Vehicles on Beaches Policy

1 Purpose

Beaches and dunal ecosystems are highly valued by the local community and the many visitors to the Coffs Harbour region. Additionally, they:

- Are integral to the lifestyle of Coffs Harbour
- Are a significant driver of tourism
- Support a diverse range of recreational activities
- Contribute to the overall amenity and visual appeal of the region
- Are vital ecological resources, providing habitat to a variety of native flora and fauna as well as protecting terrestrial areas from coastal erosion processes
- Are, North of the Harbour, part of the Solitary Islands Marine Park

Improper use can compromise this valuable resource. Projected population increase in the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area will place increased pressures on our beaches, with higher levels of competing use and greater potential for conflict between users.

This policy seeks to establish a framework that applies to vehicle use on Coffs Harbour Local Government Area beaches, with the aims of:

- Establishing a consistent approach to regulating beach access by vehicles on beaches
- Protecting the coastal environment
- Ensuring the safety of all beach users
- Allowing for sustainable and equitable recreational use of the beaches

The Policy is supported by guidelines that provide restrictions on which beaches access is permitted and how users must conduct themselves on these permitted beaches.

2 Background and Legislative Requirements

The following details the background and legislative requirements of this policy:

- This policy applies to all beaches within the Coffs Harbour City Local Government area including those adjacent to National Parks
- Notwithstanding this policy, use of beaches by vehicles is still subject to all the normal road rules and enforcements that apply on public roads
- Council will regulate access to the beaches under Section 632 of the Local Government Act 1993 via designated access points and in accordance with the terms of the regulatory signage and this policy
- The Council will, in implementing this policy liaise with the NSW Police, Department of Primary Industry - Fisheries, Department of Industry - Crown Lands, Solitary Islands Marine Park, Office of Environment and Heritage (NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service) and the Aboriginal Land Council to ensure the effective management of vehicles on beaches

3 Policy

3.1 Recreational Beach Access

1. 4WD Vehicles are permitted on beaches within the Coffs Harbour LGA, as defined by way of maps in Section 9 to this Policy.

2. All Vehicles, other than those with a fishing license are prohibited at all times on:
a) Any beach, or part thereof, not specifically identified as being accessible by vehicle under this policy as defined in Section 9 to this policy.
b) Any dune or beach area that is vegetated.
c) Areas of endangered species habitat or nesting areas, as marked by NPWS or Crown Lands.
d) Any closed beach.
e) 2WD and all other forms of motor vehicles are prohibited from all beaches with the exception of those vehicles covered by the provisions of Section 3.2 and to launch boats.
f) Vehicles must access via designated access points and abide by the Guidelines for 4WD Users on Beaches in Section 3.7 of this policy.
g) ATV's displaying an RMS mobility parking permit (for people with a disability) are permitted on beaches defined in Section 9 to this policy.

3.2 Exemptions
This Policy applies to all vehicles accessing beaches other than:

1. Emergency Services personnel during rescues, patrols or exercises authorised by Coffs Harbour City Council.
3. Note that exempt vehicles under this section are still required to abide by the Guidelines for 4WD Users on Beaches in Section 3.7 of this policy.

3.3 Commercial Fishers
1. 4WD Vehicles are permitted on beaches within the Coffs Harbour LGA, as defined by way of maps in Section 9 to this Policy.
2. Commercial Fishers are permitted to access beaches in accordance with the Fisheries Management Act 1994 and Regulations, and the management rules of the Solitary Islands Marine Park.
3. Vehicles must access via designated access points and abide by the Guidelines for 4WD Users on Beaches in Section 3.7 of this policy.

3.4 Special Occasional Use
1. Council may give consideration to the organisers of sporting, cultural or other special events to take nominated vehicles onto beaches not permitted in Section 9, with Council’s prior written approval. A marine park permit from the Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DPI) – Fisheries, is also required for activities within the Solitary Islands Marine Park.
2. Applications for special occasional beach usage must be made to Council in writing at least 21 days prior to the time of the requested beach access. Applications will be considered on merit having regard for the public interest.
3. Vehicles must access via designated access points and abide by the Guidelines for 4WD Users on Beaches in Section 3.7 of this policy.
3.5 Filming on Beaches

1. Where approval is provided for filming activities on Beaches, approval may be granted for vehicles other than 4WD vehicles to access the beach. A marine park permit from DPI Fisheries is also required for activities within the Solitary Islands Marine Park.

