

# Wamberal Community Group



## Submission to the Central Coast Council opposing the sale of these community lands

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*79A Kalakau Avenue, LOT 318 DP 225178, Forresters Beach*

*79B Kalakau Avenue, LOT 319 DP 225178 Forresters Beach (also known as Lots 318 and 319 Bluewave Crescent)*

*83 Brisbane Avenue, LOT 195 DP 9894 Umina Beach*

*85 Brisbane Avenue, LOT 196 DP 9894 Umina Beach*

*22A Delaware Road, LOT 22 DP 29443 Niagara Park*

*32A Dover Road, LOT 25 DP 26468 Wamberal (Corner of Dover & Lakeview Roads - Benjamin Parker Reserve)*

*1 Hely Street (Corner of Fielder and Hely), LOT 1 DP 17393 West Gosford*

*6 Isis Street, LOT 46 DP 231546 Wyoming*

*12 Jerribin Street, LOT 8 DP 246234 Wyoming*

*2 Kateena Avenue, LOT 192 DP 237499 Tascott*

*50 Wells Street, LOT 6 SEC 23 DP 56797 East Gosford*

*40A George Street, LOT 1 DP 996535 East Gosford*

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## Introduction

The position of the Wamberal Community Group is that the Central Coast Council has failed to make the case to support the sale of the community playgrounds, parks and reserves listed by the former Gosford City Council.

The processes and reasoning of the former Gosford City Council has been proven to be so fundamentally flawed and totally unsupported by any evidence that the sale of these lands can no longer proceed without provoking serious reputational loss to the Central Coast Council.

Further, any sale of these lands would be a net detriment to the community in terms of amenity and financial loss as well as the loss of trust by the community in the Central Coast Council. Council must honestly and diligently pursue the best interests of residents through sound analysis and evidence-based decision making.

This submission addresses the following areas of concern:

1. the failures of the public participation process
2. Council's refusal to provide information to support the sale of community lands
3. the fundamental probity and trust issues that are a legacy of the previous Gosford City Council
4. the failure by the Gosford City Council to consider and analyse appropriate evidence before making its decisions
5. the characteristics of the Benjamin Parker Reserve as a case study for all these parks demonstrating why the decision making process by Gosford Council was flawed from the start and consequently the sale process must be abandoned and the reserve retained and redeveloped as a community asset.

As the passage of time has revealed, the decision Gosford City Council made was based on errors, misinformation and an astonishing absence of evidence-based decision-making or analysis. Aggravating the situation is the banal attempts to paper over the massive disquiet about the sale of these parks.

In short, the process has been a failure and must be abandoned.





## Best practice in consultation or basic failure to inform

*"Using meaningless participation as a facade to cover over disagreement merely clogs up conflict, creating a dam of resentment, which spills over in the form of increasing litigation, loss of trust in politicians and administrators, and poor planning outcomes,"* The Hon. Robert Stokes, MP  
Minister for Planning

This statement perfectly sums up the problems facing the new Central Coast Council in carrying on with the decision from Gosford City Council to sell community parks.

Mr. Ian Reynolds has stated that he wants Council to adopt the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) framework for consultation. Based on the evidence, Mr Reynolds has an enormous task ahead.

The lowest step in the IAP2 spectrum is to inform. IAP2 defines inform as:

*To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.*

By any measure, it is self-evident that Council has failed to achieve this most elementary level of public participation.

Council has not provided information to assist the community to understand the problem: nor made the case that there is a real problem that can only be addressed by selling community assets.

Council has not provided information about alternative courses of action, opportunities or solutions.

Gosford City Council hid its decision to sell these parks on page 103 of a PDF document that was not compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 to level AA as mandated by both the Australian Government and the NSW Government. This limited the opportunity for the public to become aware of this issue which was further compounded when Gosford City Council only gave five days notice before passing the resolution to sell the community's parks, playgrounds and reserves.

Exacerbating Gosford City Council's inappropriate behaviour, was the failure to release a media release on this important issue of public importance despite having an efficient media unit easily capable of undertaking this task. Their media unit has demonstrated that it is capable of releasing 40 media releases per month so it is well within their capacity to undertake a simple information only media release, notice or statement on this issue. The failure to do so further reduced Council's credibility.



