

8.9. Events Update 2020-2021 Season

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ENDORSED BY: Margaret Palmer, Director Corporate Services

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Transport NSW - Site Compound Notification - July 2020 [8.9.1 - 5 pages]
2. Letter to Dept of Premier and Cabinet re NYE 2020 - 2 Oct 2020 [8.9.2 - 2 pages]

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the upcoming events planned for 2020-2021 financial year and the changes required to Council's events program in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, NSW Public Health Orders (PHO) and the Transport for NSW bridge works site compound in Bradfield Park. The major events that are planned in this period, include Twilight Food Fair, *New Year's Eve (NYE)*, BBQ by the Bridge, and Bradfield Bark.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

To abide by the current (at the time of writing) NSW health order pertaining to events and mass gatherings ([Public Health \(COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement\) Order \(No 5\) 2020](#)), this report details the modifications needed to be made to Twilight Food Fair to follow a food market model in accordance with the NSW regulations. It is intended to start the season at the beginning of December as a take-away market with the option to expand the event to the usual model that the community has loved for over 30 years if PHO changes permit in 2021.

There has been uncertainty about the future of the Sydney New Year's Eve fireworks due to the COVID-19 public health restrictions. As of late September the NSW Government took custodianship of the NYE from the City of September and this report provides a brief summary of what has happen to date and an update on the current status of the event. A further report is required on the outcome of the event.

Due to the Transport for NSW site compound in Bradfield Park, this report recommends that Council's Australia Day event, BBQ by the Bridge, be cancelled for 2021. If the Australia Day Council harbour program does receive a PHO exemption to go ahead, staff will implement crowd control measures and COVID safety at Bradfield Park if required to support the activities on the harbour, but no additional entertainment will be provided.

As the Transport for NSW bridge works site compound in Bradfield Park is expected to remain until mid-2021, this report recommends St Leonards Park as the location to hold Bradfield Bark in 2021. St Leonards Park is within walking distance of most suburbs in the North Sydney LGA and close to the Ridge Street carpark so is a good choice for the event. The format and delivery of Bradfield Bark will be dependent on the relevant Public Health Orders in force at the time.

The event program outlined in this report is contingent on events being permissible under Public Health Orders at the time of the event or an exemption being granted. All events would have a COVID risk management plan in place and a designated Event Officer to ensure its implementation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Twilight Food Fair, New Year's Eve 2020, BBQ by the Bridge 2021 and Bradfield Bark 2021 have been allocated \$950,000 funding from the 2020/21 budget, a large portion of this for New Year's Eve.

In addition to the already allocated Council budget, these events also have a small revenue stream through stallholder fees.

Part of the budget for BBQ by the Bridge can be utilised to implement crowd control and COVID safety practices to support the Australia Day Council's harbour event and program if it goes ahead.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. THAT** Council endorse the start of the Twilight Food Fair in December as a take-away market and note the intention to expand the market to its usual model in 2021 if Public Health Orders permit.
- 2. THAT** a further report to Council is required on the outcomes of NYE 2020.
- 3. THAT** Council endorse the cancellation of BBQ by the Bridge 2021 and note that COVID safety measures may need to be taken if the Australia Day Council harbour program goes ahead.
- 4. THAT** Council endorse St Leonards Park as the location for Bradfield Bark dog event in 2021.

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

4. Our Social Vitality

4.2 North Sydney is creative and home to popular events

BACKGROUND

North Sydney Council has a diverse events program, comprising Council run events and activities, as well as events organised by third parties on Council-owned land. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all major events from July to December are required to meet the conditions of a permissible event as stated in the Public Health Order or be granted an exemption from NSW Health to proceed, which no third party event has received to date. For Council's 2021 events, including Twilight Food Fair, BBQ by the Bridge and Bradfield Bark, programs and event formats will need to be adapted in response to external factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the Transport for NSW bridge works site compound in Bradfield Park. Further background information for these events is detailed below.

1. Twilight Food Fair

The Twilight Food Fair (originally known as the North Sydney Noodle Market) has been operating since 1990 in Civic Park, North Sydney. Last year the Twilight Food Fair season ran from the last Friday in October until the first Friday in March (except for dates around Christmas, New Year's Eve and public holidays), operating from 5.30pm to 9pm.

The event usually has from eight to 12 stallholders offering a variety of international cuisine, and family friendly entertainment, including a live band and children's activities, such as face painting, games and crafts. The Twilight Food Fair has a regular audience of between 500 and 2000 people each week (depending on the weather) as well as a take-away following.

