
Minutes of the 16th meeting of the
Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee
Thursday 23rd May 2013
Brooklyn Community Centre
2-4 Dangar Rd, Brooklyn

Title	Family Name	Given Name	Representation	Present	Apologies	Absent	Alternate Rep.
Mr	ANDREWS	John	Mooney-Cheero Progress Association	X			
Cr	ANISSE	Antony	Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council	X			
Mr	BERGMAN	Peter	Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service			X	
Mr	BLACK	Steve	NSW Maritime Authority		X		David Lyons
Prof.	BOOTH	David	University of Technology Sydney & Sydney Institute of Marine Sciences			X	
Mr	BROWN	Warren	Gosford City Council		X		
Ms	BURTON	Tegan			X		
Mr	GREEN	Marcel	Industry & Investment, Primary Industries Fishing & Aquaculture		X		
Ms	COLLINS	Emma	Community Representative			X	
Ms	MARVELL	Cheryl	Sydney Water Corporation		X		
Mr	FENWICK	Andrew	Fenwicks Marina		X		
Ms	FIELD	Melanie	NSW Food Authority			X	
Mr	FISH	Mike	Community Representative	X			
Ms	FRATER	Melissa	NSW Bridge to Bridge Committee			X	
Cllr	FREEWATER	Peter	Gosford City Council			X	
Ms	HOWARD	Mary	Community Representative		X		
Hon	LLOYD	Jim	Mooney-Cheero Progress Association			X	
Mr	MACDONALD	Tim	Gosford City Council	X			
Mr	MICHOS	Arthur	Office of Environment & Heritage			X	
Mr	MILES	David	Boat Owners Association	X			
Ms	MOOY	Rebecca	Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority		X		
Mr	NORINGTON	Rolf	Hawkesbury River District Fishermans Co-operative		X		
Mr	PIGNEYGUY	Justin	Hawkesbury Cruises		X		
Emer Prof	RECHER	Harry	Community Representative	X			
Mr	REES	Stan	Land and Property Management Authority	X			
Mr	ROWE	Simon	Oceanwatch Australia		X		
Ms	RUBIO-ZUAZO	Ana	Community Representative		X		
Cllr	RUSSELL	Steve	Hornsby Shire Council		X		Cllr Gallagher
Ms	SEGOVIA	Ingrid	Community Representative	X			
Mr	STUBBS	John	Broken Bay Oysters Association		X		Rob Moxham
Mr	VON ZELEWSKI	Axel	Community Representative	X			
Mr	TAYLOR	Chris	Roilat	X			
Mr	PEARSON	Brian	Roilat	X			
Dr	LEONG	Lim		X			

1. WELCOME

Meeting opened at 6:15pm and Peter Coad (Chair) welcomed the attendees and guests

- Cllr Mick Gallagher & Cllr Antony Anisse
- Ross McPherson - Hornsby Shire Council
- Chris Taylor & Brian Pearson – Roylat
- Rob Moxham – Broken Bay Oysters
- David Lyons

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Mayor Steve Russell, Andrew Fenwick, Warren Brown, Marcel Green, Rebecca Mooy, Simon Rowe, Anna Rubio, Tegan Burton, Cheryl Marvell, Justin Pigneguy, and Mary Howard.

3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No pecuniary interests declared.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING AND CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence:

Response received from RMS (HSC Ref D02176774) re follow up Action 201301.

Matter arising from previous meeting, 21 March 2013:

The response from RMS re rubbish at Deerubbin Reserve, the Truck stop and roadside litter along the F3 thanked the Committee for its feedback and advised that random checks have been done. The letter did not provide any ongoing resolution.