The so-called land strategy is a strategy in name only: there is no publically available strategy and despite repeated requests, it has never been released.

When pressed to list the details of our community lands on their website, the then CEO of Gosford City Council advised Councillors that it would cost over \$290,000 to do so. This amount could comfortably pay for a complex major corporate website yet all that was required by Council was to use existing functionality within their content management system to provide information to the community about their community parks. The current information on website about the land sale strategy is nothing short of pathetic.

When Gosford City Council eventually put up a single page, they incorrectly titled it the 'Land strategy' page. This misnaming of page titles drastically affects search engine optimisation and the chance of the correct page being returned high up on any search engine results page. This limits the ability of the community to locate the correct information. The question Council needs to answer is was this deliberate or just bad management. Sadly, within the context of Gosford City Councils negative behavior towards providing information about the sale of these community parks, many would consider the behavior deliberate.

The page was also posted below child care centres and cemeteries in their website information architecture. Council need to explain what a child care centre or a cemetery has got in common with selling community parks, playgrounds and reserves because based, on the correct semantic structure for the Gosford City Council website, the sale of public parks, playgrounds and reserves should sit with "Parks, Playgrounds and Reserves." This is self-evident and should have been rectified.

Still this important nexus of community assets, potential windfall profits, probity and corporate risk was never on the Central Coast Councils "Have Your Say" website: a site designed to primarily promote public comment and feedback on issues affecting the community. Council need to explain why the sale of community parks, playgrounds and reserves was never listed on the Central Coast Council's "Have Your say" website and why the community was prevented from being able to make comments online.

Council also refused to even give an email address to lodge any submissions thereby leaving three options for the community to submit a submission:

- post a submission via Australia Post
- hand deliver a submission
- deliver by carrier pigeon.

Is this the best Council can do?

There are numerous reports that staff have been telling the public that the parks, like the park where the Wamberal Memorial Hall sits, were to be sold regardless of what the community thinks or does.

Clearly, Council has only been pretending to listen, pretending to inform and not even pretending to consult.

The perception that the odds have been stacked against the community has led to white hot anger about the flawed process used by the council to sell community land.

Under the Local Government Act, Council is required to seek the views of the community, however all the evidence sadly points to the fact that Council is merely pretending to seek the views of the community and thus pretending to comply with the Act. For example, when advised that the meetings set for July 6 were inadequate and unnecessarily limited access by the public, Council told customers that customers would just have to take time off if they care. To many, this typifies the legacy of contempt and arrogance towards the community that the new Central Coast Council must address.





## July 6 meetings – consult or insult?

It is hoped that the meetings on July 6 will be the lowest point that any Council will ever reach for generating so much confusion, incredulity and frustration from the public: it is hard to imagine any attempt at consultation being worse than this.

Council needlessly inflamed community tensions by holding just one day for public meeting on an issue that:

- attacks the well-being of themselves, their children and their neighbours
- was held in the middle of a weekday when so many people are at work
- was held in the middle of a school holidays when so many are away and cannot attend.

And when staff were appraised of these facts, they responded by stating that if people really cared then they would find a way to attend. According to this logic Council expects our community members to stop flying the Qantas plane; stop the emergency surgery; abandon the court hearings; stop a Police investigation; leave children unattended; travel back from overseas for the day; neglect clients and shutdown their businesses. Really!

Aside from the unwillingness to accommodate busy business owners, professionals, managers, workers and carers by holding the meetings on one day in the school holidays, Council's disinterest was evident to all as shown by:

