

## 10.8. Memorials in Open Space Policy - Post Exhibition Report

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<b>ENDORSED BY</b>	Gary Parsons, Director Open Space and Infrastructure
<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	1. Memorials in Open Space Policy [ <b>10.8.1</b> - 3 pages] 2. Submissions Summary - Memorials in Open Space [ <b>10.8.2</b> - 3 pages]
<b>CSP LINK</b>	1. Our Living Environment 1.4 Well utilised open space and recreational facilities  5. Our Civic Leadership 5.2 Strong civic leadership and customer focussed services

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to present the outcome of the Public Exhibition of the draft *Memorials in Open Space Policy* that was placed on public exhibition on 5 June 2023.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- The purpose of the *Memorials in Open Space Policy* is to formalise the procedure for applying for a memorial plaque within public open space, to ensure applications are managed in a consistent and transparent manner.
- On 8 May 2023, the Council endorsed the draft policy for public exhibition. The draft policy was publicly exhibited from 5 June to 16 July 2023.
- Six submissions were received. Five submissions supported or partially supported the proposal and one submission was a request/application for a memorial.

### RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. THAT** the Council note the responses received from the public exhibition of the *Memorials in Open Space Policy*; and
- 2. THAT** the Council formally adopt the *Memorials in Open Space Policy*.

## Background

On 8 May 2023, the Council resolved:

- 1. THAT the draft Memorials in Open Space Policy be endorsed for public exhibition for a minimum period of 42 days.*
- 2. THAT a further report be provided to Council following the conclusion of the public exhibition period for the purpose of considering any submissions received and adopting the Memorials in Open Space Policy.*

## Report

This report details the submissions received during the public exhibition of the draft policy and presents the final plan to the Council for adoption.

In the past Council provided the opportunity for individuals and groups wishing to commemorate a loved one by donating a seat with a plaque, to align with Council's goal of increased tree canopy. There are currently no eligibility criteria to assess these requests, other than the costs to supply the memorial.

Council is receiving ongoing requests for memorials, which need to be managed through a policy to ensure they are managed through a consistent and transparent process. The policy seeks to provide this framework and move away from a donation of park furniture and associated plaques.

The main objectives of this policy are to:

- provide Council with a consistent approach to dealing with requests for memorials within open space;
- establish criteria to assess and respond to requests by individuals and groups for the recognition of appropriate community members; and
- to define conditions under which Council will accept requests for memorials.

The policy states that requests will be considered where a person is deceased:

- a) has a recognised historical link with the locality of North Sydney;
- b) is generally acknowledged as having made a significant contribution to the social, economic, sporting and/or cultural development of the community of North Sydney; and
- c) is of good repute.

### 1. Public Exhibition Period

In accordance with the Council resolution of 8 May 2023, the draft policy was placed on public exhibition from 5 June to 16 July 2023.

## 1.1 Inform Reach

The following summary details the methods used to promote the draft policy and their reach:

- web page - 176 page visits, including 14 downloads of the Council report/draft policy
- Council's eNewsletters, including:
  - Council eNews, May & June 2023 - 1,460 reach, 51% (737) opened, 16 clicks
  - Business eNews, May & June 2023 - 941 reach, 36% (337) opened, 0 clicks
  - Precinct eNews, 7 issues (weekly) - 166 subscribers, 45% (73) opened, 60 clicks total
- Civic Park and Stanton Library 'Your Say' noticeboards; and
- Precinct Committees

## 1.2 Submissions

Council received six submissions during the exhibition period, excluding Councillors and staff feedback. In summary:

- one submission overtly supported the proposal
- four submissions partially supported the proposal, including support for a plaque and seat, or seat and tree combination memorial. Of these:
  - one expressed disappointment over the eligibility provisions (clause 4.2), citing it is too restrictive as does not extend to recognition of local residents who contribute to the North Sydney community, and preferred benches as memorials; and
  - one acknowledged that Council currently bears the cost, and that tree planting is worthwhile but preferred benches as memorials (to increase public seating).
  - one submission was a request/application for a memorial.

Whilst there was some opposition against the draft policy, no submissions overtly opposed the proposal. Native trees are given priority in accordance with Council policy, and the local person proposed in submission no. 5 is eligible in accordance with clause 4.2.

Therefore, it is recommended that the policy as attached be adopted, based on meeting the initial goals and intentions of the policy.

## Options

Council has the following options in relation to this matter:

1. Take no action and continue with the current arrangement.
2. The recommended option.
3. Develop some other form of policy approach

These options are assessed in the table on the next page.

