

ITEM 11.3	PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE DRAFT NORTHERN BEACHES STORMWATER MANAGEMENT STUDY
REPORTING MANAGER	EXECUTIVE MANAGER ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE
TRIM FILE REF	2022/375149
ATTACHMENTS	1 Draft Northern Beaches Council Stormwater Management Study (Included In Attachments Booklet)

SUMMARY

PURPOSE

To seek Council approval to place the draft Northern Beaches Council Stormwater Management Study on public exhibition.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To inform the development of a new Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) for the Northern Beaches, a number of studies have been prepared, including the draft Northern Beaches Council Stormwater Management Study (the Study).

The Study has developed an approach that results in draft targets for stormwater quality and quantity for each catchment in the Northern Beaches. These draft targets vary from avoiding any impact or increase in pollution from stormwater runoff to minimising the impact, or reducing the amount of stormwater pollution as outlined in our existing Water Management for Development Policy 2021.

The Study comprised a desktop review of previous assessments and existing data, consultation with technical staff, and the development of catchment case studies to understand the existing condition of the waterways and how they may be affected by current and future land development impacts.

The Study categorises the catchments in the LGA into four groups with specific stormwater management targets based on the existing condition of the waterways as well as current and future pressures on the values and uses of the waterways in each catchment. The Study includes a map of the Northern Beaches catchments showing the recommended stormwater management approach for each catchment that will inform planning controls for the Northern Beaches LEP and DCP.

The Study recommends more stringent stormwater quantity and quality targets for high priority catchments to protect creeks and/or downstream receiving waters with high ecological value. Council will work on creating controls that are straightforward for developers to comply with and are not too financially onerous for residential lots to implement. Developers in these catchments will need to demonstrate how they will treat and manage stormwater runoff to meet these controls using options such as onsite water sensitive urban design.

Development within these areas will need to consider the impacts of stormwater runoff on waterway health and the management of these impacts. Depending on the scale of development and the catchment, additional environmental assessments and stormwater control measures may be required as part of a development application to protect the receiving waters.

Community consultation will ensure that the values and priorities recommended in the Study are reflective of community desires, which will then help in developing more specific stormwater controls for future land development. A Yoursay page will be developed for people to view the Study and provide feedback in line with Council's Community Engagement Framework.

RECOMMENDATION OF DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

That Council:

1. Place the draft Northern Beaches Stormwater Management Study on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days.
 2. Use the outcome of the public exhibition of the draft Northern Beaches Stormwater Management Study to inform the development of stormwater quality and quantity targets for the new Northern Beaches Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan.
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REPORT

BACKGROUND

The Northern Beaches Local Government Area (LGA) has a mix of freshwater creeks, wetlands and groundwater ecosystems flowing into coastal lagoons, estuaries and iconic beaches including Manly Beach, Sydney Harbour, Hawkesbury River and Pittwater. They are highly valued natural assets, contributing to the lifestyle and economy of the local community. The Community Strategic Plan and the Northern Beaches Local Strategic Planning Statement - Towards 2040 (LSPS) provide a clear vision on how these assets are to be managed now and into the future.

To inform the development of a new Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP) for the Northern Beaches, a number of studies have been prepared, including the draft Northern Beaches Council Stormwater Management Study (the Study).

Stormwater Management Study

Council aims to continue to manage the impact of new urban development and existing urban land use on the health of the creeks, lagoons, estuaries and beaches. The Study addresses the potential impacts of stormwater runoff on waterway health across the LGA, including both the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff generated from existing urban areas and future urban development.

The NSW Government has provided objectives to meet environmental values and long-term goals for waterway health. To guide councils in developing their own waterway objectives, a framework was developed which provides steps to prioritise catchments and determine management strategies (including stormwater management strategies) that meet waterway health outcomes and reflects the community environmental values and uses of the waterway.

The Study followed this framework for our waterways by:

- Identifying community environmental values (e.g. aquatic ecology and riparian habitat) and uses (e.g. recreational amenity such as swimming and fishing)
- Identifying the existing condition of the waterways as well as the future desired condition as outlined in the LSPS (e.g. to maintain or improve the existing condition)
- Identifying existing land use and potential future development within each waterway catchment over the next two decades.

The Study undertook a desktop review of previous assessments and existing data, consultation with Council staff, and the development of catchment case studies to understand the existing condition of the waterways and how they may be affected by current and future land development impacts.

This approach was used to develop draft targets for stormwater quality and quantity for each catchment. These draft targets vary from avoiding any impact or increase in pollution from stormwater runoff to minimising the impact or reducing the amount of stormwater pollution as outlined in the existing Water Management for Development Policy 2021.

Council must consider the risks of impacts of stormwater associated with development on our catchments and waterways prior to giving development consent. The three former Councils mapped and assessed stormwater impacts differently, and as such this Study is important for providing a consistent risk-based methodology across the LGA. Inclusion of an LGA wide stormwater management map outlining the recommended stormwater management targets is a key tool in addressing the risks of impacts of stormwater runoff.

Study Outcomes

The Study recommends:

- Categorisation of the catchments in the LGA into four groups with specific stormwater management targets based on the existing condition of the waterways as well as current and future pressures on the community environmental values and uses of the waterways. These are:
 - Group 1 and 2 catchments - more stringent stormwater quantity and quality targets are recommended to protect creeks and/or downstream receiving waters with high ecological value (targeting runoff volume, suspended solids, nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen, litter and coarse sediments) or high recreational values (such as swimming). This is referred to as neutral or beneficial effect on water quality.