- the absence of any welcome to country recognition
- the names and titles for Council staff and contractors not being displayed
- the absence of any lectern: lecterns assist people with disabilities and/or nervousness to support themselves as was clearly shown in the 4 pm session
- forcing people to speak into a very poor quality microphone exacerbated by sub-standard public address equipment
- not advising people that their statements were being recorded, which is illegal
- the total absence of meaningful information about the individual parks, playgrounds and reserves
- the absence of evidence explaining why these parks were being listed for sale
- the reluctance by Council to provide details about how to make submissions or where to send them. A community member eventually provided an email address – not Council.
- the confusion about which legislation Council convened the meeting under
- Council's media release on June 30, which stated that "The community has been provided with the required 28 days" notice of these meetings." How can Council claim there is 28 days' notice when the notice was given only six days before the meetings? <http://www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/about-council/general-information-rates/latest-news/june-2016/2016/06/30/public-meetings-on-potential-land-reclassifications-set>. How can Council explain the inadequacy of their communications about this public meeting when there were 40 Council

media releases in June alone, yet only one release for probably one of the most contentious issues affecting Council

- Council misconstruing carefully considered community statements that painted the speakers and there statements in a negative manner
- the absence of any maps or pictures of each site despite audio visual facilities being available
- the inability of Council to clearly articulate and explain the criteria used to select 12 parcels of land and why they considered as surplus to requirements
- the highly inappropriate statement from Council that people support selling these parks as it would save lives through more investment in roads. The clear inference was that opposing the sale of these parks would correlate to an increase in road fatalities when the fact is that more people die from suicide than road accidents and parks and green space are essential  
[<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-10-08/suicide-rates-road-toll-john-brogden-fact-check/6822324>]. Did Council consider the abundant academic research clearly demonstrating that the provision of parks helps to improve many aspects of emotional wellbeing, including minimising anxiety, repression, aggression and sleep problems and improving social behaviours. [Planet Ark. Climbing Trees: Getting Aussie Kids Back Outdoors. 2011; Kidsafe WA. Kidsafe WA Nature Play 2013 Available from: <http://www.kidsafewa.com.au/naturalplay.html>; WA NP. Nature Play WA. <http://www.natureplaywa.org.au/home>.]
- Council's refusal to accept that there is self evident correlation between removal of playground equipment from a number of sites and Council's determination that these sites are under-utilised and therefore falsely considered surplus to Council's requirements
- the inability to provide essential information to the public including the consultants report, the terms of reference (apparently verbally provided to the consultant) and the so-called strategy: there is more chance of finding intelligent life in outer space than finding these documents.
- the inability to provide current and projected ratios of parkland to population density and any benchmarks to demonstrate the parks were surplus to requirements.

The attitude, conduct and behavior of Council at the July 6 meeting made it obvious to the audience that Council is going to do what they want anyway, regardless of what was said.

The community was not being "consulted" so their ideas could be heard, but so that Council could claim they have consulted even though they ignored all feedback and misconstrued what community members actually said.

Council repeatedly stated that the meeting was required alternately by the Local Government Act then the Environmental and Planning Act and then back and forth in incoherency. Frankly, both Acts required Council to consult, not insult.



The meetings were a token effort that failed to fulfill the basic function of informing the community let alone approach the requirements set by the Independent Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for consultation.

It was apparent to all that the current process, though incoherent and confused, is driven by a need for revenue, rather than a true evidence-based commitment to provide and maintain community facilities to meet current or future needs. The new Central Coast Council must address these failures.





## A question of trust

This is no mere social faux pas: it is fundamentally about trust, probity and sound governance.

As Baroness Onara O'Neill articulated in her seminal Reith Lectures, A Question of Trust, there are sound reasons why we no longer trust our public services, institutions or the people who run them. Many regard them with suspicion: their word is doubted, their motives are questioned - and for good reason.

Now, more than ever, there is a need for the community and the new Central Coast Council to challenge the weak approaches to accountability and re-examine previous decision-making that was not based on rigorous evidence and sound logical reasoning.

The new Central Coast Council has an unprecedented opportunity to restore accountability and trust by re-examining the original decisions made by Gosford City Council and releasing all (if any) evidence there was to support those decisions.

## Probity

An email from the former Chief Executive Officer of Gosford City Council stated that it had engaged an independent consultant:

- who had to remain anonymous to maintain independence even though ultimate legal decisions in Australia are made independently by publically known members of the judiciary
- that the terms of reference could not be provided because they were provided verbally to the independent consultant.