2. Vehicles used in association with approved filming must abide by the Guidelines for 4WD Users on Beaches in Section 3.7 of this policy, and the conditions of Council’s approval for the filming activity. In the event of an inconsistency, the terms of the filming approval will prevail.

3.6 Closure of 4WD Vehicle Access

1. Council and other government agencies may close 4WD vehicle access to beaches in carrying out functions such as beach management, emergency management, monitoring of wildlife, safety and general operations as required.

   Council also reserves the right to close a beach when there are known sea turtle nests or bird nests where vehicles may impact the nests.

3.7 Guidelines for 4WD Users on Beaches

1. Vehicles must use officially constructed beach access tracks when entering and exiting the beach.

2. Vehicles are to drive below the high tide mark whenever possible and, during high tide, drive as close to the high tide mark as possible.

3. Driving on dunal areas is strictly prohibited.

4. The maximum vehicle speed is 25 km/h within 100 meters of pedestrians and beach users and 50 km/h at other times.

5. Vehicles accessing beaches must be registered and their drivers must hold a valid driver’s licence. Laws relating to drug and alcohol use on NSW roads are applicable to beaches in the Coffs Harbour LGA.

6. Vehicles using designated beaches must park responsibly away from dunes, vegetation or threatened species areas.

7. Enquiries regarding vehicle access on non-designated beaches for a special purpose should be directed to Council’s Strategic Asset Management Group, in writing. Commercial fishing access on non-designated beaches their designated permit conditions.

8. Ultra-light aircraft and motorised hang gliders are prohibited on all beaches within Coffs Harbour City area and offenders will be subject to on the spot fines.

4 Enforcement

The following persons are authorised to enforce this Policy:

- Officers of the NSW Police Force
- Authorised Officers of Council
- NPWS Officers in respect of North Beach (part of Bongil Bongil National Park).

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1 Beach users are encouraged to report sighting of shorebird nesting and marine turtles to NPWS to their office at Coffs Harbour T: 02 66502900.
5 Definitions

Motor Vehicle: has the same meaning as motor vehicle under the Road Transport Act.

Registered: is a motor vehicle duly registered by the road authority for that vehicle's state of origin.

4 Wheel Drive (4WD) is a form of drivetrain capable of providing power to all wheels of a 2 axle vehicle simultaneously and includes all wheel drive motor vehicles.

ATV: is a three or 4-wheel vehicle that travels on low-pressure tires, with a seat that is straddled by the operator, along with handlebars for steering control.

Emergency Services: refers to any recognised government or community group providing disaster relief, including, but not limited to Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service, Police, Ambulance, NPWS, Marine Rescue, Surf Life Saving Service and the like.

Beach: means the non-vegetated area below the fore dune extending to the waterline.

Commercial Fisher: means a person who holds a commercial fishing licence under the Fisheries Management Act 1994 authorised to operate in the Ocean Hauling or Estuary General hand gathering share managed fisheries.

Dunal Area: means the vegetated area comprising the fore and hind dunes.

NPWS means the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Beach Access means the access provided to the beach by way of public road or land under the control of Council, or another public land management authority.

DPI means NSW Government Department of Primary Industries which includes Fisheries.

