maintenance and management**
Fees will contribute to the ongoing upkeep, management, and sustainability of Council's parks and open space network.
4. **Transparency and consistency**
Fees will be clearly communicated through Council's adopted Fees and Charges schedule and applied consistently across similar activities.
5. **Efficient management of public space**
Pricing will assist Council to manage demand for limited public open space and support equitable access for the broader community.
6. **Regular review**
Fees will be reviewed periodically through Council's annual Fees and Charges process to ensure they remain reasonable, transparent and aligned with Council's financial sustainability objectives.

In consideration of proportionate impact, it is recommended that fees and charges for commercial activities and large groups be scaled based upon a hierarchy of parks and reserves as follows:

Category 1 Parks and Reserves		
Blues Point Reserve	Bradfield Park (South)	Capt. Henry Waterhouse Reserve
Cremorne Point Reserve (West)	Dr Mary Booth Reserve	Henry Lawson Reserve
Clark Park	Quibaree Park	

Category 2 Parks and Reserves		
Anderson Park	Balls Head Reserve	Berry Island
Cremorne Point Reserve (East)	Kesterton Reserve	Hodgson's lookout
Kurraba Point Reserve	Sawmillers Reserve	

Category 3 Parks and Reserves		
Forsyth Park	Smoothy Park	St Leonards Park
Ted Mack Reserve	Tunks Park Foreshore	

The fees and charges to be proposed for any non-government primary, secondary, tertiary, or vocational education provider will be considered based upon intensity of use and maintenance requirements.

Fees and charges for the purposes of commercial kayaking operations will be determined through a competitive Expression of Interest Process.

Consultation requirements

Community engagement has occurred in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy. The detail of this report provides the outcomes from the engagement for Council to consider prior to adoption. In addition, the proposed fee structure to support the Policy will be exhibited in order to gauge community feedback.

Financial/Resource Implications

All signs within parks and reserves will need to have a single line statement added that "All commercial activities in this reserve require the approval of North Sydney Council". The cost for this is minimal and can be borne out of existing budget lines.

The regulatory management of this change will not require any further investment as Rangers currently patrol all parks and reserves.

The bookings system for automated access to park bookings will incur a one-off cost of \$5K and ongoing annual fees of \$9.4K. The system configuration will be supported with existing

resources. This system will also allow modernisation of Councils current facility bookings processes.

Legislation

The following legislation is relevant in managing the use of our open space areas:

- Local Government Act, 1993
- Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act, 2021
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act, 1997
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.

COMMERCIAL AND GROUP USE OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

ADOPTED/READOPTED:

xxx

NEXT REVIEW:

2028

DOCUMENT TYPE:

Council Policy

POLICY OWNER:

Director Corporate Services

POLICY REFERENCE:

CORP/INT_POL_ECM**xxxxxxx**



1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to:

- ensure the sustainable use of public open space while providing equitable access for general community use and commercial and organised activities.
- reduce and manage the potential impact of commercial and organised activities on public assets.
- encourage and support the utilisation of public open space for health and recreational pursuits.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This Policy applies to:

- all public open space in the North Sydney Local Government Area
- the users of public open spaces who deliver products or services to the public for payment.
- Educational institutions that use public open spaces for operational purposes, excluding uses approved under the Sporting Facilities Booking Policy and emergency evacuation drills
- any user undertaking any commercial activity as defined in this policy, regardless of the number of participants,
- any private activity that requires exclusive use of a public open space, or where the number of participants exceed 21 persons.

2.2 This Policy does not apply to:

- Sports field bookings as covered by Council's Sporting Facilities Booking Policy.
- Public events that may be attended by any member of the community and are covered by Council's Event's policy.
- [Filming as covered by Council's 'Filming within Council Area' Policy.](#)
- [Private activities attended by less than 60 people in areas of public open space as identified in Council's fees and charges policy.](#)

3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
3.1 Authorised Officer	Council Rangers and Parking Officers
3.2 Accredited user	A person, business or educational establishment authorised by the issuance of a permit by North Sydney Council to undertake an ongoing or repeated activity in Council's public open spaces.
3.3 Approved user	A person, business or educational establishment authorised by North Sydney Council to use public open space through a single use booking

3.4 Commercial Activities.	Includes all activities that require payment from customers or users to deliver their product or service. This includes: 3.4.1 fitness training (personal and group). 3.4.2 commercial aquatic activities including kayak hire and tours 3.4.3 picnics, celebrations and events organised by commercial providers 3.4.4 professional dog walking. 3.4.5 sale or hire of goods or services 3.4.6 promotions and advertising 3.4.7 any activities not mentioned above that are carried out in a public open space for payment
3.5 Private activities	Includes gatherings of persons with no services provided by commercial operators.
3.6 Public open space	Includes all land that is provided for the use of the community and administered through its representatives in government. Specifically, 'public open space' includes land designated as public parks and reserves, sportsgrounds, beaches, swimming pools, cycleways, shared pathways and footpaths within public parks/open spaces that are within the ownership of North Sydney Council or Crown Land vested in the care and control of North Sydney Council.
3.7 Fee or fees	An amount payable to North Sydney Council prior to the activity commencing.
3.8 Group	Any gathering of people where numbers exceed 21 individuals.
3.9 Educational establishment	Any non-government primary, secondary, tertiary or vocational education provider

4. PROVISIONS

- a) The use of public open space for any commercial activities or private activities within the scope of this policy requires written approval from Council.
- b) Use of public open space areas for commercial activities and private activities will not be exclusive, unless specifically referenced in the terms and conditions of the approval.
- c) Marquees, tents, jumping castles, amplified sound, confetti, uncooked rice, synthetic flower petals, coloured powders and drones are not permitted.
- d) North Sydney Council has discretion to refuse an application for the use public open space under this policy.
- e) An "Approved" or "Accredited" user must comply with the "Terms and Conditions of Use" that may be issued by Council for their relevant activity.
- f) Fees for the use of Public Open Space are payable for the activity in accordance with

Council's adopted Fees and Charges schedule.