The Central Coast Council should immediately investigate the process concerning the appointment of the independent consultant and provide the public with evidence that:

- sound procurement processes were followed or
- if that is not the case, then advise the community how it will improve its processes to ensure Council staff have clear guidelines to follow.

No responsible government should ever rely on verbal terms of reference.

Note: the Wamberal Community Group is in now way implying that the independent consultant did anything wrong and believe the consultant has undertaken their role with professionalism and integrity within the constraints of their instructions.

## Financial responsibility and credibility

A key legal element when assessing a person or organisation as “being fit and proper” is the recognition that past behavior is a strong indicator of future performance.

Based on the performance of Gosford City Council it is not realistic to expect the community to believe that the proceeds of any sale would not be squandered.

Council does not spend money effectively or efficiently: it has a history of extensive overcharging and over servicing that results in lower quality services and infrastructure.

For example, the former Mayor of Gosford Council claimed that each park costs between \$12,000 and \$18,000 per year to mow and maintain. Now lets take Benjamin Parker Reserve for example. It takes two staff about two hours to maintain with one on a ride on mower and the other trimming the edges. Now we can safely assume Councils outdoor staff are not highly paid, but lets be generous and pay them \$50 per hour. That equates to \$200 per mow which means Council is claiming that it mows Benjamin Parker Reserve between 60 and 90 times per year. Even if you are supremely generous and pay the staff \$100 per hour they would be mowing it between 30 and 45 times per year.

Council’s claim that these parks are too expensive to maintain is not credible and this is another reason why there is so much distrust of Council’s financial management.

This view is also supported by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal which stated that the previous Gosford City Council’s:

*...strategies for improvement rely on a number of assumptions including the potential application for and adoption of a single year special variation in 2017-18 of 12.0% cumulative (9.5% above the rate peg).* IPART 2016

We concur with IPART’s assessment that:

*Gosford’s proposal is not consistent with the objectives for the Central Coast.* IPART 2016

Further, the amount of rates paid for very poor service levels are exemplified by the example of double waterfront block at 9 Coolong Road, Vacluse with a land value of \$35 million and rates of \$9500 whilst Gosford Council charges an Avoca resident \$11,000 for a single cottage.

Council needs to spend its energies on maximizing its economies of scale to minimise costs before it considers any unsubstantiated, unsupported and unnecessary fire sale of valuable community assets.



## Land sale strategy – what strategy?

At no stage has Council ever released the so-called land sale strategy. To ensure integrity in the process Council should have released the strategy and actively sought feedback from the community on it.

By not releasing the strategy, Council has severely restricted the capacity of the community to be fully informed and this has impacted on the level of feedback. This is manifestly unfair.

There are three possible reasons as to why Council will not release its strategy:

1. it is not in existence in which case, it is possibly misleading the public
2. it is so badly prepared that to release it would cause more embarrassment to Council than refusing to release it
3. that its release would so severely compromise Council that it would cause the total collapse of good government resulting in anarchical loss of order and discipline in society as a whole!

Council should always be open, honest and transparent with the community and the failure to release the strategy clearly demonstrates the lack of faith Council has in its own strategy.

The community should know:

- the scope, the strategic context, the methodology and the review of the strategy
- the criteria for the development of the strategy
- the related documents and references used for the strategy
- the demographic data used to assess current and future needs
- the key characteristics of the area and the current population
- how population growth was taken into accounting to assess future demand
- the analysis of proposed playground catchments
- how the needs of young people are going to be addressed
- the playground audit and playground distribution analysis
- the plans of management for each portion of land
- the hierarchy of playground settings used for the strategy
- the analysis of the needs for a range of local minor (pocket parks), local major, suburban and regional playgrounds
- how the appropriate level of funding from the development contributions plans are used to develop parks, playgrounds and reserves.

These are the essential elements of any professional strategy or report but there is no evidence that Council has used any of these elements in its land strategy.

The community is in no doubt that Gosford City Council arbitrarily decided on the sale of community land based on land value alone: the absence of evidence or analysis of current and future needs leads to no other conclusion. Council did so without



consulting residents. They did so without giving reasons for selecting specific land to be sold. They did so without assessing the risks to the community and future councils. They did so without addressing the risks posed by reducing the number of parks. This was irresponsible and unconscionable.





