
Car Share Parking

Discussion Paper

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1. ISSUE.

The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) has facilitated the preparation of this car share parking discussion paper. The development of this paper resulted from requests by a number of Councils to provide exclusive on-street parking spaces for vehicles associated with car share schemes. This discussion paper deals with the requirements necessary for potential implementation of such schemes on local roads managed by Councils.

2. BACKGROUND.

A number of Councils in the Sydney Metropolitan area are considering car share schemes which would involve providing dedicated on-street parking spaces by providing exclusive spaces for car share vehicles. The current scheme requests are for commercially operated schemes, however elsewhere worldwide not for profit car share clubs have been established to provide the same transport option.

Two companies, GoGet (previously Newtown CarShare) and Charter Drive, are commercial organisations which operate car share schemes in Sydney. These schemes principally operate in the inner city suburbs – including Newtown, Marrickville, Enmore, Erskineville, Glebe, Surry Hills, Marrickville, Kings Cross, Darlinghurst, Kirribilli, Bondi Beach and Bondi Junction.

The issue of providing dedicated on-street car parking spaces for car share vehicles was addressed at the Roads & Traffic Authority/Local Government Liaison Committee. The Committee established a working party comprising representatives of the Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA), Local Government & Shires Association (LGSA), the inner city Councils of Sydney, North Sydney, Marrickville, Leichhardt and the NSW Police.

The Working Party suggested that Councils consider the provision of dedicated on-street car share parking on a trial basis. In addition, the RTA agreed to develop a Technical Direction, which would indicate the guidelines to be used and the issues to be considered for dedicated on-street car share parking.

By their very nature, car share schemes with dedicated on-street parking are not appropriate for heavily trafficked roads.

3. SALIENT FEATURES OF CAR SHARING.

- Car share schemes are generally operated commercially, however non-profit clubs exist throughout Europe and the Americas.
- Users become members and pay an initial joining fee and purchase a suitable user plan based on their expected vehicle usage, which may be for a few hours, a few days or even a few months depending on their needs and requirements.

- Access to the ‘pool’ vehicle/s is obtained only by a member making a booking with the car share provider. The member then picks up the vehicle from a nominated location and uses it for various purposes such as private use (holiday, social visits, shopping etc.), business use or for commuting.

4. BENEFITS OF CAR SHARING.

The benefits of car sharing are said to include:

- Car sharing allows people who have an occasional need for a car to gain access to a pool or fleet of cars without the need to purchase and garage the car permanently.
- Car sharing suits people who don’t drive to work, a family that already owns a car and sometimes needs a second car and people living and working in the city that only need a car for occasional use.
- There is no need to own a car and incur costs such as registration, insurance, maintenance and running costs although the member’s car share fee covers part of these costs.
- Car share schemes may represent an environmentally sustainable alternative to car ownership for inner city residents and businesses.
- They have the potential to reduce the use of private cars for people making incidental trips as a result of owning a car.
- There is also the potential for a reduction in the number of car parking spaces within residential developments as a consequence of the possible reduction in the number of private car owners.
- Provision of designated spaces for car share vehicles in off-street car parks whether privately owned or council controlled may greatly benefit the members of the scheme and may also free up limited on-street parking spaces for other road users.
- Community benefits may exist where public transport access is difficult or non-existent, particularly if a car is needed for shopping for bulky items, for late night social visits/entertainment centres and visiting doctors and hospitals.

5. CURRENT LEGISLATION.

- Members of the car share scheme whilst using the car share vehicles are not eligible under the current legislation or the RTA “Permit Parking” manual to participate in a Permit Parking Scheme, that would allow them to park the cars on-street without charge or time restrictions in their area.

Permit parking schemes under the current legislation are operating successfully in New South Wales (NSW), particularly in various parts of the metropolitan areas in Sydney, as well as in other areas in NSW. They cater for a number of essential users in the community namely Residents, Resident's Visitors, Business premises and Commuters.

- Councils can authorise preferential parking zones under the current RTA policies and in accordance with the RTA manual "Guidelines for Traffic Facilities". However, dedicated on-street parking facilities can only be provided to emergency vehicles (Ambulance, Fire Services, Police Services, Doctors and SES) and vehicles belonging to Consulates and Australia Post. In exceptional cases dedicated on-street parking facilities can be provided for certain Government vehicles and some community groups (Disabled persons, Wedding and Funeral operators) who require parking close to their place of work/operation.

There is no provision under the current legislation or the RTA policy dealing with 'Preferential Parking Zones' to allocate dedicated on-street car parking spaces, or to provide exemption for car share vehicles, from on-street or off-street parking restrictions.

