Post Exhibition - Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy

File No: X111978

Summary

This report seeks Council approval of the Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy ('Policy').

At its meeting on 25 November 2024, Council resolved to exhibit the draft updated Policy. It was exhibited for public comment from 10 December 2024 to 21 February 2025 (an extended period to account for the end of year and school holiday period), with extensions granted on request. The City of Sydney ('the City') received a total of 81 responses: 57 'quick poll' responses, 22 survey responses and 2 written submissions.

The Policy provides a consistent approach to the management of on-street parking in central Sydney), 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 Policy was last reviewed in 2018. This review is part of normal Council process. This review found that the Policy is generally operating well and is a useful tool in guiding kerb management in central Sydney but needed updating to reflect current kerbside allocation and practice.

The updated Policy aligns 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.

Submissions overall showed support for the City's approach, particularly support for on-street bicycle parking and increasing bicycle parking generally, along with the need to reduce cars in the city centre further. Other comments were single issues with one or 2 comments only, and raised reduce vehicle parking, more motorcycle parking, pedestrian improvements, expanding the area that the Policy applies, improving traffic flow, providing more drop off and pick up and increasing parking.

The final Policy was amended to update the Policy with the community engagement and approval approach in response to the NSW Government's Temporary Delegations to Councils, along with an addition of 'car share' to section 1.2 (reflective of the Sydney Development Control Plan 2012) regarding types of off-street parking in new developments in response to a submission. Attachment B tracks changes to the draft Car Sharing Policy made to the revised policy placed on public exhibition.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note the submissions and feedback received through the public exhibition period is included in the Engagement Report as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;

(B) Council adopt the Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy incorporating amendments following the public exhibition process, as shown at Attachment B to the subject report; and

(C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy to correct any minor drafting errors and finalise design, artwork and accessible formats for publication.

Attachments

Attachment A. Engagement Report - Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy

Attachment B. Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy (showing changes)

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. Refer map in Attachment B which shows the defined area.

3. A 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 been reviewed to:

   (a) make sure it aligns with Sustainable Sydney 2030–2050 Continuing the Vision, the Community Strategic Plan and the Access Strategy and Action Plan – Continuing the Vision

   (b) make sure the implementation and operational process are fit for purpose

   (c) improve management of the Policy

   (d) reflect 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. In light of the above, the Policy was updated with a small number of changes. Key updates include:

   (a) Updating the prior hierarchical approach, which in practice, was not reflective of current kerbside allocation or flexible enough to enable the collaborative approach currently undertaken to kerbside reallocation. 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.

(b) To clearly outline the challenges and opportunities for central Sydney, such as: growth, new tower precincts, metro and light rail, the need for more space for people walking, bus network consolidation, the need for kerb access for construction, the need for place improvements to support economic recovery from the pandemic, continued expansion of cycleways and the mainstreaming of ridesharing, and bicycle sharing.

(c) Adding the importance of the kerbside in central Sydney to access functions such as drop off and pick up, no stopping, short stay parking and on-street bike parking.

(d) Linking the provision of loading zones to availability of off-street loading zones and making it clear loading zone provision is to support the needs of businesses.

8. The updated draft Policy was discussed at Council 25 November 2024 and placed on exhibition.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

9. 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 report 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

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

Risks

11. The review of this Policy has been assessed against the City's risk appetite and been found to pose minimal risk.

12. The updating of this Policy is part of normal business processes to ensure that the City can meet its obligation of providing and balancing kerbside space in central Sydney. The updated Policy better enables the City to manage its responsibilities reducing risk. The updates are minimal to an existing Policy. The only risk identified was not updating the Policy, which carry reputational, people, service delivery, sustainability and compliance risks.

13. The updated Policy is within the City's risk appetite/tolerance posing minimal risk to financial obligations (cautious to open risk appetite), sustainability (open risk appetite), service delivery (open risk appetite), people (minimal risk appetite), reputational (minimal risk appetite) and compliance (minimal risk appetite).

Social / Cultural / Community

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

Environmental

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

Economic

16. The Policy supports access for businesses and visitors.

Financial Implications

17. The updated Policy, if approved, will not materially impact on existing operations. The on-going management and implementation of the Policy is part of the existing operations of the City.

18. In accordance with section 610F of the Local Government Act 1993, fees will be exhibited along with the City’s draft operational plan as part of the annual review of fees and charges.

Relevant Legislation

19. NSW Roads Act 1993

20. Road Transport (General) Regulation 2013

21. NSW Road Rules 2014

22. The Policy reflects recent changes to the City of Sydney Act 1988 (the abolition of the Central Sydney Traffic and Transport Committee).