Mike **Fish** referred to an article in the Sun Herald a month ago that pointed out the poor state of Darling Harbour, which was closely followed by the truck stop at Mooney Mooney. The area is full of rubbish at the moment – including tyres that have been dumped. Mike spoke to rubbish collectors on site and they advised that their contract area does not include an area nearby that is full of rubbish. There is an “issues” link on the RMS website and Mike has entered his concerns via this site. Mike suggested that the Committee respond to RMS’s letter advising that they are not satisfied with the response. David **Miles** suggested press involvement and Tim **Macdonald** suggested raising this issue with the State Member, Chris **Holstein**.

ACTION 201304: Peter **Coad** to forward correspondence regarding roadside litter (HSC Ref D02123010 & D02176774) to Chris Holstein (State Member for Gosford) for his consideration.

ACTION 201220: Team Leader – Estuary Management, to distribute information to members regarding the formation of Local Area Services, which incorporates the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority. **Completed** – Email sent 23/11/2012 (HSC Ref D02083904).

ACTION 201303: Mary **Howard** to inform the committee if there are any opportunities to assist commercial fishers during the reform process. **Completed** – Peter **Coad** discussed this

with Mary prior to the meeting. Fishers have met to discuss their concerns, but no action was determined at this point.

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting, Thursday 21 March 2013 were accepted.

MOTION 201302: That the minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting Thursday 21 March 2013, should be accepted. Moved by Mike **Fish**, seconded by David **Miles**. Carried unanimously.

6. PRESENTATION

Chris Taylor and Brian Pearson – ROYLAT – Hawkesbury River Economic Benefit Study

Chris provided an update on work completed since the last presentation (22 November 2012). Prior to the meeting, members were emailed an executive summary of the report. Hornsby, Pittwater and Gosford Councils have all been involved with the study. The study involved looking at locations and numbers of assets (such as marinas / wharves / public toilet facilities / berths etc) and the reasonable economic value of them. They also looked at the value of assets to commercial operations such as prawning, houseboats, fishing, oyster industries etc.

There is an estimated \$274m in assets in the Estuary including:

- \$211m value in 26 marinas (8 at Pittwater, 9 at Brooklyn, 5 at Brisbane Waters, 2 at Cowan, 2 at Berowra Creek)
- \$31m value in public wharves
- \$15m value in boat ramps

There is an estimated \$1.5b in boat values. The boat count was done using Google Maps and Council's Dekho program. Boats were split into three categories; up to 6m, 6-12m and over 12m. The replacement cost of these boats:

- Moored (4,600 boats) = \$586m
- Berthed (6,250 boats) = \$916m

Location	Value	Number (approx)
Berowra Waters	\$40m	400
Brooklyn	\$100m	1,500
Cowan	\$124m	730
Pittwater	\$1.06b	5,400
Brisbane Waters	\$160m	2,600
Wisemans / Spencer	\$9m	190

Value to Industry:

Moorings – a total of \$130m to industry in the areas of maintaining and servicing boats. (\$4m Berowra Creek, \$9m Brooklyn, \$12m Cowan, \$96m Pittwater, 14m Brisbane Waters)

Recreation – an estimated \$46m pa to industries such as camping/boating/fishing/sight seeing.

Fishing – the fishing industry has been impacted by drought in previous years. Despite contacting the relevant authorities, they could not get a value of the commercial catch in the last four years. QX disease the POMs virus has severely affected the oyster industry.

Real Estate – Vehicular access directly to properties was of major value. Values of properties in places such as Scotland Island are affected by the access difficulties – eg \$12k pa in boat costs to and from the island plus having secure parking on the mainland reflect in house prices. Changes in Bank valuations / bushfire and flood zones / no direct access all drive prices down. Holiday rentals on the river (particularly Dangar Island and Pittwater) are a growing industry for short term holidays. At Pittwater, properties on the ocean side are at a premium, but properties facing the water are also increasing in value. Access to public wharves is also a major factor.

Peter thanked Chris and Brian for their presentation and opened the meeting to questions.

Stan **Rees** mentioned the carrying capacity and development issue in Pittwater – ie crowding of boats. There is poor access for some people around Pittwater compared to Brisbane Waters.