Option	Finance/Resourcing	Risk/Opportunity	Consultation
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost of seat borne by applicant</li> <li>- Cost of installation borne by Council</li> <li>- Small amount of staff resources required to liaise with the applicant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A vast majority of popular seat/benches become memorials.</li> <li>- There is an opportunity for Council to save money in the cost of replacement seats.</li> </ul>	Under this option there would be no community consultation undertaken.
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No finance requirements</li> <li>- Small amount of staff resources required to identify Tree location and liaise with the applicant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The availability of tree planting locations is extremely limited and there are risks people will not be able to identify or agree a location.</li> <li>- Ability to control the number of memorials across Council's open space.</li> <li>- Opportunity to increase Council's tree canopy.</li> <li>- A more sustainable approach to memorials.</li> </ul>	Public exhibition processes have been undertaken as per Council policy.
3.	Unknown financial implications	There may be alternative memorials that could be of benefit to the community which have not been considered.	Undertake consultation as to what memorials the public would like to see and how this could be structured.

Option 2, is recommended for the following reasons:

- Minimal requirements in finance and resourcing.
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- Control of the number of memorials across North Sydney open space.

### **Consultation requirements**

Community engagement has occurred in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol. The detail of this report provides the outcomes from the engagement for Council to consider prior to adoption.

### **Financial/Resource Implications**

There are minimal financial implications for Council in adopting this policy, as all cost will be managed through existing operational budgets.



## MEMORIALS IN OPEN SPACE POLICY

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**Policy Owner:** Director Open Space & Infrastructure

**Category:** Operational

**Direction:** 1. Our Living Environment

### 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1. North Sydney Council receives numerous requests from individuals and groups wishing to commemorate a loved one and respected person/s through a memorial within one of North Sydney's open space locations.
- 1.2. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that applications for memorial are determined and managed on a consistent basis.
- 1.3. The objectives of this policy are to:
  - a) provide the Council with a consistent approach to dealing with requests for memorials within open space;
  - b) establish criteria to assess and respond to requests for a memorial by individuals and groups for the recognition of appropriate community members; and
  - c) define conditions under which the Council will accept requests for memorials.

### 2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all open space under the ownership or care and control of the Council.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. Memorial - an object established in memory of a person e.g. memorial seat.

### 4. PROVISIONS

- 4.1. Approvals for a memorial may be granted by the following Council staff with reference to the criteria set out in this Policy. This procedure may be altered by the General Manager.
  - a) Director Open Space & Infrastructure
  - b) Manager Parks & Reserves

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Adopted by Council [insert date]

**MEMORIALS IN OPEN SPACE POLICY**

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c) Council Historian

- 4.2. A request will be considered where a person is deceased and:
- a) has a recognised historical link with the locality of North Sydney;
  - b) is generally acknowledged as having made a significant contribution to the social, economic, sporting and/or cultural development of the community of North Sydney; and
  - c) is of good repute.
- 4.3. Council will only consider the donation of a tree (excluding a plaque) as a memorial. The location of the proposed planting will be in line with Council's existing tree management policies, and be approved at the discretion of Council. No other type of memorial e.g. park furniture or standalone plaque will be considered.
- 4.4. Applications must be made via the *Memorials Application Form*. Applications must include a supporting statement detailing how the nominee meets the criteria outlined in section 4.2 this policy.
- 4.5. Memorial trees will be of a required species and size that suits the proposed location, and be determined by Council.
- 4.6. Consideration will be given to relevant Policies, Plans of Management, Masterplans, capital works programs, the safety of park users, protection of the natural environment, and ensuring the memorial tree meets with general community expectations for the area, including due consideration of any indigenous connection with the site.
- 4.7. The applicant is required to meet all costs associated with the purchase and installation of the memorial tree.
- 4.8. The memorial tree will be subject to the same level of maintenance as other trees located within open space. The tree will remain in place for as long as it meets the useful life expectancy (ULE) as covered by Section 16 Tree and Vegetation Management of the *North Sydney Development Control Plan*.

**5. RESPONSIBILITY**

- 5.1. Council's Manager Parks & Reserves is responsible for the implementation of this Policy and is the contact person for enquiries regarding memorial trees.

**6. RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION**

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Council policies and

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documents:

- Development Control Plan
- Street Tree Strategy
- Urban Forest Strategy
- Other Plans of Management or Masterplans (as applicable)

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Review Date
1	[insert date]	Council	[insert min. no.]	2024/25

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Adopted by Council [insert date]

**Draft Memorials in Open Space Policy**  
**Summary of submissions received during the public exhibition period**  
**(Exhibition Period 5 June - 16 July 2023)**

The following criteria are used to analyse all submissions received, and to determine whether or not the plan would be amended:

1. The Memorials in Open Space Policy **would be** amended if issues raised in the submission:
  - a provided additional information of relevance.
  - b indicated or clarified a change in government legislation, Council's commitment or management policy.
  - c proposed strategies that would better achieve or assist with Council's objectives.
  - d was an alternate viewpoint received on the topic and is considered a better option than that proposed or;
  - e indicated omissions, inaccuracies or a lack of clarity.
  