- g) Breaches of this policy or the "Conditions of Use" may result in the cancellation of any ability to undertake the activity in North Sydney Council public open spaces areas. Continued operation after withdrawal of authorisation will result in fines being issued by an authorised officer under the Local Government Act 1993.
- h) Persons carrying out commercial activities without authorisation from North Sydney Council may be fined and/ or prohibited from future use of North Sydney Council public open spaces for their activity.
- h)i) Notwithstanding other provisions of this policy, water craft hire, tours and all other aquatic activities that are dependent on an ongoing use of a foreshore reserve(s), will be granted a permit only after a competitive (expressions of interest or similar) process has been undertaken to enable a set of undertakings/conditions being entered into specific to the characteristics and requirements of the relevant foreshore and surrounding area and ongoing management of the proposed use.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBLE	ACCOUNTABLE
5.1 Responsible Officer	The Service Unit Manager Public Presentation is the responsible officer for this Policy and is accountable for its currency and communication.
5.2 Mayor and Councillors	Endorse the Policy and ensure that the Community Strategic Plan/Appropriate Informing Strategy align with the Policy.
5.3 Chief Executive Officer	Council has delegated the Chief Executive Officer the authority to exercise the responsibilities detailed in this Policy.
5.4 Executive Leadership Team	ELT are responsible for ensuring their Divisions adhere to the requirements of this Policy and providing guidance in respect of the strategic objectives of the Policy within their Division and the organisation.
5.5 Employees	Employees must adhere to the requirements of this Policy and operate within its authorities.
5.6 Enforcement Officers	Council Authorised Officers (including Rangers) will monitor all public open spaces to ensure commercial users, schools and groups are approved or accredited for the space in which they are conducting their activity.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

DOCUMENT	LOCATION
6.1 Policies	Code of Conduct Outdoor Fitness training https://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/downloads/download/190/code-of-conduct--outdoor-fitness-training

	Fees and Charges https://portal.lgsolutions.net.au/Fees/Public/North%20Sydney%20Council
6.2 Plan published on website	Open Space and Recreation Asset Management Plan https://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/downloads/download/247/open-space-and-recreation-asset-management-plan North Sydney Community Strategic Plan 2025 – 2035 https://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/downloads/download/233/community-strategic-plan Plans of Management (for relevant Park or Reserve)
6.3 Strategy	Open Space and Recreation Strategy – Strategic Direction 4, (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4). https://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/downloads/file/3904/open-space
6.4 Guideline document	Open Space and Recreation Strategy – Strategic Direction 4, Conditions of Use for Commercial Activities in Public Open Space

7. RELATED LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

LEGISLATION/GUIDANCE	NOTES
7.1 Legislation	Local Government Act 1993 Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021 Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 Crown Lands Management Act 2016

8. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Review Date
1		Council		

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
Your Say Survey Responses			
1	Private schools should not be exempt from fees. Space is at a premium for all local schools and they should be treated equitably.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position.	N
2	Schools in inner city locations have less green space and local parks provide much needed access to additional open space. Council should not place restrictions on student's access to open space.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
3	Schools should not have to pay fees to utilise St Leonards and Ted Mack Civic Park. Marist has significantly contributed financially through other development levies. Public spaces should be for all ratepayers. For decades, public and private schools have responsibly used nearby parks for sport, learning activities and community engagement. The use of the parks enrich students' education and strengthen ties to community. Introducing a user pay system for some schools creates an inequitable precedent.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
4	Fees to use communal open space should apply to large groups	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position.	Y

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
5	Schools such as Marist who have low fees and need access to parks shouldn't have to pay fees. They have paid financial contributions in the past.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N
6	Outdoor space is used by Marist school for breaks, lunches and extra curricular activities. Concern that fees will be passed on to families, adding to cost of living pressure. Concern that schools will no longer use public open space due to fees, resulting in a negative impact to student wellbeing.	It is acknowledged that there are health and well-being benefits for children being outdoors in open space environments. Whilst children being outdoors is obviously to be encouraged, the regular and intense use of open spaces by large numbers of children, represent an additional burden of maintenance and general upkeep which must be funded.	N
7	Public Open Space should remain accessible by the public	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
8	School students should be able to use public open space free of charge. Schools don't have play areas or appropriate sporting grounds, so they utilise St Leonards Park. Access to school students should not be restricted as they will have nowhere to play sport or have recess and lunch breaks.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N
9	School children should not be charged fees to access public open space. Schools do not have facilities and need to use public parks. Maintenance of parks should be covered by ratepayers.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
10	Schools don't have infrastructure to provide open space for students and need to use public open space. Concern that fees will be passed onto families from schools.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
11	Ratepayers should not pay for increased maintenance of public open space when it is used by groups that don't pay rates.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position.	N
12	Outrageous to charge groups and schools to use public open space. Facilities are important and should continue to be accessible to the public free of charge.	The purpose of the draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand, limited availability of open space whilst reducing and managing levels of impact. It is noted that the Council report identifies various areas of open space will not be subjected to fees or charges for group use.	N
13	I am opposed to charging schools to use public parks. The only ones who will suffer will be our children if schools do not wish to pay for this 'privilege'. The risk is less physical education, exercise and outdoor activities and more in classroom time. Children need to be able to enjoy the outdoors and the cost will be passed on to parents by way of increased school fees.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
14	Commercial Operators occupy substantial areas of public open space, particularly with harbour views like Blues Point Reserve, This reduces available space to the community and effectively privatises public areas.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position.	-
15	Public Open Space should not be restricted to people who can afford to pay.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. It is also noted that the Council report identifies various areas of open space will not be subjected to fees or charges for group use.	N
16	Schools should not be charged fees to access open space, which will disadvantage children.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
17	A small fee and permit system will encourage respectful use of public open space.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position.	-