6 Key Responsibilities

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<td>Mayor</td>
<td>Council</td>
<td>To lead councillors in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Manager</td>
<td>Executive</td>
<td>To lead staff (either directly or through delegated financial authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy and procedures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
<td>All Directorates</td>
<td>To communicate, implement and comply with this policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Leader</td>
<td>Sustainable Infrastructure</td>
<td>To facilitate review of this Policy, the development and implementation of the Beach Access Improvements Program, ensuring community is informed through media releases and Council website and advise relevant Council officers about changes to this Policy.</td>
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<td>Strategic Asset</td>
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<td>Management</td>
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7 References

- Local Government Act 1993 and Regulations
- Crown Lands Act 1989 and Regulations
8 Details of Approval and revision

- Approval date: 23/04/2020
- Responsible Section: Asset Strategies
- Superseded policies/procedures:
- Next review date: 26/09/2022

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9 Appendix - Driving on Beaches - Maps of permitted driving areas
Coffs Harbour City Council

Vehicles on Beaches Policy
Station Creek

Vehicles Prohibited

Vehicles Permitted in Compliance with NSW National Parks Rules

Vehicles Permitted for Launching and Retrieval of Boats

No Parking

Legend:
- Vehicles Prohibited
- Vehicles Permitted in Compliance with NSW National Parks Rules
- Vehicles Permitted for Launching and Retrieval of Boats
- No Parking
COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Vehicles on Beaches Policy
Woolgoolga Beach

LEGEND

VEHICLES PROHIBITED

VEHICLES PERMITTED

VEHICLES PERMITTED FOR LAUNCHING AND RETRIEVAL OF BOATS
NO PARKING

WOOLGoolga BEACH

WOOLGoolga
Vehicles on Beaches Policy
Woolgoolga Back Beach

LEGEND

VEHICLES PROHIBITED

VEHICLES PERMITTED

VEHICLES PERMITTED FOR LAUNCHING AND RETRIEVAL OF BOATS

VEHICULAR ACCESS POINT ONTO BEACH
COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Vehicles on Beaches Policy
Hearnes Lake Beach

LEGEND

VEHICLES PROHIBITED

VEHICLES PERMITTED

VEHICLES PERMITTED FOR LAUNCHING AND RETRIEVAL OF BOATS

NO PARKING
VEHICLES PROHIBITED

LEGEND

VEHICLES PERMITTED

SANDY BEACH

COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Vehicles on Beaches Policy
Sandy Beach

ACCESS AND PARKING PERMITTED FOR LAUNCHING AND RETRIEVAL OF BOATS

VEHICULAR ACCESS POINT ONTO BEACH

SANDY-BEACH
COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Vehicles on Beaches Policy
Boambee Beach

**Boambee Beach**

**Legend**

- **Red**: Vehicles Prohibited
- **Yellow**: Vehicles Permitted
- **Blue**: Vehicles Permitted for Launching and Retrieval of Boats

**Jetty Beach**

**Vehicular Access Point Onto Beach**

**Boambee Beach**

**Legend**

- **Red**: Vehicles Prohibited
- **Yellow**: Vehicles Permitted
- **Blue**: Vehicles Permitted for Launching and Retrieval of Boats

**Jetty Beach**

**Vehicular Access Point Onto Beach**

**Boambee Beach**
Vehicles on Beaches Policy
Sawtell Beach

VEHICLES PROHIBITED

VEHICLES PERMITTED

ACCESS AND PARKING PERMITTED FOR LAUNCHING AND RETRIEVAL OF BOATS

LEGEND
COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Vehicles on Beaches Policy
North Beach

LEGEND

VEHICLES PROHIBITED

VEHICLES PERMITTED IN COMPLIANCE WITH NSW NATIONAL PARKS RULES

VEHICLES PERMITTED FOR LAUNCHING AND RETRIEVAL OF BOATS

NO PARKING

ACCESS VIA BELLINGEN COUNCIL
Regulations for 4WD Vehicles

1. No Driving on sand dunes.
2. Registered vehicles only.
3. Speed limit as indicated on entry sign.
4. Pedestrians have right of way.
5. Vehicles are prohibited in red areas as indicated on entry signs to beach, and as indicated on this map.
6. No permit required.

- 4WD Vehicles Permissible
- All Vehicles Prohibited (Excepting Emergency Services)
- Area Controlled by National Parks & Wildlife Service NSW
- Adjoining Local Government Area

PENALTIES APPLY FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

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