## Shortage of parks

There is no evidence to support Council's claim that there is an excess of suburban and urban community parks, playgrounds and reserves. There is in fact a shortfall demonstrated by the high demand for the few high quality parks in the area and by comparison with other Council areas.

The then Gosford City Council mislead the community when it falsely equated inaccessible virgin bushland with high value neighbourhood parks designed for children. The Council claimed that they acquired 84 hectares of land in the last three years, which was mostly incredibly dense bushland for the Coastal Open Space System (COSS), and that this was a prime reason for the parks listed being declared excess and subsequently identified for sale.

There is no logically sound method to relate inaccessible bushland, which would even challenge Bear Grylls to access, with a neighbourhood or village playground suitable for very young children to play in.

All of the parks listed for sale have access to public transport and provide a safe accessible environment for children and the elderly: this gives these parks considerably higher value in meeting critical community needs. The sale of these parks would be a significant detriment to the community.

In addition, there is no benchmarking to show we have an excess of parks.

The Council website lists only four parks for Wamberal. If the Central Coast Council proceeds with the sales as planned, Wamberal will have just one small pocket playground in Wycombe Road and one oversubscribed playground in Wairakei Road to service a community of over 6,200 residents in Wamberal plus substantial populations from Terrigal, Erina Heights and Forresters Beach along with the many visitors to the area.

How does Council realistically expect one oversubscribed playground to meet all the needs of the community? Benjamin Parker Reserve is the only park in the area capable of taking pressure off the Wamberal Park and must not be sold - and in fact, should be improved.

The Wamberal Community Group notes that the Gosford City Council released a playground strategy in its dying days. The timing of this document combined with the poor analysis, and viewed in conjunction with the behaviour of Gosford City Council at that time, seriously compromises its integrity.

These factors give overwhelming credence to the argument that the playground strategy was solely designed to provide post-hoc support to Gosford City Councils ad-hoc decision to sell these the parks in 2015 - a decision based on land value instead of community needs.

Upon an initial analysis, this document is deeply flawed: its uses selective data to (and unfortunately there is no other way to adequately describe it) “spin” the net reduction of parks as a benefit to the community through some sort of twisted Orwellian doublespeak. The comparison to Sydney City Council is nonsensical. The comparison with north coast councils is false due to the disparities in development patterns, demographics and absence of future analysis for the number and ages of children within 500 metres of a park.

Further, a level of service comparison between Wagga Council and the former Gosford City Council is staggering.

Wagga Council has 91 playgrounds with a population of 55,000 people.

Gosford, by comparison has only 93 playgrounds with a population three times higher (165,000 residents). To match Wagga Council on a pro-rata rate, Council would need to build a further 180 playgrounds. That is the extent of the shortage.

And though Wagga Council has only one third the ratepayers, the local government area they manage is five times greater than Gosford yet Wagga Council are managing to fund and create new playgrounds.

The Wamberal Community Group therefore requests that the Central Coast Council withdraw the former Gosford City Council’s flawed playground strategy and develop a rigorous and sustainable playground strategy in consultation with the community.



## **Benjamin Parker**

According to reports of those who knew him, Benjamin Parker was a generous, highly respected, hardworking and likeable gentleman who willingly donated the land for a public garden and recreation space in 1956.

Now Council is seeking to treat this gracious man's hard work and memory with unprecedented contempt.

## **Benjamin Parker Reserve**

Benjamin Parker Reserve is community land and it is essential for everyone that the new Central Coast Council becomes a responsible custodian and does not abrogate its trust to the community.

Benjamin Parker Reserve is a park on Dover Road, Lakeview Road and Prince Street, Wamberal with views south over Terrigal and the Skillion.

The land was granted to Mr Willoughby Bean in May 1833 and this grant was subdivided into small farms known as the Gosford Model Farms Estate in the 1880s.

With the declining viability of agriculture after World War 11, Benjamin F Parker and his son subdivided the land and donated the reserve to the community.

