

## **6.2. MM02: Toilet at Hayes Beach**

In February 2018, I prepared a Mayoral Minute recommending a number of actions that would reclaim Hayes Street Beach in Neutral Bay as a swimming beach. These included removing the watercraft abandoned or stored haphazardly on the beach, engaging with the community to find alternative storage options and increasing the frequency of beach cleaning.

I am pleased to say that three years on we have achieved what we set out to do. A shared kayak scheme, initiated by Ms Loretta Moy and run by the local community, now operates from the beach, which is well used for swimming, relaxing by the water and launching small watercraft. When I visited mid-afternoon on 25 January, a warm day with temperatures over 30<sup>0</sup>C, I counted 193 people either on the sand or in the water.

Unfortunately, the Thelma and Louise café is an unintended victim of our success. With no public toilets near the beach, the café receives between 30 and 50 requests a day from swimmers and kayakers asking to use their toilet, which of course the cafe must clean and maintain.

When we first became aware of this problem, the Director of Open Space explored options for installing public toilets nearby. Two options were possible - installing a toilet block on the public land across the road or seeking permission to build one in the heritage structure near the wharf.

Installing our own toilet block was deemed not suitable, as the only appropriate location would have been directly adjacent to private property. Instead, we opened negotiations with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) who own the heritage structure to see whether we could build a toilet within the building.

The structure currently contains a toilet for use by bus drivers, which could not be opened to the general public. On 15 February 2021, I had a fruitful discussion with staff at TfNSW who indicated their support for an additional toilet being construction into the building at Council's cost. I would like to acknowledge the efforts made by the Member for North Shore, Ms Felicity Wilson, and her staff, who have advocated strongly on our behalf to open the door for discussions.

This is an outstanding solution as it reduces the pressure on Thelma and Louise, does not require adding another structure in the limited open space, does not impact neighbouring properties and does not change the aesthetic values of the area. If Council moves quickly on this matter, we could have new toilets in place before the swimming season next summer.

**I therefore recommend:**

**1.THAT** Council writes to the Member for North Shore, Ms Felicity Wilson, thanking her for advocating strongly on our behalf with TfNSW.

**2.THAT** the Director of Open Space and Environmental Services prepares a report for the March meeting of Council outlining the approximate cost of the project, the timeline and process for progressing the work, and the possibility of funding and completing the project in the first quarter of the 2021/2022 financial year so that the new toilet is available for the busy Summer swimming and kayaking season.

**3.THAT** Council writes to Loretta Moy, President of the Kayak Share Club, thanking her for her sustained lobbying for this facility.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON  
MAYOR**