Under the current NSW Public Health Order (No 5), the traditional format of Twilight Food Fair will not be possible, as it does not fit within the conditions of a permissible event. Therefore, adaptation is required for the Twilight Food Fair to change it from being an 'outdoor event' to a 'food market'.

2. New Year's Eve

There has been uncertainty about the future of the NYE fireworks due to the COVID-19 public health restrictions. Councillors were provided with an update on the status of the event on 12 October 2020.

As a summary, the City of Sydney officially transferred custodianship of the fireworks event to the NSW Government in late September. As of 21 October 2020, the Department of Premier and Cabinet has not briefed landholders and other agencies about how the event will proceed for 2020 and two scheduled landholder meetings on 8 and 19 October 2020 were cancelled.

The General Manager has written to the Secretary of the Department of Premier & Cabinet requesting clarification of the NYE arrangements. The letter has been acknowledged, but no reply has been received. A copy of the letter is attached.

3. Australia Day and BBQ by the Bridge

The Australia Day Council operates a harbour program on Australia Day (January 26) which delivers several activities including a ferry race, harbour parade, aerial activities, floating concert, and ‘Salute to Australia’. Cremorne Point, Blues Point Reserve and Bradfield Park are popular vantage points to watch the harbour program. Bradfield Park is currently the venue for the ‘Salute to Australia’.

Since 2017, Council has contributed to the greater harbour program by hosting its own free Australia Day event at Bradfield Park: BBQ by the Bridge. The event celebrates Australia’s national and local diversity by featuring BBQ style food from a variety of international cuisines, as well as offering entertainment of live music and children’s activities such as circus playgrounds, Australian Wildlife displays, jumping castles and face painting.

With the Transport for NSW bridge works site compound in Bradfield Park expected to occupy what will be most of the event footprint, BBQ by the Bridge will be unable to held in 2021.

4. Bradfield Bark

At its meeting of 14 September 2015, Council resolved:

1. THAT Council’s events section organise a North Sydney Dog Show, the inaugural event to be held on a Sunday in March 2016 and if deemed a success, annually thereafter. The event to be held in Bradfield Park and free to the public.

On Sunday 6 March 2016, Council held the inaugural free event Bradfield Bark. For 2017, 2018 and 2019 the event was moved to the month of May as cooler weather allowed for more varied dog demonstrations. The event featured a varied program including demonstrations, expert talks, a ‘Mutt and Meow’ market, live band performances, and competitions for dog owners, lovers and park visitors to enjoy. For 2020, the event was moved to June as the date proposed in May competed with a Dog Show event in Canberra. Due to COVID-19 lock down and event restrictions, the event was offered in 2020 in an online format with video presentations supported by live streaming of Q&A sessions with the experts and music.

Due to the Transport for NSW bridge works site compound in Bradfield Park expecting to occupy most of the Bradfield Park event footprint, the event will need to move for 2021.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement is not required.

DETAIL

1. Twilight Food Fair 2020/2021 Season

Friday 4 December 2020 – Friday 5 March 2021, 4.30pm – 8pm, Civic Park, North Sydney

To abide by the current (at time of writing) NSW Public Health Order (No 5), this report details the modifications to Twilight Food Fair to follow a food market model, rather than an outdoor event model, with it to be repositioned as ‘Takeaway Twilight’. The proposed changes include:

- Shortening the event season to start on the first Friday in December and finish on the first Friday in March;
- Promoting it as a takeaway food market;
- Changing the time of the event from 5.30pm - 9pm to 4.30pm - 8pm;
- Reducing the number of stallholders to a maximum of six to allow for physical distancing;
- Replacing live band performances with recorded music or busking performers. There will be no children’s activities;
- Developing a COVID-safe plan for the event; and
- Implementing several COVID safety and physical distancing measures.

This format will be adapted and expanded to the usual model if permitted under Public Health Orders in 2021.

2. New Year’s Eve 2020

31 December 2020 – 1 January 2021

As of the time of this report no further planning can commence for Council’s NYE vantage points until further guidance as to how the event will proceed is provided by the NSW Government.

3. Australia Day and BBQ by the Bridge

26 January 2021, Bradfield Park, Milsons Point

Due to the Transport for NSW site compound in Bradfield Park taking up a large portion of the usual BBQ by the Bridge event footprint, it is recommended that Council does not proceed with the event in 2021.

However, if the Australia Day Council harbour program proceeds, measures will need to be implemented to manage the crowds in a COVID-safe manner at the popular North Sydney viewing location, Bradfield Park.

The third-party annual event, The Celtic Council of Australia Celtic Festival in St Leonards Park on Australia Day, may still go-ahead pending approval by Council of an event application and if they receive a Public Health Order exemption.

