

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

2021/22 Fees and Charges – New fees Currawong Beach Cottages (Stage 1 of 1)

Impact level: 4

Consultation period: 21 June – 19 July 2021

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1. Summary¹

This report outlines the community and stakeholder engagement conducted as part of the New Fees – Currawong Beach Cottages project conducted from Monday 21 June until Monday 19 July 2021.

Four submissions were received which directly related to the proposed fees on exhibition. A fifth submission, unrelated to the exhibition of the fees was received on private boats accessing Currawong Beach. As this is outside the scope of the exhibition a response has been provided directly to the community member.

Respondents commenting on the accommodation fees for Platypus Cottage and The Lodge (weekly fee) felt that the fees were too high and one also felt discounts should be offered to ratepayers and seniors. A similar sentiment was expressed by a respondent that made a submission on the fee for tennis court hire.

1.1. Key outcomes



Total submissions received

4



Feedback themes

Tennis court fees.

Discounts for ratepayers/seniors.

Accommodation fees.

1.2. How we engaged



Have Your Say

Visitors: 639

Visits: 716

Av. time onsite:
1m13sec



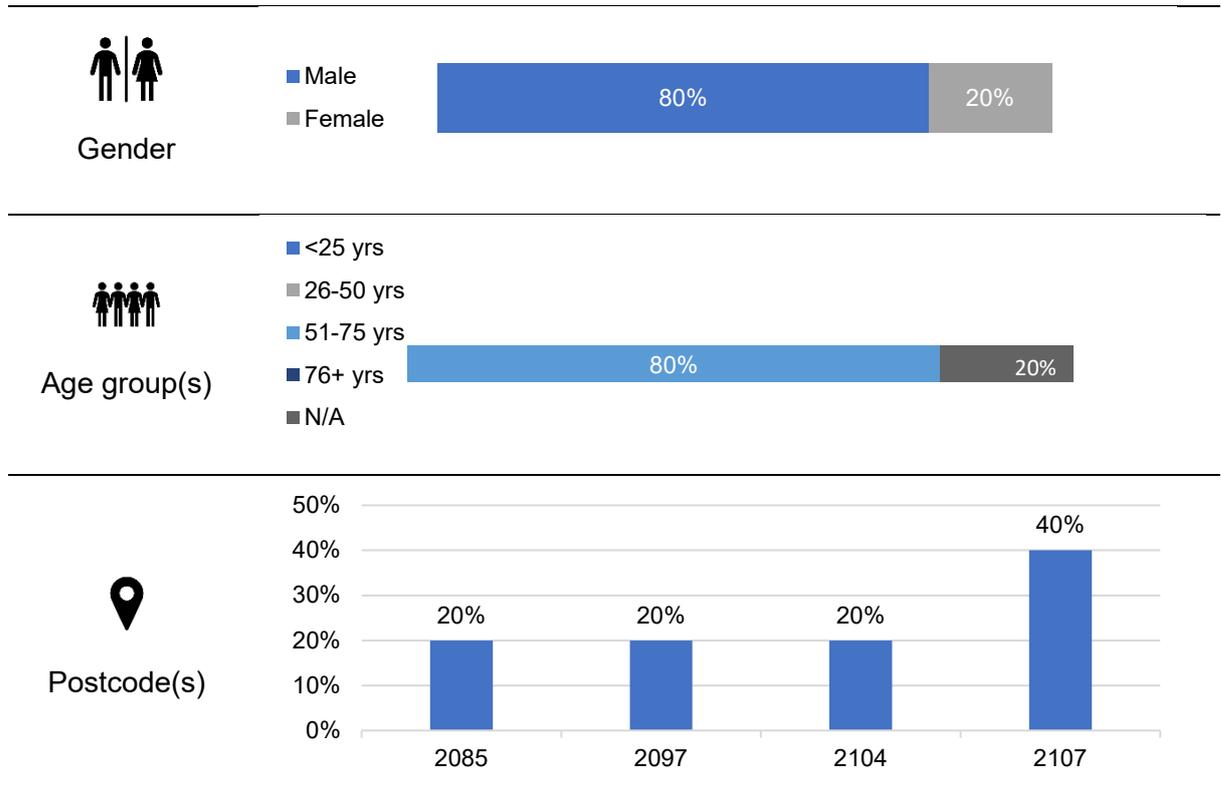
Electronic direct mail (EDM)

Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 2

Distribution: 20,000 subscribers

¹ Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

1.3. Who responded²



2. Background

On 15 June 2021, Council adopted the 2021/22 Fees and Charges and also approved the exhibition of additional fees for accommodation and services at Currawong. In accordance with sections 610F and 705 of the Local Government Act the proposed fees were exhibit for at least 28 days and any submissions received need to be considered by Council before adopting the fees. Details of the submissions and Council’s response are contained in this report.

3. Engagement objectives

- Build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities.
- Provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way.
- Communicate to community and stakeholders how their input was incorporated into the planning and decision making process.

² Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.

4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the New Fees – Currawong Cottages was conducted over a four-week period, from Monday 21 June until Monday 19 July 2021. The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Matrix](#) (2017).

A project page was established on our have Your Say platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format.

The project was primarily promoted through our regular email newsletter (EDM) channels.

Submissions was captured via an online form on the have Your Say project page.

Email and written submissions were also invited.

Support and non-support sentiment was determined through the analysis of qualitative feedback only.

5. Findings

The sentiment expressed across submissions was that pricing for both the accommodation and tennis courts fees were too high and needed to be made more affordable to attract a larger number of guests and users.

Appendix 1: Verbatim submissions and Council's response

Theme	Verbatim submission*	Council's response
Accommodation fees	How were these charges calculated?	Currawong is a unique remote living experience in a secluded, beautiful environment. The prices for accommodation at Currawong have been set in accordance with Council's Pricing Policy. The pricing basis for the accommodation is "Rate of Return" which includes recovering the direct and indirect costs as well as a profit margin. In setting the fees consideration has also been given to similar facilities around NSW.
Accommodation fees	We have stayed at Currawong before the accommodation was renovated. The conclusion we came to was that it was a ripoff. A one night stay \$345 with bring your own sheets and no road access is quite frankly not worth the effort. We were the only people there in October and I feel it is better to have the accommodation busier and a better price might achieve this situation. The price is not value for money!	Currawong is a unique remote living experience in a secluded, beautiful environment. The accommodation, whilst being renovated, is intended to reflect the heritage importance of the site and protect the surrounding natural environment. Prices are set in line with similar facilities around NSW and reflect the direct and indirect costs of providing the accommodation.
Accommodation fees	Provide a substantial discount for Northern Beaches Council ratepayers (and Seniors) when booking.	Currawong State Park is for all residents in NSW and Council are not able to offer discounts to ratepayers or seniors.
Tennis court fee	\$15/hour for the court hire is an excessive fee when typically its just the kids having a play.	The Tennis Court hire fee is not applicable to overnight guests. The fees for court hire are at a reduced rate in comparison to other Council Community Tennis Court Facilities.
Boat access to Currawong Beach	The beach should be made available to all boat owners to use.	This matter is outside the scope of the exhibition. However, the response below was provided to the writer. Currawong Beach is accessible via ferry, barge or water taxi.

Theme	Verbatim submission*	Council's response
		<p>Access to the beach via boat for Day Visitors is not prohibited. Small boats can be beached however visitors are asked to come via the wharf where possible due to the sensitive sea grass on approach to the beach. Anchoring is not permitted in the area due to numerous submarine cables as per the map on Transport NSW Website https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/documents/maritime/usingwaterways/maps/boating-maps/9a-pittwater.pdf. Day visitors are invited to picnic at the north end of the beach.</p>

* Personal details have been redacted where possible. Spelling and grammatical errors have been amended only where misinterpretation or offence may be caused.

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