Transport and Regulation.RTranter
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City of Newcastle

13 February 2026

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President
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Dear Lindy

PARKING MANAGEMENT – HARBOUR FORESHORE, STOCKTON

The management of parking within the foreshore areas along the western side of Stockton, adjacent to the Hunter River, involves a range of contributing areas, stakeholders, as well as operational and legislative considerations. The land includes roadways, road related areas (car parks), boat ramps, community buildings, as well as large areas of public reserve. While predominantly a recreational space, the foreshore also provides operational locations, resident property access, and community facilities.

There has been a steady rise in issues related to vehicle use in the area, including long term parking, people residing in vehicles, and camping on public reserve. These matters have become more frequent and complex over time, with distinct changes in the user groups and patterns of behaviour involved.

To help manage this location, there are three key areas that City of Newcastle (CN) is focusing on. These relate to the separate sets of legislation and processes that apply to these different matters:

Road related areas, including car parks, access roads, and road sections

- These areas allow vehicle access and parking and are managed predominantly under the NSW Road Rules and NSW Roads Act.
- Issues relate to long term parking, including persons sleeping in their vehicles for multiple nights. Please note it is not illegal to sleep in a vehicle overnight, if the vehicle is legally parked within the road reserve.
- A key management approach requires the installation of regulatory signage that restricts and controls parking. This was the subject of the recent engagement completed through January, related to the installation of overnight No Parking restrictions in these areas.
- These restrictions will give CN the ability to issue fines for vehicles parking for extended periods and will assist NSW Police in moving on vehicles that are staying within these areas for extended periods. Restrictive signage has also been effective in reducing the recurrence of overnight parking in areas where signage exists.
- Any signposted restrictions will apply to all vehicles within the subject area, resident or visitor. There is no available function to provide exemptions for residents to allow parking contrary to any restriction signage.
- Note that the Local Government Act, and the restrictions on camping, does not apply to roads, the road reserve, or road related areas.

Parks and public reserves, including Crown Land areas

- These open grassed areas are predominantly areas of Crown Land that are managed by CN and are kept as open recreational space.
- These areas fall under the Local Government Act for enforcement, with fines associated for parking vehicles or camping on the public reserve.
- Methods to improve compliance include the installation of barriers and fences to restrict access, and the installation of regulatory signage to assist enforcement within these spaces.
- Any restrictions, or enforcement activity, will apply to all vehicles. This is for both parking on the reserve or camping on the reserve. There is no differentiation between resident or visiting vehicles, and CN is obligated to address any illegal activity that is evident at the time of an inspection.
- There is no proposal at this time to restrict access to the rear or residential properties that currently exists. Noting that if access is provided, it can also be used by visiting vehicles to access the reserve.
- While these restrictions are currently in place, further work will be carried out with CN's Community & Recreation team to improve barriers and regulatory signage to reduce the number of vehicles accessing, parking, and camping on the open reserves.
- Regulatory action in these areas to date has been applied with consideration of the use of these spaces by both residents and visitors, as well as the management and support of vulnerable people identifying as homeless who are residing within these spaces.
- This activity is based on the ongoing requests from residents in the community to reduce the vehicles using the park reserve.

Homeless and vulnerable persons

- There are a number or persons currently located on the Stockton foreshore that have identified as being homeless.
- In these instances, CN Officers then adopt the "Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places" published by the NSW Department of Community and Justice.
- CN continues to work closely with Department of Community and Justices' Assertive Outreach team and NSW Police to assist these persons and find appropriate accommodation.

Proposed Action

The next stage of improving management in the area has focused specifically on the road-related spaces, which was the content of the recent public engagement. Signposted overnight No Parking restrictions are proposed to be provided at the two road related areas being Clyde Street, west of Fullerton Street, and the area between the western end of King Street and the norther end of Hunter Street.

This approach of implementing overnight No Parking restrictions aligns with measures already in place in other areas of Newcastle, including the Newcastle East coastal precinct. It provides general unrestricted access during the day, while providing a clear restriction to remove parking from these spaces overnight.

These signposted restrictions will apply to all vehicles that park within these areas and remove permissible parking from these spaces overnight. These areas are shown in images (a) and (b):



Image (a)



Image (b)

As this process continues, the area will be continue to be monitored to determine whether additional measures are required as the next stage of considerations, such as increased areas of restrictions, installation of further vehicle barriers, or increased regulatory restriction on park land. Any future changes to restrictions or enforcement of the park land spaces will be informed by ongoing activity and monitoring of these spaces. These actions will be considered once the effectiveness of the first stage has been assessed.

To address the specific questions raised under your letter:

The short timeframe (3 weeks) for submissions with a closing date of 27th January 2026, given some residents have been away over the holiday period

The consultation period was extended to cover the month of January, to provide an extended period for people to receive and respond to the engagement. CN received many responses to the engagement, which are currently being assessed. If any person still wishes to make a submission, they are welcome to lodge this via a standard customer enquiry for consideration.

The impact on parking for the residents in the designated zones

As outlined above, restrictions will apply to any vehicle within the space. There is no function available under NSW Legislation that would differentiate between resident vehicles and others within any area (be it road area or park land segment).

Lack of an overarching plan to address the increasing number of long-term campers and rough sleepers along the Ballast Grounds, which is the primary issue for the community

CN has an ongoing operational procedure addressing the issues associated with long term campers and vulnerable persons which is being employed across the city. When looking specifically at the area outlined, CN is taking a staged approach, first focusing on road related areas, following with further works on recreational areas in conjunction with our Community & Recreation team based off ongoing monitoring.

Lack of CN action to enforce existing camping and parking restrictions on Ballast Grounds (Crown Land) particularly between Clyde and Monmouth Streets.

CN has been active within this area for an extended period. As noted above, many of these persons have identified as being homeless, and CN continues to work with NSW Assertive Outreach and NSW Police through the “Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places” published by the NSW Department of Community and Justice. Further information on CN’s approach to Homelessness and Housing Stress can be found on our website here: https://newcastle.nsw.gov.au/community/our-community/housing-stress-and-homelessness

Should you require any further information on this matter please contact me on (02) 4974 2817 or rtranter@ncc.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Ryan Tranter
EXECUTIVE MANAGER TRANSPORT & REGULATION