4. Bradfield Bark

May-June 2021 (date TBC), Bradfield Park, Milsons Point

Due to the Transport for NSW bridge works site compound in Bradfield Park taking most of the Bradfield Bark event footprint, this report recommends St Leonards Park as the contingency location for Bradfield Bark 2021. St Leonards Park is an appropriate location because it is within walking distance of most suburbs within the LGA and is close to the Ridge Street carpark.

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22 July 2020

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DISCUSSION NOTES

Sydney Harbour Bridge Maintenance Program – Bradfield Park

I refer to previous discussions and correspondence concerning maintenance and rehabilitation works being planned for Sydney Harbour Bridge (SHB).

In response to the impacts of Covid-19 the NSW Government is bringing forward part of the planned SHB Maintenance Program. I note there are two areas for liaison being suggested between Transport and Council as follows

- Council's Bradfield Park South Landscape Masterplan DA.
- Transport bringing forward the SHB Maintenance Program

Bradfield Park South Foreshore Masterplan

The information that Council provided at our last meeting has been provided to TfNSW Commercial and Property Branch. As discussed resolving the matter of land transfer for the Bradfield Park South Foreshore is outside the work area of the proposed Harbour Bridge Maintenance Project and is not managed by the SHB Project team.

I am advised that the Commercial and Property Branch is working on Council's request and is considering options for a land agreement that would provide for the requirements of the proposed Masterplan. This work is being co-ordinated by Susannah Mobberley, Senior Manager Property Strategy and Planning. Mobile: 0428 640 487. Council is welcome to make contact with Susannah to co-ordinate this matter.

SHB Maintenance Plan

Sydney Trains has been planning the upgrade of the SHB rail deck for several years and discussed the project with Council in March 2018.

Due to impacts of Covid-19 the NSW Government is bringing forward the Sydney Harbour Bridge Rail Deck Upgrade which includes works on the Northern Approach Spans.

These works were previously planned to commence in mid-2021. It is now planned undertake the works in January 2021 over a two week track possession planned during the holiday period. Advancing the planned Rail Deck Upgrade will minimise impacts on rail commuters and the community by eliminating the large number of weekend track possessions. Previously the proposed works would have extended over a period of several

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years. The planned possession in January 2020 also takes advantage of the current low passenger usage on the rail network.

For the SHB Rail Deck Upgrade to be undertaken in January 2021, Sydney Trains has engaged the Sydney Program Alliance to urgently commence installation of the access platforms beneath the railway lines. This work extends for the full length of the Southern and Northern Approach spans. To safely undertake assembly and erection of the platforms, exclusion zones will be required to be established with temporary fencing within Bradfield Park.

To minimise the impact and the duration of these exclusion zones, the work is being planned as follows;

Rail Deck Upgrade (West Side SHB)	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish site compound (on TfNSW land adjacent to North Pylon) 	August 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively establish western exclusion zones (working south to north) 	September to October 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive removal of platforms and exclusion zones (working north to south) 	January to Mid 2021

The above timing to complete the rail deck upgrade in January 2021 has also been developed to coordinate with other essential maintenance work that Transport had planned to carry out on the SHB Road Deck for the Northern Approach on the eastern side of SHB.

This work is also being undertaken by the Sydney Program Alliance. These works are programed to commence in late 2020 and are to be completed in mid-2022.

Roadway Deck Works (East Side SHB)	Timing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively establish eastern exclusion zones (working south to north) 	December 2020 to Mid-2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive removal of platforms and exclusion zones (working south to north) 	Late 2021 to Mid-2022

A plan showing the location of the proposed site compound and the overall footprint of the SHB northern approach is provided as **Attachment A**. As referenced above the works program would require firstly an exclusion zone along the western side of the northern approach. The exclusion zone would then be relocated to the eastern side of the northern approach. Detailed staging will be discussed with Council.

The environmental management of the works are being planned and delivered in accordance with the project's approved Environment Management Plan. As previously raised by Council, the management of soil contamination for the works in Bradfield Park is summarised in **Attachment B**.

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Further Consultation

As per previous discussions Transport would welcome the opportunity to consult with Council concerning the proposed works. To ensure the works can be delivered to schedule it is planned to start these works in August 2020 starting by the Southern Pylon in the less used area of the Park.

By programming the works in this manner the intention is to provide sufficient time over the next few months to engage with Council and key stakeholders that use Bradfield Park as well as the wider community. Transport plans to commence consultation with the above groups in parallel over the next few weeks.

I hope the above information is of assistance. As discussed I would welcome the opportunity to provide more details of the proposed works in Bradfield Park to Council no later than 31 July 2020.

