

Item 4.

Public Exhibition - Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy

File No: X111978

Summary

The City of Sydney's (the City) Central Sydney On-Street Car Parking Policy (the Policy) was adopted in late 2015. The Policy was reviewed in 2018 and determined to be fit-for-purpose. The Policy provides a consistent approach to the management of on-street parking in central Sydney only (see map included in the draft Policy in Attachment A for the defined area. Note a separate policy applies elsewhere), identifying high value uses that should be given priority for access to kerb side space. The Policy aims to balance the complex and competing needs of the kerbside in central Sydney.

The 2018 Policy has been reviewed. The review determined that the Policy continues to be a useful tool in guiding kerb management in central Sydney. It has provided the policy framework for allocating scarce kerb space in central Sydney, notably in response to the construction of light rail and major construction works associated with Sydney Metro and major developments.

The review aligns the Policy with Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision, the Community Strategic Plan, the Access Strategy and Action Plan – Continuing the Vision and the Central Sydney Planning Strategy 2016-2036, along with updates to operational and implementation processes.

The review determined a number of small changes to update the Policy and improve implementation. The proposed changes include replacing the hierarchical approach with an approach which aligns the policy guidance to use of the kerbside and more closely with the generally agreed approach adopted by the City and Transport for NSW; allocation of kerb for high value parking or stopping, including 'No Parking', taxis and point-to-point, delivery and services vehicles, mobility parking, authorised vehicle zones and short stay parking ('No Parking' creates valuable shared spaces for pick up and drop off); minor text updates to strengthen the nexus between the provision of individual and shared off-street loading docks, and the retention of on-street loading in those areas; short stay parking (5 to 15 minutes); and a new section on approach to bike parking, especially share bike schemes. Other minor changes and updates are detailed in this report. The proposed changes (shown in Attachment A, with tracked changes in Attachment B) aim to make the Policy clearer and more reflective in implementation.

It is recommended that Council approve the draft Policy as shown in Attachment A to be publicly exhibited. The current Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy will remain in effect until such time as the revised Policy is adopted by Council.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the draft Central Sydney On-street Parking Policy, as shown at Attachment A to the subject report, for public exhibition;
- (B) Council note that the Central Sydney On-street Parking Policy, including any recommended changes, will be reported to Council for adoption following the exhibition period; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make minor editorial amendments for clarity or correction of drafting errors prior to the exhibition of the draft Central Sydney On-street Parking Policy.

Attachments

Attachment A. Draft Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy

Attachment B. Draft Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy (tracked changes version)

Background

1. The Central Sydney On-Street Car Parking Policy was adopted in late 2015 and was reviewed in 2018. The 2018 review determined that the Policy was 'fit-for-purpose'.
2. The Policy outlines an approach to the management of on-street parking in central Sydney (see map in Attachment A for the defined area).
3. Review of the 2018 Policy was delayed, primarily due to the Covid-19 pandemic and to the NSW Government advising it was updating its Sydney City Centre Access Strategy. It is our understanding that the NSW Government currently has no intention to release such a strategy.
4. The Policy has now been reviewed and draft changes are presented in Attachment A incorporating the tracked changes shown in Attachment B.
5. The policy review enabled:
 - (a) alignment of the policies with Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision, the Community Strategic Plan and the Access Strategy and Action Plan – Continuing the Vision.
 - (b) assessment of implementation and operational process to improve management of the Policy.
 - (c) reflection of current kerbside challenges, opportunities and trends in central Sydney. A key element of these is increasing emphasis on uses of kerb space for cycleways, footpath widening, outdoor dining and tree planting, as well as vehicle storage.
6. The review found that the Policy is a useful tool in guiding kerb management in central Sydney. The intent and purpose of the Policy remain important. The Policy has provided the policy framework for allocating scarce kerb space in central Sydney, notably in response to the construction of light rail and major construction works associated with Sydney Metro and major developments.
7. The current Policy reads as a strict hierarchical approach, which in practice, is impractical, and was a response to changes occurring on central Sydney streets at that time. The hierarchical approach outlined in the current policy does not:
 - (a) reflect the reality of current allocation
 - (b) reflect the place and access needs of the future central Sydney
 - (c) provide for the flexibility and collaboration that currently guides changes in central Sydney.
8. There are consistent demands for more kerb side access from all user groups, from waste trucks and tourist coaches to people with limited mobility to taxi drivers and motorcycle riders.

9. Kerbside changes are made in collaboration between the City, Transport for NSW, government authorities (such as NSW Fire and Rescue), and groups such as the Taxi Council, and often in response to representations from key business stakeholders, such as hotels or business associations, or in response to new development. There is generally consensus on the most important functions in most areas, and solutions often involve crafting complex time of day and week sharing of the kerb between multiple users. These solutions are too location-specific to capture in a rules-based or strict hierarchical policy.
10. General time limited paid parking is the default restriction wherever / whenever the space is not required for higher-value uses. Fees and charges are set and exhibited annually as part of the City’s draft operational plan.
11. The current Policy does not clearly outline the challenges and opportunities for central Sydney, such as:
 - (a) growth outlined in the Central Sydney Planning Strategy
 - (b) including new tower precincts
 - (c) successful introduction of metro and light rail
 - (d) need for more space for people walking
 - (e) opportunities for further bus network consolidation
 - (f) the need for kerb access for construction
 - (g) the need for place improvements to support economic recovery from the pandemic
 - (h) continued expansion of cycleways
 - (i) the mainstreaming of ridesharing, and bicycle sharing.
12. The importance of the kerbside in central Sydney to access functions such as drop off and pick up, no stopping and short stay parking are not sufficiently clarified in the current policy.
13. A review of the Policy, considering the above, has determined a small number of changes to enable the Policy to be more reflective in implementation. The proposed changes include (titles and section numbers refer to those in the draft Policy, Attachment A):
 - (a) Key changes, and the rationale for them, are:

Current Policy	Proposed change	Rationale for the change
1. Prioritising kerbside space 1.1 Background	Align Policy to: Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050, Access Strategy and Action Plan and Central Sydney Planning Strategy 2016-2036.	Parking policy should be designed to assist in implementing adopted strategies and action plans.