- There is no "legal" definition currently available in NSW Legislation for sign display purposes and consequent enforcement requirements.

It appears this is also the case in Victoria. Victorian local Council's are using "Permit Zone" legislation allowing the Council to "authorise" vehicles to use the parking spaces. NSW did not adopt the generic "Permit Zone" legislation under the Australian Road Rules due to its existing detailed permit parking scheme legislation.

Possible definitions of car share that could be used are:

- A car share vehicle is a vehicle made available for use by members of a car share scheme.
- A member of a car share scheme is a person who has paid a joining fee to become a member of a car share scheme.
- A car share scheme is a scheme which provides access to vehicles for its members. A car share scheme does not have casual users of its vehicles as is the case with car hire or car rental companies.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCILS.

- Providing dedicated on-street car parking spaces for car share vehicles may give rise to increased pressure on Permit Parking Schemes due to the continuing high demand for a reduced number of parking spaces.
- Providing dedicated on-street parking spaces for car share vehicles is allocating valuable on-street parking spaces for exclusive commercial benefit. Community consultation is essential to achieving an equitable balance of car space allocation. Thus careful consideration needs to be given before Councils give car share schemes exclusive access to the public asset.

- Any move to provide dedicated on-street parking spaces to commercially operated car share vehicles may open the door for similar private car rental groups and car pooling operators to seek allocation of such dedicated on-street car parking spaces for their vehicles. In the event of this occurring, Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) requirements will have to be addressed by the Councils.
- Car share schemes may have some impact on both residential and commercial developments due to their influence on the supply and demand for car parking spaces.
- Administration of a car share scheme will require the authorisation of each vehicle which will be permitted to use the dedicated on-street parking spaces. Further, to assist with enforcement, display of a “sticker” (or some other form of identification) on the vehicle will be required to indicate that the vehicle can legally use a dedicated “car share vehicle” parking space.
- Enforcement will require the easy identification of a “car share vehicle”.

7. REVIEW OF OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE.

In cities like Amsterdam, Edinburgh, Hamburg and Vienna car share schemes have been implemented mainly in medium density residential developments either close to city centres where public transport services are concentrated or along major public transport corridors.

In some cities the car share scheme members are given discounts on public transport services as a further incentive to attract the public to join the car share schemes.

In Edinburgh parking for car share vehicle is often provided in off-street car parks and on-site within developments. In some not very busy locations on-street parking spaces are provided with appropriate signage.

Due to under utilisation of dedicated car spaces and financial difficulties, dedicated car share spaces have been reduced in Edinburgh and Vienna.

8. REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN EXPERIENCE.

• New South Wales.

In NSW a few metropolitan councils have investigated “car share” schemes as an alternative transport mode.

Marrickville Council has endorsed a proposal to implement three dedicated on-street car parking spaces in Federation and Metropolitan Roads for Council authorised car share vehicles within a “No Parking” zone. This will provide parking without any restrictions.

North Sydney and Waverley Councils have also implemented ‘trial’ on-street parking schemes.

Sydney City Council has also received a representation from a car share company requesting allocation of dedicated on-street parking spaces for their vehicle in the council area.

In November 2004, the City of Sydney resolved that Council agree in principle to the allocation of on-street parking spaces for car share vehicles subject to a number of conditions which included mainly (i) satisfactory outcome of community consultation on the car share proposal and to conduct a trial for a limited period of 2 years (reviewed after 12 months), (ii) council place the proposal on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days to seek comments from the public and (iii) consideration and agreement to the proposal by the Sydney Traffic Committee.

In NSW, the view has been expressed that car share vehicles and taxis have a common public transport objective, thus both types of transport should have access to dedicated on-street car spaces. However, there is a significant difference in that any taxi can pick up or set down passengers in Taxi Zones and any member of the public may hire a taxi, while car share vehicles can only be used by members of the scheme.

- **Victoria.**

A majority of Local Governments in Victoria have a “Sustainable Environmental Strategy 2000” as the basis of the commitment to their communities for environmental sustainability into the future, which includes transport and alternative transport modes.

Some Local Governments in Victoria are using “Permit Zone” legislation to authorise the use of “Permit Zones” by car share vehicles.

Melbourne City Council has recently adopted the Carlton Access and Parking Strategy for Carlton. Carlton was selected as the first area in the City of Melbourne to have an Access and Parking Strategy developed. The Carlton Access and Parking Strategy outlined a range of recommendations for future improvements of infrastructure and strategies to support public transport use, walking and cycling. These initiatives are expected to improve the mobility choices for people living and working in Carlton.