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report			
Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
18	Rate payers should not be charged additional fees to access public open space and the community groups use this open space.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. It is also noted that the Council report identifies various areas of open space will not be subjected to fees or charges for group use.	N
19	Rate payers should not be charged additional fees to access public open space. Schools have used public parks for decades and should continue to be able to without fees being applied.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
20	All schools should be treated equitably and need to pay fees to use public open space. These fees should not be passed onto the community and general public. More schools have opened in the area, student population has increased which results in increased use of public parks.	Requiring a contribution from privately funded institutions assists Council to sustainably manage these shared community assets while ensuring that public open space remains available and well maintained for the wider community.	-

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
21	Fees should not apply to private schools. All children should have free access to parks.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
22	Several commercial kayak operators now utilise Lavender Bay for their business, occupying considerable space so nobody else can access the area and lawn areas have been destroyed. Regulations need to be implemented to control access.	The report recommends that an EoI process be undertaken to better manage kayak and similar operations from our foreshore areas.	-
23	Fees should not be charged to access public open space	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. It is also noted that the Council report identifies various areas of open space will not be subjected to fees or charges for group use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
24	Schools should not be charged fees. Schools don't have appropriate outdoor space. Fees will be passed onto families.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
25	Schools don't have appropriate infrastructure or space. Concern that schools either won't use public open space at the detriment of children or that fees will be passed onto families. Need to find other ways to generate revenue.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
26	There should be a differentiation between educational facilities and commercial activities. Schools should not be charged.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools that have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	-
27	Commercial operators generate income from using public open space and do not make any contribution. Concerns around littering and occupying public open space by commercial activities. Personal Trainers should pay an annual fee. Groups should be charged more, as should dog walkers who often have more dogs than permitted under Companion Animals Act.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position.	Y
28	User pays approach is fair to public spaces. This should not be used as a means to recoup funds from the NSOP project.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position. The purpose of the draft Policy and associated fees is to recoup some maintenance costs associated with the significant recurring expenditure that is required to maintain and keep our open spaces accessible, usable and inviting. The income generated is likely to be modest and in no way intended to recoup funds for the NSOP project.	Y
29	Users should contribute to increased maintenance costs of public open space. Many users are not residents or ratepayers. Quibarbee Park has been badly damaged by kayak operators and now it is no longer fit for purpose	The report recommends that an EoI process be undertaken to better manage kayak and similar operations from our foreshore areas.	Y

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
30	With increased number of residents, school students, workers, visitors and tourists, commercial and large groups should contribute financially to the spaces they use. An increase in litter is also a concern. A partial deposit could be refunded if the reserved space is left tidy.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position. A bond is likely to be recommended as part to a future fee structure for some commercial uses.	Y
31	Do not support community fitness groups or small businesses being charged fees. They support local business, i.e. cafes and shops, pay for parking etc and promote inclusivity in the community.	Community, not for profit fitness groups (or other not for profit groups) would not be charged for the use of open space under this draft Policy.	N
32	Fees should not be charged to access public open space. A user-pays system creates inequity, excluding some students from public open space. Schools have contributed through other levies.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N
33	As proposal planners, we often require permits within 24 hours due to last-minute bookings is this possible? Weather also means locations may change, so how are refunds handled if a site cannot be used? It seems unfair to charge for an intimate picnic for two simply because of the view. Instead, we suggest clear rules around rubbish, structures, and impact, with fines for non-compliance, rather than penalising small, low-impact experiences.	The system of booking that is being prepared is intended to be a self serve and immediate offering for bookings. More detail around refunds and actual proposed fees will be presented to Council in due course. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	-

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
34	Public Spaces should be accessible by Rate payers for free. Schools contributed through development levies and should also access public open space without fees. Equity and fairness should apply to any policy.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality.	N
35	Parks are a community asset and should be accessible to everyone without fees, including dog walkers who help keep the parks clean. Rates should cover maintenance costs.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N
36	Other Councils charge to access public open space, North Sydney shouldn't be an exception.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position.	Y
37	Commercial operators from outside the LGA use public open space without contribution to the community. Ratepayers should not be responsible for increased maintenance costs.	This is noted and is consistent with the draft Policy position.	Y
38	Will create a barrier to people wanting to exercise or hold group classes that create a sense of community and belonging. Adding fees may result in cancellation of group fitness classes.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
39	Fees should not apply to public open spaces due to taxes and rates being paid.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N
40	Schools do not have suitable outdoor areas and schools, both public and private should have access to public open space. All children, from both public and private schools should have free access to public open space.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
41	Fees for affordable small group fitness classes may result in classes being disbanded. Some group classes are designed for those that can't afford more expensive programs and classes.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
42	Introducing fees may have a negative impact on small local businesses.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N
43	Public Open Space should be accessible by everyone without additional fees. Taxes and Rates should be sufficient to cover maintenance costs.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N
44	Small businesses that are already struggling wouldn't be able to operate in the LGA if fees were introduced, impacting local residents.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
45	Public open space promotes fitness and health and fees should not be introduced to access these spaces, in addition to the current taxes and rates.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N
46	The community space is enhanced by the diversity of groups and organisations able to access the area for free. Putting a fee on this is greedy and limiting. If those accessing the park areas are doing so *for profit only* then a licensing regime may be useful. Clearly the children of the local schools, and indeed, the schools themselves are not profiting commercially from using the space.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. As responded elsewhere Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	-