<p>1. Prioritising kerbside space 1.2 New development</p>	<p>New text on provision of bicycle parking and on-site loading in new developments. References requirements for new developments to have off street loading docks.</p>	<p>Demonstrate how planning controls in new developments support more efficient kerb side space allocation.</p>
<p>1. Prioritising kerbside space 1.3 Approach, and 2 Allocation of kerb for parking or stopping</p>	<p>New text replaces the 'proposed hierarchy' diagram for the allocation of kerbside space with an approach that focuses on uses / functions of kerbside at the 'Network level', 'Place level' and 'Parking / stopping level'.</p>	<p>Aligns the Policy more closely with the generally agreed implementation approach adopted by the City and Transport for NSW in central Sydney. A strict hierarchy can be overly prescriptive and hinder site-specific considerations of kerb-side changes. There is significant existing supply of high value kerb side uses such as taxi ranks.</p>
<p>2.1 No parking</p>	<p>New section.</p>	<p>No Parking restrictions are in large supply in central Sydney and provide valuable shared spaces for pick up and drop off, for many sections of the community.</p>
<p>2.3 Delivery and service vehicles</p>	<p>Minor text updates to loading zones, linking the provision to availability of off-street loading zones Added discussion about waste vehicles. Text added to make it clear that loading zone provision is to meet the needs of businesses. Outlines City's approach to loading zones, linking them to buildings and time of day. Specifies the need for users to display a ticket</p>	<p>Reflects current practice. Strengthen the nexus between provision of individual and shared off-street loading docks, and the retention of on-street loading in those areas.</p>
<p>2.8 Short stay parking</p>	<p>New section.</p>	<p>Short stay parking exists in central Sydney and can be an appropriate treatment to facilitate access and pick up and drop off for some locations, including near hotels, and mobility access.</p>
<p>2.10 On-street bicycle parking – to reduce footpath clutter</p>	<p>New section on purpose of and approach to on-street bicycle parking, Includes option for a small amount of on-street bicycle parking.</p>	<p>Consistent with resolution of Council on the issue. Approach would maximise storage of bicycles on-street to reduce footpath clutter, while minimising impact on other kerb side uses.</p>

- (b) Other minor changes:
 - (i) 2.2 Taxis: Updates to text for clarity and to provide context for time of day taxi ranks.
 - (ii) 2.4 Mobility parking: Updates to text to clarify the types of Mobility Parking, the opportunities for pick up and drop off, and the rationale for timed mobility parking. References the importance where possible of physical access to these space e.g. kerb ramps.
 - (iii) 2.5 Authorised Vehicle Zones - Essential Services, 2.6 Authorised Vehicles Zones - Coaches, and 2.7 Authorised Vehicle Zones - Passenger Vehicles: Clarification added.
 - (iv) 2.9 General period parking: Combined prior motorcycle parking section in this section.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

14. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This policy is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 3 - Public places for all - The Policy manages kerbside to respond to the access of places, not just for vehicle movement and storage.
 - (b) Direction 5 - A city for walking, cycling and public transport - The Policy tries to balance the competing needs of the kerbside for access and place to enhance central Sydney as a city for walking, cycling and public transport whilst maintaining access for required vehicle parking, such as mobility parking, loading and servicing, taxis and point-to-point amongst other users who are necessary to the economic functioning of central Sydney.
 - (c) Direction 6 - An equitable and inclusive city - The Policy provides for mobility parking, drop off and pick up and short stay parking, reflective that this access is of vital importance to some members of our communities.
 - (d) Direction 9 - A transformed and innovative economy - The Policy ensures that businesses have access to parking for loading and deliveries.

Organisational Impact

15. No organisational impacts are identified. The proposed changes reflect existing City operations.

Social / Cultural / Community

16. The Policy aligns with the City's A City for All – Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2021-2025.

Environmental

17. The draft Policy better aligns with the City's environmental strategies, including aiming to provide more space for planting.

Economic

18. The Policy has a primary objective of supporting access for businesses and visitors.

Financial Implications

19. The proposed changes to the Policy, if approved, will not materially impact on existing operations. The on-going management and implementation of the current Policy is part of the existing operations of the City.

Relevant Legislation

20. NSW Roads Act 1993.
21. Road Transport (General) Regulation 2013.
22. NSW Road Rules 2014.
23. Reflects recent changes to the City of Sydney Act 1988 (the abolition of the Central Sydney Traffic and Transport Committee).

Critical Dates / Time Frames

24. The current Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy will remain in effect until such time as a revised Policy is adopted by Council.

Public Consultation

25. City staff consistently engage with relevant key stakeholders including Police, the Taxi Council and key central Sydney business stakeholders such as hotels. General feedback from the community has been considered. This arises from individual representations on issues, including with key stakeholders, but also the structured engagements on Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision, the Community Strategic Plan, the Access Strategy and Action Plan – Continuing the Vision, the Electrification of Transport in the City Strategy and Action Plan and the Central Sydney Planning Strategy 2016-2036.
26. The City engaged with Transport for NSW on the drafting of the Policy.
27. If approved, the draft Policy will go on public exhibition for a period of at least 8 weeks (accounting for end of year holiday period).

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