

6.1. MM01 - Managing Blues Point Reserve

The view of Sydney Harbour from Blues Point Reserve is arguably the best harbour view in Sydney. I'm fairly sure I'm not the only person to hold this opinion - a few weeks ago someone used the reserve without Council's permission for a wedding, which placed the bride and groom in front of a panorama that included the Bridge and Opera House.

In the normal course of events this wouldn't warrant a Mayoral Minute, but in this case the happy couple erected two marquees, a wedding arch and 50 chairs to support the event. Council doesn't permit marquees in our parks for private events, as they can damage the grass and our watering systems, so this guerrilla take-over of our park was cheeky and potentially costly to Council.

I've noticed an increase in the commercial use of our parks over the past couple of years. Some, like pop up picnic tables with champagne and flowers brought in to create a romantic place for a proposal or to celebrate an anniversary, just add to the atmosphere in the reserve.

But larger events that annex the space from public use and increase wear and tear on the park, need to be controlled. This will be especially important in the coming few years as areas of open space are taken over by the NSW Government for the construction of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway upgrade.

Blues Point Reserve is under extra pressure at present because the centre of the park is taken up with a work compound for the NSW Government infrastructure works. A large work compound is also taking up the centre of Bradfield Park while Harbour Bridge works are undertaken. The temporary loss of these large areas of open space is having a flow on effect to other foreshore areas such as Quibaree Park and Cremorne Point Reserve.

North Sydney is blessed with numerous parks and reserves along the harbour edge and we want to share them with others. Sydney Harbour belongs to everyone who lives in our city, not just those fortunate enough to live nearby.

But we need to be extra vigilant during this busy construction period to ensure that our parks are well managed and available for everyone to use. I'm sure there are many things we can do. For example, we could review signage and install one sign, preferably an illuminated one, that makes it clear what is and isn't permissible in the park or reserve. We could potentially increase ranger surveillance of popular parks so we can keep a closer eye on how they are being used.

I therefore recommend:

1.THAT the Director of Open Space and Environmental Services prepare a report for Council outlining options to manage Blues Point Reserve and other foreshore parks to ensure they are available for everyone to use.

2.THAT the report include options for improving signage within the parks if needed.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON
MAYOR**