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
47	Students should have access to free public open space.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
48	Private organisations should not be charged to use public open space.	Non commercial use of open space will not be subject to this policy unless constituting large groups.	N
49	Schools should not be restricted to accessing public open space, however if schools have to pay, all schools should pay.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
50	Schools have made financial contributions to council through other levies and all children should have equal access to public open space. Fees should not apply to ratepayers.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N
51	Rates contribute to the maintenance of public open space and additional fees should not be introduced. Children should not be disadvantaged and schools should be able to access public open space free of charge.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
52	Parks like Ted Mack Civic Park and St Leonards serve as vital community spaces for recreation, wellbeing and education.	Agreed, however, public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
53	Access to public open space should be free and equitable, including schools. Rates should cover the maintenance of parks. Introducing a user-pays systems for some schools introduces an inequitable precedent.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
54	School fees will increase if fees to use open space are introduced to private schools. Rates should cover this cost.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
55	Support Commercial operators being charged fees when income is generated from using open space. Schools should not be included as there is concern these will be passed on to families.	The commercial use of open space comments noted and consistent with the draft Policy. Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	-

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report			
Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
56	We support the Council already as residents. The School pays significant rates. Fees will add unnecessary cost to community groups and will introduce an inequitable policy where not all users will pay.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
57	Public Open Space should not be considered a luxury facility. Ordinary families and community organisations may be excluded from being able to use parks, allowing access to parks for only those that can afford it. This turns shared green spaces into private commodities and undermines the idea of community.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. It is also noted that the Council report identifies various areas of open space will not be subjected to fees or charges for group use.	N
58	Public Open Space should be available for all to utilise. Introducing a fee directly disadvantages those who do not have space or resources to access open space. Not all schools have open play areas and charging schools may result in them no longer having access to parks. Obesity is a serious issue and Council shouldn't restrict access to parks for school children.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
59	Private schools contributed financially through development levies. Schools should not be charged to access public open space. Feels like private schools are being targeted.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N
60	Marist contributes to paid parking in the area in addition to the payment of development levies. Fees should not apply to schools.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
61	Public Open Space should be accessible to everyone. Community contributes to the maintenance of parks through rates and additional fees should not be introduced. Schools should be exempt from fees.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N
62	Schools should not be charged fees or have access restricted to public open space. Ratepayers contribute already.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
63	Marist is not an exclusive private school and should be treated the same as Public Schools. Grateful for how well open spaces are maintained in North Sydney.	Requiring a contribution from privately funded institutions assists Council to sustainably manage these shared community assets while ensuring that public open space remains available and well maintained for the wider community.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
64	Public Open Spaces should be available to everyone.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N
65	Schools, both public and private should be exempt from fees.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
66	Schools should be treated equitably, fees should apply to all schools or none.	Requiring a contribution from privately funded institutions assists Council to sustainably manage these shared community assets while ensuring that public open space remains available and well maintained for the wider community.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
67	The parks are for everyone and in this day and age where it's a struggle to get children off devices and outside with an obesity epidemic. Schools only utilise the park during lunch times which is limited throughout the day.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
68	This is just an attempt for council to recover funds due to the NSOP project.	While the framework will generate some modest levels of revenue, this is intended to support the ongoing maintenance and management of public open space and reduce reliance on rate increases to fund these activities. In this way, those who derive a commercial or exclusive benefit from the use of public land contribute toward the upkeep of these shared community assets.	N
69	Public Open Space should remain free and accessible to all users.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
70	Schools, Libraries and community centres are the backbone of any community. Schools should be exempt from fees to access public open space, they will be passed onto families adding to cost of living pressures. Not all schools have the same funding.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
71	Our Simple Ceremonies marriage celebrant service is for 30 minutes, after which time we are no longer in the park. Majority of our couples will go to local North Sydney LGA restaurants to celebrate. Some will stay in the parks and have a picnic. Request that any system be streamlined.	This is noted. The booking system that is proposed to accompany this draft Policy, is indeed intended to be a self-serve, streamlined type system	Y
72	Organisations from outside of the LGA utilise North Sydney parks and should contribute to the ongoing maintenance, likewise with people from outside of the LGA that hold functions in North Sydney parks.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
73	Strongly support this proposal to introduce fees. Blues Point Reserve is constantly crowded from commercial operators and large groups, wedding ceremonies, custom picnics. Operators generate a profit from utilising parks and contribute nothing to the maintenance, including removal of litter being left behind on the grass.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
74	All commercial operators utilising public spaces should incur a fee, not just large groups. Commercial operators do not contribute socially or economically. Ratepayers incur the cost of maintaining public open spaces and commercial operators restrict the use of parks to the community.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
75	Fees will contribute to the clean up of events and monitoring by Rangers, as well as booking processes. Suggest to impose fees for Cremorne Point Pool access and use for non-residents to control the number of people who access it so that residents can use and enjoy this space.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy. There are no plans to charge for entry into Cremorne Point Pool.	Y
76	Marist school should pay fees as they use the park every day for lunch and sport. There are many children in the park, teachers ask children to sit on paths, restricting access to the community. Schools shouldn't use public parks as playgrounds as it restricts community use.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
77	Fees should depend on the usage of public open space, if it is the non-commercial benefit for the community, they should be exempt from fees.	The Council report identifies the principles upon which a fee system should be based.	-
78	The indiscriminate use for commercial activities like glamour picnics, proposals, and similar takes away the space for the enjoyment of residents.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
79	Lessen the burden on ratepayers and hence the Council to upkeep these areas, which will get more wear and tear. Also, noise pollution, rubbish left behind, messy dogs running unchecked and unscheduled large functions, could be sanctioned.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
80	The proposal feels too restrictive. I also have concerns for schools like Marist who I assume would have to pay to use the park. We already pay rates to cover costs of public spaces and now families will have to pay extra again.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
81	We already pay council rates to maintain parks, so added fees unfairly pressure small businesses and their local clients, who also contribute through rates. A fairer approach would be to recover costs from larger non-ratepaying educational institutions that regularly use public spaces, ensuring maintenance needs are met without double-charging local ratepayers and businesses.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	-
82	Public parks are community assets, maintained through existing rates and taxes, and should remain accessible to both individuals and small businesses who bring value to the community. Small operators provide affordable, beneficial services that encourage residents to use these spaces more actively and responsibly. The Policy risks discouraging their contribution.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
83	By not charging fees while neighbouring councils do, our area risks becoming a magnet for outside businesses seeking to avoid costs. This could place additional pressure on local infrastructure and leaves rate payers paying the bill. It seems reasonable that businesses using spaces in our council area contribute a fee, since that's part of their business costs.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
84	Supportive provided it does not impact on not-for-profit exercise groups such as The Waverton Hub's Tai chi group in Brennan Park or The Waverton Hub's social gatherings such as a picnic on Ball's Head or on children's birthday parties.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy. Non commercial uses of less than 21 people are not proposed to be charged.	Y
85	I avoid walking my own dog at lunch in a local park due to so many dog walkers. This will ensure only well managed companies walk dogs and hopefully reduce the number.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
86	Fees for a small business/sole trader could be detrimental to their livelihood. Larger businesses that are constantly using facilities and/or using multiple in the area may pay a small fee.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses.	-

