

Direction 6: A resilient natural and built environment

We live in balance with our natural and built environments, and proactively take steps to protect and enhance our environment, cool our suburbs and green our buildings.



Our community deeply values the natural environment of the Northern Beaches. It is a core feature of our landscapes, way of life, and culture. It also supports our local economy by attracting skilled workers and vibrant recreation and tourism industries.

The need to protect our bushland and beaches and live in balance with our urban environments is a core principle of all community engagement, including the engagement for this Strategy. Although our unique natural environment poses threats such as bush fires and floods, we also directly rely on it for our livelihoods and wellbeing. Our vast natural reserves, parks, coasts, lagoons, wetlands and waterways not only provide much needed reprieve, particularly in times of stress or hardship such as during the pandemic, they also clean the air we breathe and help regulate the climate.

There is an urgent need to reduce our environmental footprint, reduce climate emissions, cool our cities, reduce runoff to protect our waterways, and create more sustainable homes and buildings.

**Appreciating and protecting
what we have in terms of
our natural environment**

(SRG Workshop participant)

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Key Priorities

Key Actions

1. Focussed investment on natural hazard and climate change mitigation and adaptation actions to avoid and reduce future risk	1a. As per Direction 5 - Undertake a Resilience and Climate Change Assessment across all of Council's infrastructure and assets that identifies: - risks and vulnerabilities to critical assets as a result of natural disasters and climate change impacts - critical assets that will have a consequential impact on the community due to the failure - adaptation/mitigation action strategies that minimise impact on the asset and community to ensure continuity and reduce recovery time (S).
	1b. Continue to enhance Council's approach to how we manage natural hazards with increased focus on prevention and mitigation/adaption actions (O)
2. Our local environment is resilient, protected and enhanced in recognition of its contribution to community wellbeing and support of critical ecological processes	2a. Increase investment in programs that protect and enhance our natural environment in alignment with the Council's Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2021d) (S,M,L,O)
	2b. Continue to deliver environmental education activities to foster awareness, understanding and ownership of our environment (O)
3. Buildings and precinct-scale developments are adaptive and ready to transition to a low carbon future	3a. Develop planning controls to improve energy, water and waste efficiencies in new developments, support the push for net zero buildings and require sustainability certification for certain developments (threshold to be developed) (S)
	3b. Prepare decarbonisation plans for existing precincts to identify opportunities for retrofitting and precinct scale opportunities (e.g. community solar) - as per the GBCA Climate Positive Roadmap for precincts (new and existing) (S-M)
4. Ensure the natural environment is recognised as key priority within disaster recovery plans and programs	4a. Include environmental recovery strategies within the Northern Beaches Recovery Plan (S-M)
5. Our community has sustainable access, recreation and engagement opportunities in natural areas	5a. Prepare an Open Space and Recreation Strategy that enables sustainable access, recreation and engagement opportunities in natural areas (S)
6. Invest in urban heat mitigation programs to cool homes, streets and public spaces	6a. Develop an urban heat mitigation program to reduce the impact of urban heat stress, improve amenity and increase ecological function (M)

Links to Existing Plans and Strategies