Critical Dates / Time Frames

23. This is a review and update to an existing policy. The current Policy is in effect until such time as this revised Policy is approved.

Options

24. There are no options. The Policy requires updating as part of normal Council processes.

Public Consultation

25. At its 25 November 2025 meeting, Council resolved to exhibit the draft Policy. It was exhibited for public comment from 10 December 2024 to 21 February 2025, with extensions granted on request.

26. During the consultation period the 'Sydney Your Say' page was visited 343 times, with 37 people downloading the draft Policy.

27. The City received 57 quick poll responses, 22 survey responses and 2 written submissions from organisations (no written submissions were received from individuals).

28. Attachment A provides a detailed Engagement Report.

29. Submissions overall showed considerable support for the City's approach, particularly to providing on-street bicycle parking.

30. Managing kerb space in central Sydney was important or very important for 96 % of respondents to the quick poll.

31. The survey feedback highlighted the following key areas:

    (a) the majority of respondents parked off street in central Sydney, or did not park, rather utilising drop off or pick up or driving through

    (b) comments supporting the proposed new approach to kerb side space allocation were provided by 14 respondents.

32. There were 14 responses to the open question response (including 2 relevant comments submitted to the Neighbourhood On-street Parking Policy survey which was open at the same time):

    (a) Three responses were generally supportive. One response was generally unsupportive.

    (b) The biggest single issue respondents mentioned in the open response part of the survey was support for on-street bicycle parking and increasing bicycle parking generally (6 comments).

    (c) Respondents raised that there was a need to reduce cars in the city centre further such as through congestion pricing (4).

(d) The other comments were single issues with one or two comments only, and raised: reduce vehicle parking (2), more motorcycle parking (2), pedestrian improvements (one), expanding the area that the Policy applies (one), improving traffic flow (one), providing more drop off and pick up areas (one) and increasing parking (one).

(e) Nine comments were not related to the Policy. Two comments were related to the Neighbourhood On-Street Parking Policy and have been reflected there.

(f) Location-specific comments and suggestions have been passed on to the relevant operational teams.

33. Comments that crossed multiple themes were reported in each theme.

Amendments to the Policy following exhibition

34. Based on the nature of feedback provided the final Policy required minor amendments. Attachment B identifies the proposed changes to the exhibited drafts, using tracked changes, with key amendments as follows (changes in bold):

(a) Addition of car sharing to 1.2. New Developments

(i) Current text: 1.2 The City can also require developers to provide bicycle parking and other end-of-trip facilities in a development.

(ii) Amended text: 1.2 The City can also require developers to provide bicycle parking, **car sharing** and other end-of-trip facilities in a development.

(iii) Requested by submission. Reflects existing Sydney DCP 2012.

(b) Community engagement and delegated authority

(i) Response to a change of City's operational processes confirmed during the exhibition period, and the abolition of the Central Sydney Traffic and Transport Committee.

(ii) Deleted text: Proposed changes to parking restrictions in central Sydney will be considered by the members of the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee. Decisions will be taken at an open meeting wherever possible, and any urgent out-of-session decisions reported to the subsequent meeting. Changes will also be reported to the Central Sydney Traffic and Transport Committee where required by the City of Sydney Act, or where desirable to improve coordination with the NSW Government. [new paragraph] In addition to consultation with statutory committees established under the City of Sydney Act, changes to traffic, parking and loading in central Sydney will be discussed and coordinated with Transport for NSW in order to ensure their consistency with the Sydney City Centre Access Strategy. [new paragraph] Where changes to kerbside space are likely to affect known nearby users, the City will consult affected properties or users in writing. User group representatives may be non-voting members of the City’s Traffic Committee.

(iii) New text: Community Engagement. Given the strong community interest in kerbside parking management, consistent with its Community Engagement Strategy, the City will ensure that businesses and residents have an opportunity to comment on proposed changes that are likely to have significant impact on parking. [new paragraph] For other changes, such as changes to signage that are required for safety or regulatory compliance, the City will notify nearby businesses and residents of the change prior to implementation. [new paragraph] In 2023 the NSW Government delegated exclusive authority to local governments to make most parking changes on local and regional roads. Delegated City staff will make a final decision after the appropriate community engagement. [new paragraph] The City will refer to the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee matters where NSW Government delegations require the Committee's consideration. It will also take matters to the Committee where, after community engagement, it is clear there are a significant number of opposing views in the community. After recommendation by the Committee, delegated City staff will then make a final decision.

35. To manage the kerb to maximise the benefits across the multiple outcomes, we will continue to work collaboratively and consult with specific stakeholders, including with Transport for NSW, and with key business and community groups.

KIM WOODBURY

Chief Operating Officer

Annie Matan, Transport Policy Analyst