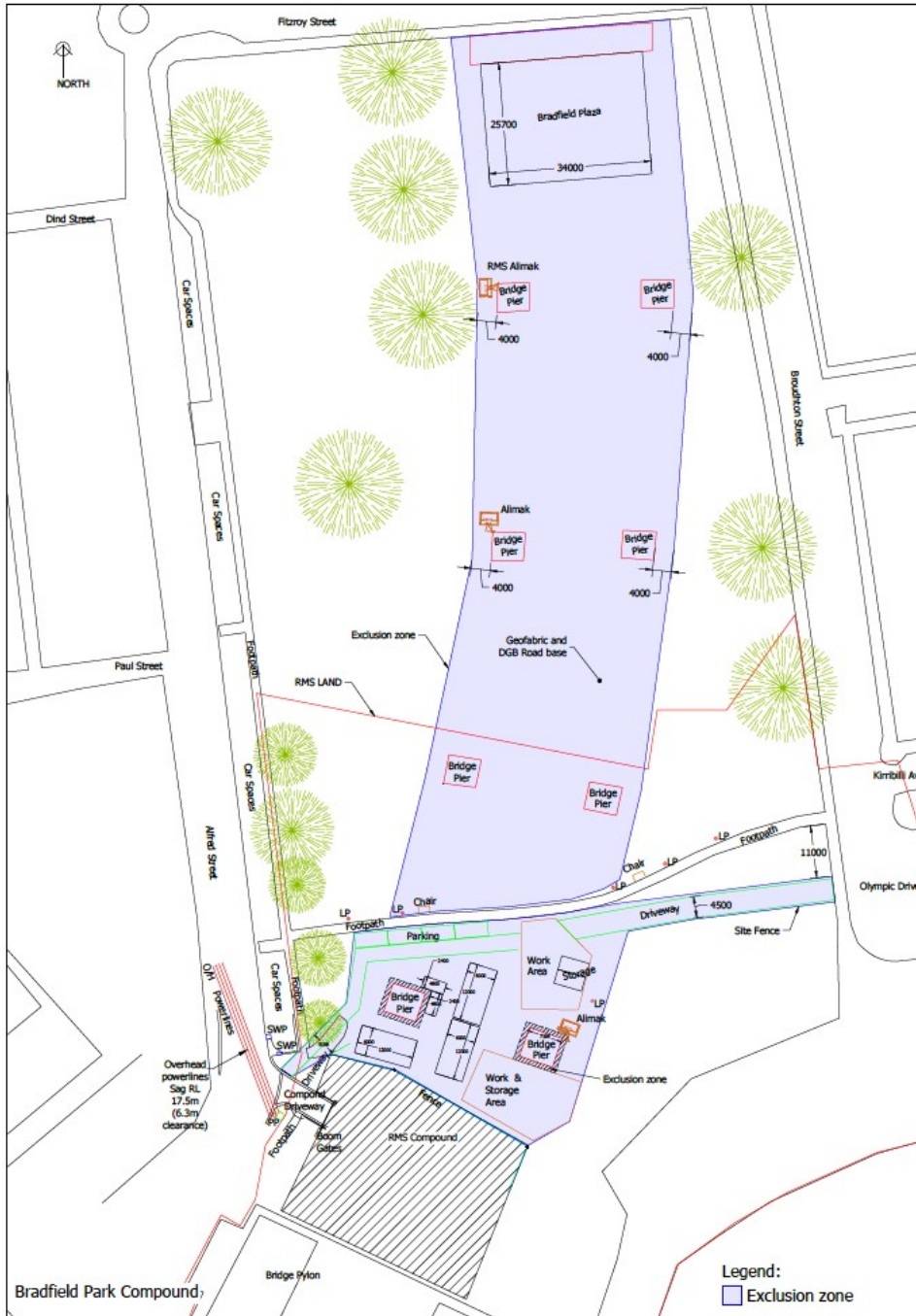


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Attachment A



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Attachment B – Management of Potential Soil Contamination in Bradfield Park

The proposed upcoming maintenance works on the Sydney Harbour Bridge will be undertaken in accordance with approved Environmental Management Plan. Details to address potential soil contamination as raised previously by Council is as follows:

Potential Soil Contamination

A Contamination Management Strategy for Bradfield Park has been prepared by the Sydney Program Alliance. The Contamination Management Strategy describes the process for compliance with the Bradfield Park Plan of Management and provides for:

- Soil Testing in Bradfield Park in the area of the proposed site compound will be undertaken prior to the work and following demobilisation. All soil testing and subsequent turf restoration will be in line with North Sydney Council's Plan of Management for Bradfield Park.