Group 1 catchments include:

- creeks in National Parks and catchments with very low existing imperviousness and low development pressure in the future; or
- creeks with high ecological value but may be slightly disturbed in the catchment with existing imperviousness of approximately 10% or lower; with development pressure in the next 20 years likely to increase imperviousness closer to or above 10% (examples include McCarrs, Deep and Curl Curl Creek catchments).

Group 2 catchments include:

- creeks that are at the point where any increase in flows or pollutants from the catchment could result in significant deterioration; or
- creeks with highly disturbed reaches in urban and rural areas in catchments with existing imperviousness of 10-25% where an increase in flows or pollutants can further degrade downstream reaches and values (examples include Bare, Carroll and Mullet Creek catchments).

- Group 3 catchments have highly disturbed creeks and/or poor condition receiving waters that will have targets that aim to mitigate the impact of stormwater runoff to improve condition of the waterways (targeting the same pollutants and addressing quantity as for Group 1 and 2). This includes creeks that are highly disturbed located in catchments with existing imperviousness > 30% (examples are Manly, Brookvale and Careel Creeks).
- Group 4 catchments, discharging directly into well flushed permanently open estuaries or the ocean, will focus on managing discharge of litter and coarse sediments, as pollutants such as excessive levels of nutrients have little impact on open, well-circulated marine waters (examples includes catchments such as North Harbour, Dee Why Beach and Newport Beach catchments).

- A map outlining the draft stormwater management approach for each catchment for inclusion in the Northern Beaches Council planning controls. The map will allow landowners and developers to see where their property lies and what stormwater quality and quantity targets they will be required to meet.

Feedback from community consultation will help refine these broad qualitative targets to more specific quantitative stormwater targets that will guide future land development stormwater controls. Additional studies and field investigations are now underway to complete the remaining steps of the risk-based framework as part of the next phase of works.

CONSULTATION

Internal consultation has taken place with Council's Strategic and Place Planning business unit to ensure the information provided by this Study can be applied in the new LEP and DCP. The Stormwater and Floodplain Engineering team and Development, Engineering and Certification team, within the Environment and Climate Change business unit, have also been consulted to ensure consistency with stormwater related development controls.

Public exhibition is proposed for a minimum period of 28 days to coincide with the exhibition of the draft Conservation Zone review which will be brought to Council for its consideration at an upcoming Council meeting. The community will be invited to participate in the review of the documents through the following methods:

- Council's Have Your Say webpage, including frequently asked questions information and an online project feedback form.
- Council will undertake phone interviews with interested or affected community members.
- Other appropriate avenues in line with Council's Community Engagement Framework.

Following the completion of the exhibition period the community's comments will be considered and amendments made to the studies where appropriate. Further engagement during the development of the LEP and DCP will be also undertaken.

TIMING

The draft Stormwater Management Study is proposed to be publicly exhibited with the Conservation Zones Review material. The outcome of the public exhibition of will be reported to Council at a future meeting.

LINK TO STRATEGY

This report relates to Theme 2 of the Environment and Climate Change Strategy which states:

We are committed to:

- Protecting our receiving waters and riparian areas
- Protecting and improving the condition of creeks and riparian vegetation
- Minimising threats to aquatic ecosystems
- Reducing the impact of urban runoff on our waterways
- Actively working to keep single use plastics and other litter out of our network

This report relates to Priority 1 of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (Towards 2040):

- Priority 1: Healthy and valued coast and waterways.

Action 1.1: Prepare a stormwater quality management plan to guide implementation of the risk-based framework, identify stormwater quality target, and priorities public and private stormwater infrastructure needs.

This also report relates to the Community Strategic Plan Outcome of:

- Protection of the environment - Goal 1 Our bushland, coast and waterways are protected for their intrinsic value

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Funding to support the public exhibition of the Study is included in the existing budget.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Study provides Council with a stormwater management strategy that outlines qualitative stormwater quality and quantity targets for each catchment in the LGA based on Council's waterway objectives and the community environmental values and uses of the waterways.

This will result in more stringent stormwater quantity and quality targets for Group 1 and 2 catchments to protect creeks and/or downstream receiving waters with high ecological value. Council will work on creating controls that are straightforward for developers to comply with and are not too onerous for residential lots to implement. Developers in these catchments will need to demonstrate how they will treat and manage stormwater runoff to meet these controls using options such as onsite water sensitive urban design, which may lead to higher costs for both the developer and landowner.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Study outcomes and associated map will be included in the new Northern Beaches LEP and DCP to ensure land use policy responses and development controls manage the impact of new urban development and existing urban land uses on the health of creeks, lagoons, estuaries and beaches in the LGA.

The stricter targets identified in the Study seek to avoid serious or irreversible damage to the environment and ensure we maintain or enhance the health of our waterways for future generations. This will enable Council to help protect the community environmental values and uses of our waterways so that we can continue to swim, fish, and enjoy the natural amenity they provide, as well as protect the aquatic ecology and riparian habitat necessary to support our local fauna and flora.

GOVERNANCE AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

In line with our planning harmonisation program, the Study has been developed across the entire LGA. The proposed objectives and targets will lead to improved ongoing environmental protections from future development in our catchments and will help us achieve objectives in both our Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Local Strategic Planning Statement (Towards 2040).

The addition of a map outlining the stormwater management approach for each catchment and its draft qualitative targets for stormwater quality and quantity will allow landowners and developers to see where their property lies and what stormwater targets they will be required to meet. It will also enable Council to assess development applications according to a risk-based methodology that has been applied across the LGA.

This will ensure that the health of creeks, lagoons, estuaries and beaches are protected and that we are reducing the impact from urban stormwater runoff and new developments.