One of the initiatives of the Carlton Access and Parking Strategy was to "work with other organisations to confirm the market feasibility for establishing a Car Sharing Club within Carlton". The feasibility of the market will be established through the Council’s Carlton Car Sharing Program. Council has plans to provide car parking spaces for car share vehicles and issue special parking permits.

The City of Darebin in Victoria has introduced a car share scheme within a Permit Zone and also with a unique identifier for such vehicles.

9. ADMINISTRATION/OPERATION OF CAR SHARE SCHEMES.

Local Government will need to administer all applications for dedicated car share parking. Councils are ideally situated to ensure that guidelines produced are adhered to. Councils are representative of the local community and will need to determine community opinion through consultation as part of the process. Councils will also need to develop their own criteria for car share schemes covering issues such as any restriction on the number of spaces and preferred or restricted areas.

The operation of car share schemes can be undertaken a number of ways. The schemes can be operated directly by Councils who can either undertake the entire scheme using their own staff and assets or they can engage a car share company to operate the scheme on their behalf. Councils would need to determine the costs involved in operating the schemes in this manner. Alternatively, Councils can approve private operators (either profit or non-profit) to run the schemes without any input from Council following initial approval. The most appropriate means of implementing a car share scheme is a decision for Councils.

Councils also assess Development Applications which potentially could include car share arrangements for large residential and commercial developments as seen from experiences internationally.

The provision of dedicated car share parking spaces will be restricted to local roads and road related areas if resolution is finalised. By their very nature, car share schemes with dedicated on-street parking, are not appropriate for heavily trafficked roads.

10. PRIORITY OF CAR PARKING SPACES.

Bus and taxi zones, loading facility requirements and parking for people with disabilities will always be the first users allocated on-street parking spaces. In high demand residential districts, resident parking schemes would be next to have space allocated. Therefore car share provisions would need to be provided from unallocated spaces or from reallocating spaces within a resident parking permit area.

Councils would be required to formalise an “On-street Parking” document reflecting generic categories of land use (i.e. shopping strips, residential, other streets) to assist any discussion with the local community.

11. OTHER ASSOCIATED ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION.

- **Process for identifying car share sites.**

Council is best suited in identifying community needs through development of a Transport Access and Parking Plan. However a commercial car share organisation or a group of residents may commence the process prior to Council developing such a plan.

Advertising.

There should be no form of advertising associated with a car share scheme placed on the infrastructure components or elements of the scheme (i.e. parking signs).

- **Reporting on Performance of Scheme.**

Council should ensure any scheme has met community expectations by ensuring appropriate reporting on usage. It is envisaged that Council would require a Performance Plan which details Customer Service and Operational details. Approved termination provisions need to be considered.

- **Benefits of Car Share need Quantifying.**

Car share schemes are intended to provide an environmental alternate transport option but due to its early stages in Australia very little data is available to quantify this type of stated benefit. Efforts should be made to justify commercial use of public space to the community through Council and other Government Agencies.

- **Destination parking spaces.**

This discussion paper is considering the provision of exclusive on-street parking for car share vehicles at their “origin” only. This addresses the need to have a single fixed location to enable the next user to simply and quickly find the vehicle, which may not be the case if the previous driver was forced to find any available parking space.

It is not considered appropriate to provide dedicated on-street parking at the vehicle’s destination, which would encourage vehicle trips to areas of high demand and limited on-street parking such as the Sydney CBD.

12. OPTIONS.

Three options for consideration are:

- a) Restrict car share parking to off-street only (road related area).
- b) Introduce “Car Share” permit parking Legislation for road and road related areas.
- c) Provide an exemption under the RTA “Preferential Parking Zones” Policy for road and road related areas.

All three options have basic issues that require resolution prior to any implementation considerations. These are Sign Display, Enforcement and Funding. Option C has the further issue of prioritisation of on-street car share parking requirements in relation to other high priority demands for parking.

- **Sign Display.**

Following is a sign design appropriate to current NSW Legislation. This is for discussion purposes only.



The necessary sign components include (i) Council Name (ii) wording “Authorised Car Share Vehicles Excepted” and (iii) an easily recognisable locality.

The locality could be a street name, Council car park or “Zone” (as shown in example).

Road marking associated with the allocated spaces should be considered. This would include the marking of the bay(s) and possible inclusion of “car share” stencilling.

Authorisation of the signs and markings would be required to pass through the normal Local Traffic Committee process.