Before establishing the site compound the area will be covered with a geofabric and road base hard stand. The road base material will be disposed to an appropriate waste facility at the completion of the works and the area immediately reinstated with a layer of topsoil and turf.

- For the exclusion zone areas, a section along the centre alignment of the Northern Approach span will be used as a trafficable zone and grassed areas of the park will be covered with a geofabric and road base hardstand. This material will also be disposed to an appropriate waste facility at the completion of the works and the area immediately reinstated with a layer of topsoil and turf. Areas not to be trafficked will be monitored and turf reinstated immediately should any areas be damaged as a result of that work.

Protection of the area within Bradfield Plaza will be through installation of a plywood layer or other suitable material in consultation with Council.

- A containment system under the deck will be installed where paint is to be removed from the existing steelwork.

The proposed Contamination Management Strategy for Bradfield Park will be provided to Council for review.

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N O R T H S Y D N E Y



C O U N C I L

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2 October 2020

Department of Premier & Cabinet
Tim Rearden, Secretary
Via: Department of Premier & Cabinet Contact Form

Dear Mr Rearden

RE: Management of New Year's Eve 2020

I am writing to seek confirmation that the NSW Government intends to manage New Year's Eve (NYE) 2020 including the public parks and spaces on the Harbour in the North Sydney Local Government Area. As you are aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the planning for NYE which is a complex, multi-agency event.

North Sydney Council begins its internal planning in March each year, taking into consideration direction from Council and feedback from the community. We engage suppliers in July and start regular meetings with other agencies including attendance at the monthly all agency Event Operations Group (EOG) organised by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and the North Shore Local Area Command meetings organised by the Police Superintendent or their nominee.

This year the first all agency meeting was convened in June and North Sydney Council, along with other agencies, sought direction on public events including NYE. Clarity was not provided at this meeting or the July or August meetings that followed. The DPC NYE Operations Group meeting, scheduled for 31 August, as well as the City of Sydney's NYE Stakeholder Working Group meeting on 23 September, were cancelled.

I am advised that the DPC, which had accepted custodianship of the fireworks for NYE 2020, were unable to provide guidance as to the timing or content of the event and how it would be delivered within the context of the new Public Health Order (PHO) at the EOG meeting of 28 September. At this meeting, numerous agencies including North Sydney Council expressed concern that they could not deliver support for the event within the remaining timeframe.

As background, last year North Sydney ticketed four vantage points and provided infrastructure at a further eight vantage points and numerous road closure sites to manage crowds attending the City of Sydney's event.

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At this stage of the year, Council would normally have completed the following tasks:

- Requested quotes for ticketing, fencing, lighting towers, VMS, generators, toilets, site sheds, marquees, signage, security, first aid, traffic management and risk assessment.
- Appointed infrastructure suppliers and prepared a run sheet for the bump in and bump out of all infrastructure at the 12 sites.
- Appointed a ticketing provider, built the ticketing platform, prepared and implemented the marketing plan and released the tickets for sale.
- Appointed other service providers and finalised the transport control and traffic management plans.
- Negotiated arrangements with affected agencies including NSW Police, NSW Ambulance, Sydney Buses, NSW Ferries, Sydney Trains and the Transport Management Centre.
- Negotiated arrangements with affected businesses.
- Consulted resident groups, prepared community information and started dissemination through Council's website and social media.
- Conducted expressions of interest, selected and finalised stallholder agreements.
- Finalised the staff schedule and started internal and external recruitment of event staff.

In addition to the usual tasks listed above, it is anticipated we would need to significantly alter the plans for each site to meet the requirements of the PHO and ensure the safe ingress and egress of ticketholders.

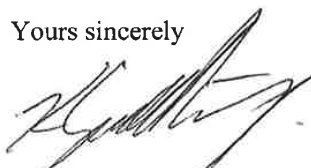
Our regular suppliers for infrastructure, security, ticketing and traffic management have been in contact and have expressed concerns about being able to deliver their services, with changed requirements, for this year.

Given the continued uncertainty about the scale of NYE fireworks, likely attendance numbers, the context of the PHO, the complexity of the detail that needs to be addressed and the very short timeframe now available, North Sydney Council is not in a position to manage our parks and reserves in a COVID-safe manner.

I would appreciate if you could confirm that in taking custodianship of the NYE 2020 event, the NSW Government will also take responsibility for, and management of, the public parks and reserves that are used as vantage points within the North Sydney LGA.

I can be contacted directly on 02 9936 8111 / 0409 969 071 if you would like to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely



Ken Gouldthorp
GENERAL MANAGER