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report			
Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
87	Large groups that use occupy an area that is reserved and not able to be publicly accessed should be charged. Charging for dog walkers or business that simply pass through or use alongside the public shouldn't be charged.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses.	-
88	Strongly believe parks should remain free access for all. Outdoor activities should be encouraged not charged for.	Council's intention is not to limit casual community use of parks or introduce barriers to residents enjoying public open space. Public parks will continue to remain free and accessible for everyday use, including informal gatherings, family picnics and spontaneous recreational activities. The proposed permit and fee framework is primarily intended to manage organised activities that involve larger groups, exclusive use of an area, or commercial use of public open space. The framework does not represent a privatisation of public space, but rather a mechanism to ensure that shared community assets remain available, fairly managed and sustainable for the benefit of all users.	N
89	I support fees for commercial organisations not in the North Sydney area. I support fees for large groups (in excess of 15).	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy position (with the exception of the threshold number of 15).	-

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
90	Unfair for the community who want to celebrate events!!	Council's intention is not to limit casual community use of parks or introduce barriers to residents enjoying public open space. Public parks will continue to remain free and accessible for everyday use, including informal gatherings, family picnics and spontaneous recreational activities. The proposed permit and fee framework is primarily intended to manage organised activities that involve larger groups, exclusive use of an area, or commercial use of public open space. The framework seeks to create a mechanism to ensure that shared community assets remain available, fairly managed and sustainable for the benefit of all users. It is noted that a range of open space areas, will remain free for use for informal groups.	N
91	Personal trainers and fitness instructors are providing services to locals who already pay council rates towards these amenities. Trainers shouldn't be levied. Other events should not be levied as it will be a deterrent for use of public spaces which contribute towards tourism and our local community.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
92	As a local resident, professional dog walker, and WIRES volunteer, I use North Sydney's parks daily with care and responsibility. The proposed policy unfairly impacts small, low-impact operators like me. Fees and restrictions could make my service unviable, despite its value to the community and local wildlife.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N
93	Parks should remain free and accessible for the whole community, as they promote health, inclusion, and connection. If fees are to be considered, they should only apply to large groups, businesses, or commercial events - not everyday visitors.	This is noted and consistent with the principles of the draft Policy.	N
94	Personal trainers and especially dog walkers are not high income earners. They should not be the subject of fees for using open spaces. Their services support wellbeing of people and animals.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report			
Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
95	I run a long standing very professional dog walking business and we always strive to do the right thing. My company provides service to many locals within the areas under question. This would impact them and my business greatly and I would in fact be forced to stop providing my services to such areas.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N
96	I oppose the proposed fees for local businesses using public parks. These spaces should remain free and inclusive. Small operators like personal trainers, educators, and dog walkers enhance community wellbeing and should not be penalised. Charging them risks reducing accessibility and vibrancy, especially for those unable to afford fees.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
97	It will make it even more expensive for my dog to be walked while I am at work contributing to society. Putting this fee on small businesses will make it impossible for them to be profitable, or will cause such a drastic increase in cost that their clients will not be able to afford to pay their fees.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N
98	The increased fees will affect the viability of many small, independently run businesses. The commercial users of public spaces are often the most responsible with waste management and minimising the impact to the ecology as they rely on the regular use of such spaces for their livelihoods.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
99	The park should be accessible to everyone. Public parks shouldn't be closed off or limited. This seems very much like a money making scheme for the council when times are already tough. Let dogwalkers and gym classes run freely - as long as they aren't causing significant irreparable damage.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N
100	I do not support the idea of permits and fees for small local businesses like dog walkers. This would unfairly impact people who provide valuable services for pets and the community.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
101	For a long time, commercial businesses have been taking advantage of the North Sydney Council's public spaces. As a long term resident of Lavender Bay, action is needed to stop this and hold operators accountable for the destruction that they cause to the land and the impact that they have on local residents.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
102	Fair to all rate payers, helps defray Council costs, ensures rangers have clear guidelines they can implement / follow up	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
103	In terms of using public areas for commercial purposes / making money they definitely should pay for the space and factor the cost into how much they charge. This should include a modest charge for the picnic set ups that we regularly see by the harbour. In terms of large groups - I feel large groups impact environments, the noise, waste, use of facilities etc, and therefore should be charged a fee.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	-
104	Groups leave a mess that council has to clean up so if there is a group, including more than 21 school kids, they should pay for clean up.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
105	Proposal seems like council is trying to recoup funds from the failed NSOP project. Public open spaces should remain free and be built into rates.	The income generated from this draft Policy position is expected to be modest. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact.	N
106	Budgetary considerations	The income generated from this draft Policy position is expected to be modest. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact.	-