The Terrigal-Wamberal Apex Club undertook landscaping – at no cost to Council and suggested the gifted reserve be named after its donor, Benjamin Parker.

Benjamin Parker Reserve is essential to meet the current and future needs of the residents of Wamberal.

The popularity of Wamberal Park at Wairakei Road is proof that we need better parks not less.

Wamberal Park is overused and the parking situation is incredibly dangerous. It was never designed to cope with the hundreds of people driving their cars to find a suitable park.

Benjamin Parker is the only site in Old Gosford, Dover Road and Lakeview Road catchment of Wamberal that is suitable for development as an inclusive community playground that can take the pressure off the Wamberal Park.

The sale of this valuable park would mean that Wamberal parents will have even less areas where children can play in safety. This park has plenty of shade and is in a central location for young families with a bus stop nearby. By contrast, there is no bus stop near Wamberal Park.



There is simply no valid argument or sound reason to support the sale of Benjamin Parker Reserve and therefore it must be preserved with a quality playground and picnic facilities installed to benefit the whole community.

It is unacceptable and contrary to best practice to expect young children and the elderly to have to walk up to 1.6 kms and cross a major regional road like Ocean View Drive to access a park with playground equipment especially when there are no safe pedestrian crossings on Ocean View Drive.

Wamberal is very hilly so if you have small children it is not always feasible to walk them to the beach especially when there is not one safe pedestrian crossing on Ocean View Drive.

*...the beauty of Wamberal is the trees... remove the trees and the charm will be gone.* EJ Loxton KC, MLA 1921

And shady trees, picnics, flying kites, running, jumping, skipping, playing chasings and catching balls are essential for kids.

Council has falsely claimed that this and other parks have "...little community benefit" and "...no foreseeable use for the community going forward."

Wamberal needs more open space and Council does not spend anything on community development in the area.

Parks also unite people: they encourage altruism and community spirit. For example, the Apex club landscaped the Benjamin Parker Reserve at no cost – but now the Council is whining about the cost of fuel for a lawn mower to run over the grass a few times a year.

And just because the former Council incorrectly decided that there was no use for parks and reserves that does not mean there won't be a significant need for parks in the future: buying back land we already own will be more expensive than any amount of lawn mowing!

There are no "new or better amenities" that brands these parks "redundant." There is in fact a desperate need for more parks and the new Central Coast Council must reinstate the playground equipment. It is not acceptable to sell this and other parks for private development.

The default position of Council should be to retain and protect parks, not sell them off based on land value alone.

The inability to find a suitable location for the Banjo's skate park is a current and prime example of why we should not sell off community land.

Perhaps, by saving our parks, we can begin to see a change for the better.



## Philanthropy

Australia has a poor record of philanthropy but is it any wonder.

Imagine you have worked hard and been fortunate to become wealthy.

Then why would any philanthropist ever donate property or assets to the community, when the custodians of those community gifts, a Council, betrays their good will at the first opportunity simply because it cannot manage its own budget.





## Overwhelming community opposition

Opposition to council selling off community land was the one factor that drew unprecedented crowds to the Council meeting on February 9 this year.

Opposition to the sale of community land was the factor that has seen thousands signing petitions to save Wamberal Memorial Hall and Benjamin Parker Reserve.

Based on the evidence it is clear that the community believes the decision to sell these parks, playgrounds and reserves is unsupported, unethical and unnecessary.

And let's make this clear; it is Council's negative behaviour towards the community that has caused this flood of opposition. Council's actions have lacked fairness, respect and proper process; all key factors that the community has a reasonable expectation to receive from Council.

Many now believe that Council has misrepresented the issues to the public of the Central Coast.

All the evidence is that Council is going through the motions to achieve a pre-ordained result and it must and will be challenged.

If Council were to proceed with the sale of these lands based on what has been provided to the community is so fundamentally wrong, it is the equivalent of Council marking its own homework.

If the Council proceeds, then there must be fresh calls for public inquiries into Council's compliance with due process and the letter and spirit of the law.



## No mandate to sell

Council has no mandate to sell these parks. The massive protests, the negative mainstream press and outcry on social media clearly demonstrate that Council has lost its social license to sell these valuable community assets.