Ross **McPherson** clarified why the study was commissioned – Council cannot manage the estuaries if they don't know the value of built assets AND the value of natural assets. Council is already using the study data for management of assets and estuaries. The main reason for commissioning the study was to assist in grant funding. The figures will help when Council applies for funding, particularly in showing how industries are affected by estuary management. It is also helpful to have all of the information in one place – as it is now.

Harry **Recher** said that he accepts this is a valuable study but asked if the report provides any maps/photos of evidence of assets held. Harry pointed out anyone can use Google Earth to provide snap shots of assets, but he suggested taking photos of the assets – eg documenting a wharf.

Tim **Macdonald** advised that Councils are going through this process now – and are also looking at community needs/wants.

Leong **Lim** suggested finding out how and if Council can access old Army aerial photos. Leong also said he was disappointed that there were no figures available for the value of the commercial fishing industry. Peter **Coad** advised that Mary Howard has sent some landing catches information that might be helpful.

Chris pointed out that major wharf replacements are being done at Palm Beach and Pittwater – and that the study did not include private wharves. There was some discussion about these not being included as they are an economic value too.

Leong asked how far we are from a full eco-services analysis. Ross advised that valuing the built assets is the easy part, now we need to value the natural assets and eco-services will be helped by the results of this study.

Cllr **Anisse** asked about the value of assets appreciating. Chris said that anything to do with water is actually depreciating – mainly due to high costs.

Peter asked that if anyone wanted a full copy of the report, they could email him and he will arrange it. The study is not on the website at this stage.

7. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LOWER HAWKESBURY ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Action 201204: The Team Leader – Estuary Management to request information from National Parks regarding the management of local Aboriginal artwork. **Ongoing.**

Action 201206: Tim **Macdonald**, Gosford City Council, to update the LHEM Committee on the progress of the Mooney Mooney and Cheero Point connection to the Brooklyn Wastewater Treatment Plant. **Ongoing.**

Action 201208: Peter **Coad**, Team Leader – Estuary Management, to report to the LHEM committee on actions undertaken to reduce dogs on Bradleys Beach. Options to consider include writing to Dangar Island residents, increased compliance and improved signage. **Ongoing.**

Peter Coad – Hornsby Shire Council

Probe Updates

- There are five probes in the Hawkesbury and they will have turbidity sensors added in mid June.
- All probe data is on Council's mobile site app

ACTION 201305: Peter **Coad** to forward a link to Council's mobile app to members.

- The Loughtondale probe moved during the flooding in March but the mooring has now been refixed (as has the probe mooring at Gunyah Point)
- Probe data now shows winter temps, with a 4° drop in temperatures in the past few days.

Swimming Conditions Map

- The swimming conditions are generated at 2am each day to provide swimming conditions reports (available on Council's website)

Real Time Data

- The website provides access to data (water quality, tides etc).
- Historical data is available.

David **Miles** asked about salinity levels for swimming. Peter advised that the site provides bands and associated recommendations. Oyster farmers use this data to track salinity. Rob **Moxham** said he uses the historical and rainfall data to monitor salinity for dangerous

levels. Harry **Recher** said that he also uses the data but other local residents don't know about it. Peter confirmed he has emailed the link to the Dangar Island League, and he is still working on getting the message out there.

ACTION 201306: Peter **Coad** called for **Committee members** to send him any suggestions on how to engage the community in using the data – eg putting signs up / advertising it in industry newsletters?

Presentation by Graham Johnston – McMasters Beach Surf Life Saving Club

- Peter mentioned Graham's presentation at the last meeting and the great work he has been doing with local schools and organisations. Peter acknowledged Rob **Moxham** for his generosity in allowing Graham use of his punt.

Porto Bay Clean Up

- This was completed on 21/22 May

Kangaroo Point Pumpout Facility

- 81,920L pumped out this year.
- 840445L pumped out since 2008.