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
107	User pays is reasonable for commercial and large groups.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
108	Many private schools who do not pay rates but own swaths of land with minimal open space provided. There have been many occasions when I have gone to these parks as a ratepayer for my own recreation and found every open area was taken up by classes of Wenona, Marist, Aloysius or Redlands students.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
109	Many private schools use the NSC facilities, they pay zero rates and students come from areas outside the LGA. Also they have good facilities of their own which often they don't share.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
110	I am supportive for groups but not for schools. I do not support any proposal that attempts to limit children's ability to use green space. It is critical that they are able to run and play for their physical development during their childhood. Charging for profit organisations who use the space for adult activities is fine	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	-

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111	Could create unnecessary barriers for the community, especially for customers who want to enjoy a picnic experience but may not have the budget to cover extra charges. Many families and individuals choose picnics as an affordable way to celebrate various milestones. It risks turning the park into a space only the wealthy can afford to use for events.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N
112	I'm broadly supportive of the initiative to collect fees for commercial and large group park use but I feel the current proposed policy would require permits in cases that are not warranted.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy. There will be opportunities for review in future to determine extent and scale as experience informs refinement.	Y
113	I play touch football with a casual group in St Leonard's Park. The fees will discourage spontaneous group activities.. Three of my sons attend or have attended St Mary's Catholic College. The children rely on this space for their lunchtime play. Charging fees will discourage the use of the Park.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. A causal game of touch football will not attract the need for a booking or fee, unless the game is in excess of 21 people.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
114	One of the liberties and beautiful thing about our country is the freedom to use parks. This is a control measure that sets a dangerous freedom precedent.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge profit making ventures, making a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. It is noted that a range of parks will remain unaffected by this policy in terms of casual community use.	N
115	Marist is a school with a small footprint in comparison to other schools. Its use of St Leonards park at recess/lunch is in line with what community green spaces is for - giving those that don't have the green space themselves to benefit from shared community spaces.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report			
Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
116	School children should not be prevented from accessing green spaces. We have enough trouble getting them outside as it is.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N
117	Our open space is limited. Those who use it for profit should contribute to its maintenance. Schools using open space for recreation instead of their own grounds should pay as well. It is notable that they do not pay rates, so it is particularly important that they contribute.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
118	We live in the area, already pay council tax and our young children attend a local school. The parks provide essential space given the dense area we live in. Children need space to run around.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use.	N

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No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
119	North Sydney Council spends a large amount of resources on parks etc. All users should pay on a user's pays basis for groups larger than ~21people; Including rate exempt entities, not for profits and religious groups. Commercial / profit groups, including private schools, should pay a premium.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
120	This provides additional income for the Council and improves management of such activities including ecological sustainability, noise and waste management etc.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
121	Neutral Precinct supports the draft proposed new policy Commercial and Group Use of public Open Space and specifically the introduction of fair contributions from all users towards the maintenance and up keep of the areas.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
122	Do not support new or increased fees for commercial or large group park use in the North Sydney area. Our local parks are community spaces that should remain accessible to all. Many small businesses, personal trainers, and community groups use these parks to encourage health, fitness, and social connection.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N
123	Not fair that commercial operators are allowed to use North Sydney parks as free venues - they are using public space to put money into their own business without contributing rates. Professional dog walkers should be limited to certain larger parks.	This is noted and broadly consistent with the draft Policy.	Y

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
124	Schools and commercial users should pay to use/access our open space/parks.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
125	Any commercial use of shared, public places should be paid as it stops the usage of said land by anyone else including schools.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
126	This is a policy that is overdue. With open space being at a premium in our LGA, it is only fair that appropriate "user pays" charges are implemented including schools.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
127	Public parks should be for public use for all. Large school groups effectively block off the use of St Leonards park during school play times	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	-
128	Open spaces are under increasing pressure with heavy usage from schools, trainers, sports events and require maintenance and sadly repair after this heavy usage.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
129	Policy makes perfectly good sense, provide equity and the implementation matches neighbouring Councils who already raise revenue through this proposed process.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
130	Blues Point & Henry Lawson Reserves are overused by event organisers. Impacts like rubbish, traffic, noise, alcohol at all hours.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y