Because the decision by the former Gosford City Council to sell these parks was not based on evidence and combined with the complete absence of any supporting analysis, there are no sound arguments to support the sale of these parks.

Therefore, to continue the sales processes will only generate deeper suspicion that the sales are not being driven for the benefit of the community but could be driven by backroom deals to benefit a few. This statement needs to be placed within the context of the extraordinary allegations of corruption made by the Independent Commission Against Corruption in 2014 and 2015.

Council must now take the responsible course, abandon the process entirely, and begin working with the community to protect and create better urban environments.



## Conclusion

Thousands of people are engaged with this issue and former Gosford City Council's behaviour to date has been the antithesis of good governance and good government.

The failure to give the public essential information has created an inherent unfairness because the community cannot challenge Council's decision. It is incumbent on any Council, as the proponent, to fully consult the community before any parks are identified for sale. People should not have to do research the minutiae of Council's business papers in order to find out about what is happening to their parks, playgrounds and reserves.

It is now up to Council to decide if they want to reform and become an innovative and trustworthy organisation and use its enormous (and largely unaccountable power) to serve the public good.

The community needs a strong, integrated network of inclusive, walkable and attractive parks that provide a place to meet and for children to participate in physical and social play.

It is our honest conclusion, based on the evidence that the former Gosford City Councils ad-hoc decision to sell these the parks in 2015 was based solely on land value instead of community needs. This conclusion is based on Councils refusal to release essential information about the community lands being proposed for sale and its continual failure:

- to provide any valid evidence to support the sales of these community lands
- to inform the community of its intentions
- to inform the community of the impact of the loss of these parks
- to facilitate adequate or appropriate community consultation
- to treat residents with opinions differing from Council's with respect
- to adhere to proper risk and probity controls
- to demonstrate a sound understanding of the processes involved in the management of community lands including the processes to convert community land to operational land
- to consider and analyse appropriate evidence before making its decisions
- to not fully appraise the Councillors from the former Gosford City Council of the implications and necessary processes before they voted on the motion to sell these lands.

The question is a question of trust and hope; can the new Central Coast Council change the negative culture inherited from the former Gosford City Council to become a responsive, innovative and high performing organisation that actively seeks the best long term interests of current and future residents? The sale of these parks would only benefit property developers with immeasurable damage to current and future generations.



Like many in the community, the Wamberal Community Group is willing and able to engage and work with the new Central Coast Council to help create a dynamic and exciting region.

The Wamberal Community Group sincerely hopes the new Council grasps this opportunity to reach out and work cooperatively with the community to restore trust in the institution of Council. The first step is to stop the sale of these parks, playgrounds and reserves.



## **Attachments**

[List of dot points for use in letters and emails](#)

[Summary points to support the importance of parks with academic references](#)

[Help save Benjamin Parker Reserve](#)

[Submission points to save Benjamin Parker Reserve](#)

[Benjamin Parker Reserve image gallery](#)

[Benjamin Parker Reserve to be sold to developers](#)

[10 ways to save your park](#)

[Thurs nite – submission workshop to save our parks](#)

[Public meeting on parks – what happened on July 6](#)

[Save our playgrounds and parks – public meeting – Wednesday July 6](#)

[Media release – Save Central Coast Reserves](#)

[Wamberal Memorial Hall saved](#)

[Community meeting Wednesday 7:15pm – Wamberal Surf Club](#)

[Gosford Council sacked – administrator appointed](#)

[Mass photo shoot to Save Our Parks – 6pm Tuesday 9 Feb at Gosford](#)

[Save our parks – public rally](#)

[The great park sell off: Public meeting on 19 January at Gosford.](#)

[The parks and reserves Council wants to sell](#)

[Playgrounds](#)



## Contact

Web: [www.wamberal.net](http://www.wamberal.net)

Twitter: Wamberal @Wamberal\_WCG

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wamberal/>

Email: [wamberalcommunitygroup@gmail.com](mailto:wamberalcommunitygroup@gmail.com)

Post: PO Box 3191 Wamberal NSW 2260