2. The Memorials in Open Space Policy **would not be** amended if the issues raised in the submission:
  - a addressed issues beyond the scope of the proposal.
  - b was already in the proposal or will be considered during the development of a subordinate plan (prepared by Council).
  - c offered an open statement, or no change was sought.
  - d clearly supported the proposal.
  - e was an alternate viewpoint received on the topic but the recommendation was still considered the best option.
  - f was based on incorrect information.
  - g contributed options that are not possible (generally due to some aspect of existing legislation or government policy) or; involved details that are not appropriate or necessary for inclusion in a document aimed at providing a strategic community direction over the long term.



No.	Name and Address	Key Points Raised	Criteria
1.	Susan Wright 6/3 Cammeray Ave CAMMERAY	It would be more appropriate for memorials to be in the form of a tree. We have lost so many in our suburb, it would make an appropriate memorial to remember a loved one. Species and placement could perhaps be negotiated. We need our tree canopy back again.	2d
2.	Robin Richard 405/20 Premier St NEUTRAL BAY	I do understand the dilemma Council finds itself in and I feel that the burden of cost should not be Council's even if plaques are to Council's design or even the cost of the outdoor furniture. Speaking personally supporting tree planting would not be something, though worthwhile, that I would be interested in. A seat or park bench where I could sit and reflect on past times would be. I also would not be interested in any park. Milson Park is the only place we went to frequently and I suspect many others would also have their preferred outdoor area, which perhaps applicants could specify.	2e
3.	J Goodwin 33/441 Alfred St North NEUTRAL BAY	Seats and trees are both welcomed by public. They are not interchangeable functionally. To encourage tree supply, why not make a seat + tree combo available (maybe not installed adjacently)? I appreciate more seating. For the past couple of years, I have found the walk to the shop or bus stop hard. I rest at bus stop seat and at buildings with low brick fences. I sometimes see others, including an elderly neighbour, sitting on fence. As I pass a couple of grassy areas, I wish there was a seat to rest and thought about funding one. I am at least 4th generation resident of North Sydney and could identify an ancestor for memorial.	2e
4.	Breana Bunce 13/252 Willoughby Rd NAREMBURN	Please consider mandating native trees, to increase ecological resilience of the area. Reference: <a href="https://www.agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/native-vegetation-framework.pdf">https://www.agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/native-vegetation-framework.pdf</a> . It would also be great to have the name (and ideally contribution) of the memorialised person displayed physically. This adds cultural richness to our community and inspires the next generation.	2e
5.	Willoughby Bay Precinct	I am writing to make a submission on the Draft Memorials in Open Space Policy. I have been approached by a Willoughby Bay resident who has expressed disappointment over the provisions of the draft policy. I understand a consistent policy is a good idea. However, it seems unduly restrictive that a request will only be considered where a deceased person: <i>"a) has a recognised historical link with the locality of North Sydney.</i> <i>b) is generally acknowledged as having made a significant contribution to the social, economic, sporting and/or cultural development of the community of North Sydney;"</i> If you're a Ted Mack, or a sporting hero, fine. What about an ordinary local resident who spends time caring for a local park or reserve and perhaps wants to give a bench to the community? Mortlock Reserve is named after Bryce Mortlock who, with his family, protected the local foreshore area near his home until the reserve was included in the Bushcare program. Would he not be allowed a memorial because he didn't make "a significant contribution to the social, economic, sporting and/or cultural development of the community of North Sydney"? Would it be possible to allow a local Precinct to make a recommendation where a local resident has contributed to the community in their own quiet way and the family would appreciate a small memorial? Would it also be possible for Council to consider a bench (or similar) in some circumstances, rather than only a tree? Thank you for considering this submission.	2e

No.	Name and Address	Key Points Raised	Criteria
6.	Name and address withheld	<p>I have been advised re memorials to forward my requests to Council on the Have Your Say site. I believe there is an open space policy of planting trees in remembrance which I feel is a good idea, for the environment and the beauty of the area.</p> <p>We have a memorial seat at McMahons Point as my husband was born in 1945 and grew up in 1A East Crescent St McMahons Point. Those flats have since been demolished and replaced by penthouses. He lived above the wharf, Jim's backyard. Jim loved the harbour and worked as a ferry master. We all visit his seat often. We have been asking if we are able to have a memorial for my Mum as we also lost her at the same time as my husband Jim passed away. My children were so very close to their Nan, she loved the Harbour and spent many wonderful times there, she climbed the bridge at 91 years old.</p>	2f