Commercial and Group Use of Open Space Policy -Post Exhibition Report Submissions Summary (Exhibition period 5 September 2025 - 6 October 2025)			
No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
Email submissions			
131	Schools should not have to pay fees to utilise St Leonards and Ted Mack Civic Park. Marist has significantly contributed financially through other development levies. Public spaces should be for all ratepayers. For decades, public and private schools have responsibly used nearby parks for sport, learning activities and community engagement. The use of the parks enrich students' education and strengthen ties to community. Introducing a user pay system for some schools creates an inequitable precedent.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N
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No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
133	<p>As a resident and daily user of St Leonard park, I object to the proposed policy for three core reasons;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policy addresses a problem that hasn't been demonstrated with data. 2. Policy creates a disproportionate regulatory and cost burden that will increase cost of living. 3. Proposed enforcement regime appears unrealistic and presents administrative costs. <p>No evidence that a problem exists at scale. The policy cites complaints but does not present data to support this. Charging commercial trainers, dog walkers etc will raise operating costs and these are likely to be passed down, resulting in higher prices. Imposing approvals for groups of specific numbers is impractical, how will this be realistically monitored?</p>	<p>The proposed permit and fee framework is intended to support the fair and sustainable management of public open space. Where organised activities involve larger groups, exclusive use of areas or commercial use of public land, additional management, maintenance and administrative resources may be required. Introducing fees helps ensure that these costs are shared appropriately rather than being borne solely by the broader community through general rates. Organised use of public open space by commercial and large groups can place additional pressure on Council resources, including increased maintenance requirements such as turf rehabilitation, waste management, and general upkeep. In a local government area with limited public open space and high demand for parks, it is important that these impacts are managed in a sustainable way. Enforcement will be made much easier when a clear regime is introduced compared with the confusion which currently exists in responding to community concerns relating to the use of open space.</p>	N
134	<p>Schools should not have to pay fees to utilise St Leonards and Ted Mack Civic Park. Marist has significantly contributed financially through other development levies. Public spaces should be for all ratepayers. For decades, public and private schools have responsibly used nearby parks for sport, learning activities and community engagement. The use of the parks enrich students' education and strengthen ties to community. Introducing a user pay system for some schools creates an inequitable precedent.</p>	<p>Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.</p>	N

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No.	Key Points Raised	Council Response (summary)	Support
137	<p>Appreciate Council's intent to generate additional revenue and manage public spaces. I strongly oppose this policy due to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legal obligations - Under s83C of the Education Act (NSW) and s26 of the Australian Education Regulation 2023 (cth) non-government schools that receive government funding are prohibited from making payments where there is no legal liability to pay. Council's proposed voluntary contribution model falls directly within this prohibition. 2. Existing contributions - Council already receives substantial contributions from schools and their governing bodies to support public amenities. 3. Community Considerations - Rates should be sufficient to maintain public open space. Schools should not be charged fees. 4. Enforcement - difficulty in enforcing this policy and creating unnecessary confrontation between council staff and community. 	<p>Section 83C of the Education Act does not allow a private school to receive public financial assistance if it makes payments for property, goods or services at more than market value or for payment by a school for services not required for the operation of the school or are unreasonable in the circumstances that public funding is provided. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance. Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.</p>	N

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139	Under s83C of the Education Act (NSW) and s26 of the Australian Education Regulation 2023 (cth) non-government schools that receive government funding are prohibited from making payments where there is no legal liability to pay. Schools should not have to pay to utilise St Leonards Park and Ted Mack Civic Park. Charging some schools and not others unfairly penalises parents and students. City of Sydney distinguishes between commercial and educational use. Willoughby, Lane Cove and Mosman all allow education groups to use their parks without charge.	Section 83C of the Education Act does not allow a private school to receive public financial assistance if it makes payments for property, goods or services at more than market value or for payment by a school for services not required for the operation of the school or are unreasonable in the circumstances that public funding is provided. Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N

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150	Code of conduct St Leonards Park states a number of rules should be adhered to, including rules around use of sport equipment, students always needing to be under strict supervision and not hinder other users from using pathways, students are prohibited in any play area of the park designed for children, dogs must always be under control etc.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	-
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152	Summary on the website is unclear about who is impacted by this proposed policy. The policy infers that the aim is to stop smaller, public and commercial operators monopolising public open space with things like proposals and small weddings. The summarised description on the website states the policy applies to anyone using public open space for commercial or organised group activities including businesses like dog walkers, fitness training kayak hire, educational institution and private groups needing exclusive use of a space with more than 21 participants.	The draft Policy at attachment 1 is clear on the scope of its application.	-
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157	Public spaces at McMahons Point are being dominated by noisy tourists to the detriment of residents. Traffic noise from Blues Point Rd is frightening. I oppose council constructing amenities for tourists. Work should be limited to safety issues, including maintenance of sea walls and toilets in Blues Point Reserve.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	N

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169	I've operated a dog walking business since 2013. I serve ratepayers in North Sydney and surrounding LGAs. All responsible walkers adhere to the 4-dog limit set by the Australian Companion Animals Act, there is no evidence that professional walkers regularly breach this rule. Quite often it is the professional dog walkers that notify council of problems in parks. There is no indication that wear and tear from professional walkers is greater than general park users. Parks are shared spaces and maintenance should reflect all user activity. Professional dog walkers always clean up after their dogs. It should be recognised that dog walking is a vital service.	Public open space will remain accessible to the public. An objective of this draft Policy is to ensure equitable access to open space in the context of broad levels of demand and reduce and manage levels of impact. It is noted that a range of fees is still being developed and the report to Council includes principles to guide these including fairness and proportionality. A fundamental premise of the draft policy is to acknowledge that profit making ventures should make a contribution towards the maintenance of our limited open space areas in the same way that our neighbouring Councils deal with such activities. Council's open space areas are used by both small and large businesses. It is noted that fees have not yet been determined and the report identifies various principles for adoption in setting such fees including fairness, proportionality and regular review.	N