Other happenings

- Bar Island - 25 people visited Bar Island on a recent guided bushwalk
- One Tree Reach Wetland – A Plan of Management is being developed and a boardwalk is being planned for the area.
- Sediment monitoring – Council is reviewing a 2006 study on 56 sites to see if sediment quality has changed. CSIRO want to deploy Automated Underwater Vehicles in late June – these will aid in understanding sediment quality.
- McKell Park Upgrade – funds are earmarked for work on the foreshore area.
- Estuary Regeneration – Works are continuing at Brooklyn Park, McKell Park, Bar Island, Singleton Road and Wisemans Ferry.

Tim Macdonald – Gosford City Council

Deerubbin Reserve

- The Deerubbin Reserve carpark upgrade will provide additional parking for 8 trailers and 11 cars. Work will be done to increase the size, change the layout and reseal the surface. Council applied for \$400k but only got \$100k in funding.
- There is an online survey at <http://haveyoursaygosford.com.au/deerubbunreserve> - open till 7th June so please have a look and complete the survey.

Richard Woodbury Reserve

- National Tree Planting day to be held at the Reserve on Sunday 28/7/13. 9:0am – 4:40pm

Rob Moxham – representing the local oyster farmers

Rob provided a history of the local oyster industry and the affect that QX disease and POMs virus has had on the industry. The future of the industry is uncertain at the moment – short term options include working with other farmers, working in colder months when the Pacific oysters are not subject to the POMs virus. Rob explained the impact that has been caused by the industry being 'wiped out' on jobs and families etc.

Harry **Recher** pointed out the need to be careful moving oysters between estuaries
Tim **Macdonald** asked if the State Government is taking any leads with research or are they relying on overseas research? Rob said that they have not provided much help other than a little fee relief – oyster farmers have not qualified for disaster relief.

Leong **Lim** suggested that the Government should be providing advice on how to manage stock and to obtain assistance from geneticists.

Rob said that the SA & TAS Governments have provided some funding. He also advised that changing to another species would be costly.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Dangar Island Seagrass Protection

- Still missing one buoy and the other existing ones are out of place. Discussion took place about getting brochures/stickers printed, getting Fisheries/Maritime departments to spend some money at the upcoming boat show

ACTION 201307: David **Lyons** and Harry **Recher** to look at redeploying the buoys around Dangar Island

B. Peat Island / Mooney Mooney Development

- John **Andrews** advised that the local residents feel that they have been left in the dark re the subdivision of land on the east side of the freeway and redevelopment at Mooney Mooney. He spoke with Greg Pearce – who is to meet with State Members and Mayors of Gosford and Hornsby to discuss options.

C. Committee Membership

- The committee membership renewals will be advertised in the Hornsby Advocate and Bush Telegraph. Peter **Coad** will advise the existing committee when this is being advertised.
- Tim **Macdonald** asked about the Terms of Reference and Voting Rights. Peter explained that the Terms of Reference are held and that a full member receives voting rights.
- Leong **Lim** asked about suitable criteria. Peter said they would be looking for experience, knowledge, skills and representation via an application form.

D. Deerubbin Reserve Pontoon

- Lim asked about the works happening around Deerubbin Reserve Pontoon. The pontoon has been damaged during the works.

ACTION 201308: Tim **Macdonald** to follow up repairs to the Pontoon at Deerubbin reserve.

E. Cllr Anisse

- Asked about the follow-on from the Hawkesbury River Economic Benefit Study – is there a way to add value to current assets. Peter advised that Ross will now use this information for grant funding, but he welcomed any feedback/suggestions from committee members.

F. David Miles

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- Suggested there is still a great lack of facilities for recreational boats. Is there a measure of what is required and what is provided?

G. Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee will be held 6pm, Thursday 22nd August 2013, at the Brooklyn Community Centre.

9. CLOSE

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:45pm