

Environmental and sustainability highlights 2022/23

Our community aspires to enhance and protect the natural and built environment from the risks and impacts of global and local pressures

Our community aspires to be leaders in managing our resources sustainably and for the long term, to ensure that development is balanced with our lifestyle and environment

Living with our natural environment

Our programs manage, protect and enhance our unique environment across 23km² of bushland, 80 km of coastline, estuaries at Pittwater and Middle Harbour, beaches, lagoons and other wetlands, seven major catchments and 256 kms of creeks.

As well as being valued locations for our enjoyment, these natural areas house 2,000 native species and 13 Threatened Ecological Communities, provide wildlife corridors, create clean water and air, and reduce urban heat.

Our ongoing programs help protect these habitats, their biodiversity and how they function. Plus our strong interagency programs reduce the impacts of natural events such as fire, storms, coastal erosion and floods.

Operational program

In support of our Environment and Climate Change Strategy, we'll implement new action plans on bushland and biodiversity, the coast, waterways and catchments, climate change and environmental education. We'll also review our climate change risk, to integrate into our Risk Management Framework.

Our draft Resilience Strategy sets out approaches for landuse, services and assets; community capacity and readiness and our response to incidents. The Strategy will be adopted in early 2022/23 so we can prepare and implement the action plan.

For our aquatic environments we will:

- develop a creek management strategy
- implement the new Narrabeen Lagoon Entrance Management Strategy
- develop coastal management programs for Collaroy-Narrabeen, Fishermans, Bilgola and Basin Beaches
- prepare flood studies, modelling and flood risk management plans
- progress flooding solutions for the Wakehurst Parkway with detailed designs and environmental assessment

Around 300 volunteers currently make a real difference in our bushland, native plant nurseries and aquatic reserves. We'll extend our programs for volunteers, and environment centres which educate over 16,000 people/year.

A robust planning system is being built based on sound environmental studies. Already complete are studies on our environment, biodiversity, waterways, stormwater, estuaries and geotechnical stability, with more to come. These support the development of the new Local Environmental Plan.

Capital program

We manage a stormwater system worth over \$950 million, with more than 60,000 pits, pipes and gross pollutant traps.

Our asset management plan guides how we maintain and renew this system to prevent flooding, pollution and protect downstream creeks and estuaries. The program in 2022/23 includes:

- \$5.8m for planned stormwater renewal projects across 16 suburbs
- \$2m in new stormwater works in 14 suburbs
- \$0.96m for emergency stormwater works.

We're also designing the new Warriewood Community Centre to cater as an evacuation centre as needed, as well as upgrading Duffys Forest Rural Fire Station and Marine Rescue Broken Bay, Bayview.

Leaders in environmental sustainability

Council has committed to ambitious sustainability targets for its operations. Council is now powered by 100% renewable energy through our electricity contracts, and over 900kW of solar panels, reducing our carbon emissions by 80%. Sustainability principles are embedded in our project design for upgrades, new buildings and water use. For example new surf clubs at Mona Vale and Long Reef include natural materials, solar panels and recycled rainwater.

Our use of drinking water has reduced by 36% in recent years, that's 80 Olympic swimming pools/year. New road surfaces and footpaths use recycled crushed glass instead of sand.

Other programs are enabling the community and businesses to reduce water, energy, emissions and waste as well as sourcing local products and creating more nature-friendly spaces. As a Silver Partner in the NSW Government Sustainability Advantage Scheme, we're aiming for Gold.

Operational program

We will implement our action plans on climate change, environmental education and sustainable living. We'll also drive other key programs, such as building a circular economy to reduce waste:

- develop a new long-term strategy on waste and circular economy
- deliver programs and education on waste reduction, recovery and reuse
- manage domestic waste contracts to maximise resource recovery
- expand Kimbriki's sustainability hub
- assess waste management plans for events, and provide water refill stations at events and parks – plus Swap For Good programs to eliminate single use plastics

Improved sustainability in centres and suburbs will be supported by:

- building sustainability solutions into our new Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plans
- the design of the new Frenchs Forest precinct
- implementing new guidelines on public space design, for sustainable and liveable spaces
- developing an Urban Tree Canopy Plan to expand tree cover and reduce urban heat
- community workshops on composting, vegetation gardens, community gardens etc
- water savings assessments for businesses.

Programs will be delivered to support the community and business to reduce their carbon emissions including:

- continuing the Charge Ahead program to grow energy efficiency and solar uptake
- implementing the Transport Strategy for better infrastructure, public transport, mass transit, and community choices
- developing an Economic Development Strategy with sustainable tourism, more local jobs and less commuting.