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170	<p>Sydney by Kayak has been operating from Lavender Bay for more than 12 years. In that time, our Ecotourism certified family run business has contributed over \$74,000 to local conservation projects and removed more than 40,000 kilograms of rubbish from the harbour and donated \$180,000 to local fundraising events, schools and community groups. We partner closely with Council on initiatives like family bushcare paddles, school holiday programs etc. We truly love our community and as both residents and operators in Lavender Bay, we want to continue contributing to a way that adds value for locals, visitors and the harbour itself. We support the introduction of a permit system to ensure fair use and responsible management, we are not opposed to paying for a permit. In fact, we welcome it. With an increase in kayak operators, launching from the same small beach, it can feel crowded at times. Exclusive use would allow us to better manage visitor numbers, ensure locals are not inconvenienced and preserve the quality of the experience for everyone.</p>	<p>This is noted and addressed in detail in the report. Kayak and water craft related foreshore businesses will be required to respond to an EoI process for use of such foreshore areas to better manage these interfaces.</p>	Y

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175	Schools should not have to pay fees to utilise St Leonards and Ted Mack Civic Park. Marist has significantly contributed financially through other development levies. Public spaces should be for all ratepayers. For decades, public and private schools have responsibly used nearby parks for sport, learning activities and community engagement. The use of the parks enrich students' education and strengthen ties to community. Introducing a user pay system for some schools creates an inequitable precedent.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N
176	Please don't impose fees on Catholic Schools. Schools should not have to pay fees to utilise St Leonards and Ted Mack Civic Park. Marist has significantly contributed financially through other development levies. Public spaces should be for all ratepayers. For decades, public and private schools have responsibly used nearby parks for sport, learning activities and community engagement. The use of the parks enrich students' education and strengthen ties to community. Introducing a user pay system for some schools creates an inequitable precedent.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N

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183	Why not charge to breathe air?	No comment required.	N

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186	I agree with this policy, I live in Kirribilli, and Dr Mary Booth Lookout reserve is always busy with "Marry Me" small businesses and associated litter, parking and noise. Weddings and catered picnics run all week in the park and along the foreshore, sometimes they clean up, sometimes it's left behind. Music is a growing feature. If Council requires additional income, small businesses should pay a fee, at the very least to compensate for garage removal and clean ups. The usage of parks like this is growing and it means other users are forced away. As I write this, music is blaring from the park. It's a free to utilise goldmine for small businesses and a cost to everyone else.	This is noted and consistent with the draft Policy.	Y
187	Schools should not have to pay fees to utilise St Leonards and Ted Mack Civic Park. Marist has significantly contributed financially through other development levies. Public spaces should be for all ratepayers. For decades, public and private schools have responsibly used nearby parks for sport, learning activities and community engagement. The use of the parks enrich students' education and strengthen ties to community. Introducing a user pay system for some schools creates an inequitable precedent.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N

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189	Fair access to parks and public open space for everyone in the community. Schools aren't in the park all the time and certainly don't occupy the whole space. Is Council more concerned about the appearance of the park than residents' health and fitness? Council should write policies that minimise risks by making unregulated use at the users expense. As the population grows and infrastructure grows, it is inevitable that there will be frequent use of the parks. Imitating other councils takes the uniqueness away from our community. It is unreasonable that public school students are entitled to access public open space over private schools.	Public open space is increasingly being used by private schools for operational purposes due to building expansions and/or school developments that do not provide for adequate playground space, thereby creating a reliance on nearby parks to accommodate outdoor recreational needs of their students, including for lunch and recess breaks. The lack of playground space relates to site constraints. For those schools who have provided sufficient open space, they are responsible for both the management and delivery of maintenance, renewal and waste management services in these playgrounds as an operational cost. Council is required to fund additional maintenance for increased use. Developer contributions are payable for all developments of a particular scale including schools. Such payments cannot be used for maintenance.	N

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193	The proposal sounds very reasonable. I appreciate the particular point that private schools should pay for the use of areas particularly given they have a much larger school grounds than public schools. I hope Council is in a position to charge independent schools including private and catholic/Christian schools to pay council rates for use of roads, sewerage, waste removal etc. When you see some of these schools with pools, tennis courts and a wide stretch of land using more than their fair share of resources, meanwhile the public pool is unavailable and public schools don't have enough space.	This is noted and broadly consistent with the draft Policy.	Y

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198	There is broad community support for the main idea of getting businesses and private schools to pay for heavy use of parks, however the current policy also forces parents doing a quick and easy birthday party for a dozen 4 year olds and their parents at a park to also get a permit. It's birthday party season and all the parents at daycare are doing parties at local parks and all would need to get a permit. This is an overreach on young kids parties.	North Sydney is a highly urbanised local government area with comparatively low levels of public open space per capita. As population density increases and demand for parks continues to grow, it is increasingly important that these shared community assets are managed in a way that ensures equitable access for all users. In response to feedback, Council has reviewed the application of permit requirements and identified a number of parks where informal gatherings of up to 60 people may continue without the need for approval or fees. These locations have been selected based on their size, capacity and ability to accommodate larger gatherings without significantly impacting other park users.	-
199	Fully support introduction of fees for private schools to use parks and courts. I also fully support Council asking them to pay rates and water fees at the commercial rate. So many private schools in North Sydney have kids that don't reside in the LGA and there is no contribution from schools. I would support private schools from being prohibited from using public parks altogether.	This is noted and broadly consistent with the draft Policy.	Y

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201	Wollstonecraft Precinct unanimously support the Commercial and Group Use of Public Open Space in North Sydney. Precinct requests that Council consider a discounted residents rate.	This is noted.	Y