- **Enforcement.**

Enforcement of car share parking is the responsibility of Council.

Any vehicle parked in an allocated car share space must be easily recognisable as conforming to the sign displayed. The vehicle must display a fixed annual Council “sticker” (includes Council “logo”). The “sticker” is issued to the car share organisation (or club) and would need to include the Registration Number of the vehicle the “sticker” is to be affixed to.

The “sticker” must also identify the locality which allows the vehicle to park in only the space(s) nominated. If two or more areas of allocated space occur within one street then both sites need to be identifiable as separate localities to enforcement agencies.

The “sticker” is to be renewable annually and adhered to the vehicle – to limit misuse.

- **Funding.**

The RTA’s Traffic Facility Block Grant funds are not to be utilised for signposting of car share schemes.

The cost of approval for these schemes should be recoverable by Council from the applicant.

Also the costs for installation of any signs and markings should be recoverable by Council from the Applicant. While the annual review and reissuing of an annual “sticker” should also be recoverable from the Applicant as an administration charge.

12.1 ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS.

The above three options have been assessed as follows:

Common Features / Issues:

- “Car share” will require a definition.
- Councils will need to determine criteria for car share schemes in their area.
- Councils will need to administer all scheme applications.
- Councils will need to determine the best method of operating the schemes.

Specific Features / Issues:

Option a) **Restrict car share parking to off street (road related areas).**

- Sign display will need to conform to ASI 742 and NSW Regulatory Sign requirements.
- Signs and markings installation and maintenance will be the responsibility of Council (but may be funded by the Applicant).
- Timeframe for implementation: Immediate

Option b) **Introduce “Car share” Permit Parking Legislation.**

- A new permit (such as ‘Car Share Permit’) will be required under Part 6 – ‘Parking permits and mobility parking scheme authorities’ of the Regulation. This will authorise permit holders to park their vehicles without charge or time restrictions in a parking space on a road or road related area (on-street or off-street).
- Car share vehicles would have to compete with other road users for parking.
- Sign display will need to conform to the RTA’s Permit Parking guidelines.
- The RTA would need to amend its Permit Parking guidelines for introduction and uniformity. As an interim measure the RTA would release guidelines using its Technical Direction process.
- Councils would need to ensure local community consultation is undertaken.
- Signs and markings installation and maintenance will be the responsibility of Council (but may be funded by the Applicant).
- Signs and markings for the scheme must be approved by Council and pass through the normal LTC process. This shall ensure RTA guidelines are followed, and outcomes which are acceptable to the community.
- Timeframe for implementation: 6 - 12 months.

Option c) **Provide an exemption under RTA “Preferential Parking Zones” Policy.**

- An exemption may be granted to car share vehicles under the current RTA ‘Preferential Parking Zones’ policy and the Regulation governing ‘No Parking’ zones. i.e. “No Parking XXX Council Authorised Car Share Vehicles Excepted (locality)”.

- Amendment to legislation is not required.
- Car share vehicles may have to compete with road users who only park in the zone for loading and unloading purposes for a very short duration of 2 minutes (“No Parking” provisions).
- Sign display will need to conform to ASI742 and NSW Regulatory Sign requirements.
- RTA would provide guidelines for introduction and uniformity.
- Council will need to ensure community consultation is undertaken.
- Signs and markings installation and maintenance will be the responsibility of Council (but funded by the Applicant).
- Signs and markings for the scheme must be approved by Council and pass through the normal LTC process. This shall ensure RTA guidelines are followed, and outcomes which are acceptable to the community.
- Priority will be required for other high demand parking e.g. permit parking, loading zones, taxi zones, disabled parking etc
- Timeframe for implementation: approximately 3 months.

13. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCILS BUT NOT DISCUSSED IN THIS PAPER.

- Application costs.
- Administration costs.
- Local Government Act requirements.
- Other legislative requirements.
- “ACCC” issues regarding competition rules.
- Insurance liabilities for Council.
- Community consultation requirement by Applicant and/or Council.
- Council Financial or Operational Role in a Car Share Program.

14. CONCLUSION.

To further facilitate the introduction of Car Sharing Programs the RTA is seeking comment from interested stakeholders and members of the public on the issues raised in this Discussion Paper.

15. SUBMISSIONS.

Written submissions should be forwarded no later than 5:00pm on Friday 2 March 2007. Submissions may be mailed to:

General Manager, Traffic Management
Roads & Traffic Authority
PO Box K198,
HAYMARKET NSW 1240

or emailed to:

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