
Minutes of the 39th Meeting of the
Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee
Thursday 7th Nov 2019
Brooklyn Community Centre
2-4 Dangar Rd, Brooklyn

Title	Family Name	Given Name	Representation	Present	Apologies	Absent	Alternate Rep.
Mr	ANDREWS	John	Mooney-Mooney Progress Association	X			
Mr	BROWN	Warren	Central Coast Council	X			
Mr	BURNS	David	Community Representative	X			
Ms	BURTON	Tegan	National Parks & Wildlife		X		
Mr	COAD	Peter	Hornsby Shire Council	X			
Mr	FAIRBAIRN	Iain	Sydney Water Corporation		X		
Mr	FENWICK	Andrew	Fenwicks Marina	X			
Mr	FISH	Mike	Community Representative			X	
Ms	FRATER	Ray	NSW Bridge to Bridge Committee		X		
Dr	FREEWATER	Peter	Office of Environment & Heritage	X			
Ms	CONACHER	Sarah	Industry & Investment, Primary Industries Fishing & Aquaculture		X		
Ms	HOWARD	Mary	Community Representative	X			
Mr	IRWIN	Tim	Lower Hawkesbury River Residents –Visiting member	X			
Mr	KARCZ	Bronek	Community Representative	X			
Mr	HAM	Peter	Central Coast Council			X	
Dr	LIM	Leong	Community Representative & Hawkesbury River Rescue Inc	X			
Mr	LEDGER	Robert	Berowra & Districts Community Association – Visiting member	X			
Mr	LYONS	David	Roads and Maritime Authority			X	
Mr	MACDONALD	Tim	Hornsby Shire Council	X			
Cr	MARR	Mick	Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council	X			
Ms	MCMURDO	Wendy	Community Representative		X		
Mr	MILES	David	Boat Owners Association	X			
Ms	MOOY	Rebecca	Greater Sydney Local Land Services		X		
Mr	MOXHAM	Rob	Commercial Representative – Oysters Farmers			X	
Mr	PATTISON	Mick	Hawkesbury City Council		X		
Mr	PIGNEYGUY	Justin	Hawkesbury Cruises		X		
Mr	PLUMMER	Graeme	Berowra Waters Progress Association – Visiting member		X		Jill Gleave
Mr	REES	Stan	Land and Property Management Authority			X	
Mr	ROWE	Simon	Oceanwatch Australia			X	
Dr	RUBIO	Ana	Hornsby Shire Council	X			

Title	Family Name	Given Name	Representation	Present	Apologies	Absent	Alternate Rep.
Mr	SCARSBRICK	Brian	Community Representative		X		
Ms	SEGOVIA	Ingrid	Community Representative	X			
Ms	SHORTER	Cybele	Community Representative Dangar Island	X			
Mr	TAYLOR	Chris	Community Representative	X			
Cllr	TILBURY	Nathan	Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council		X		
Mr	VON ZELEWSKI	Axel	Community Representative		X		
Cr	WADDELL	Warren	Councillor – Hornsby Shire Council		X		

1. WELCOME

Welcomed Tim **Macdonald** as the Strategy manager of the Natural Resources Branch of Hornsby Shire Council. Tim is in Julie Ryland's old role and Julie Ryland's role has been shifted to Strategy & Place as part of the Office of the General Manager. Both Cr Tilbury and Cr Waddell were an apology as they had previous arrangements to attend other community meetings. The meeting was chaired by Cr **Marr**.

2. APOLOGIES

Tegan **Burton** (NPWS); Sarah **Conacher** (DPI Fisheries); Iain **Fairbairn**; Ray **Frater**; Wendy **McMurdo**; Bec **Mooy** (GSLLS); Mick **Pattison**; Justin **Pigneguy**; Graeme **Plummer**; Brian **Scarsbrick**; Cr **Tilbury**; Axel **von Zelewski** and Cr **Waddell**

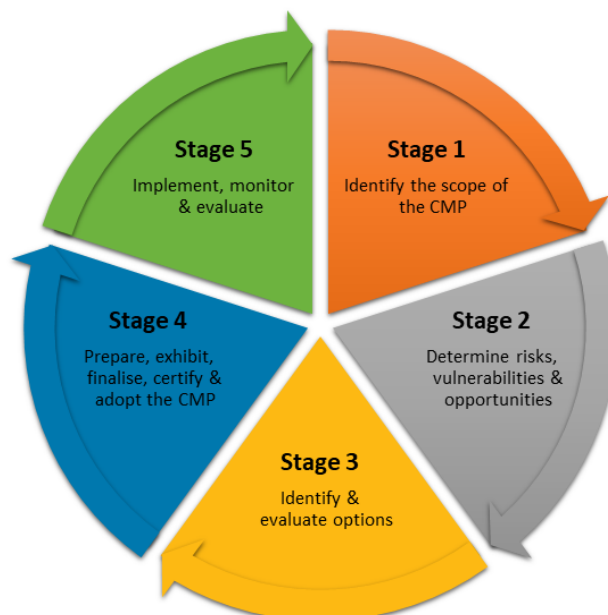
3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No pecuniary interest was declared

4. PRESENTATION:

The meeting was organised to give an update on the progress undertaken in developing Stage 1 of the Coastal Management Program (CMP). The project is being driven by the six councils managing the tidal portion of the Hawkesbury Estuary including Brisbane Waters and Broken Bay to the tidal limit at Yarramundi. The presentation was given by Ana Rubio on behalf of Hornsby Shire Council, Central Coast Council and Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment, Energy, Climate Change & Sustainability (DPIE -EES)

- In partnership with the NSW Government, we are progressing a Coastal Management Program (CMP) for the Hawkesbury in line with the [NSW Coastal Management Framework](#). This framework aims to provide an integrated framework for coastal management across the state.
- Councils have engaged specialist consultants Water Technology and Molino Stewart to assist developing a Scoping Study, which is Stage 1 out of five stages in the development of a CMP.



Key points of the presentation

- The Partner Councils recognise the need for improved management of the river system, to maintain and enhance the social, economic and environmental values of this iconic system.
- The scoping study aims to:
 - review the history of managing the river system and understanding successes (and challenges) in management to date
 - develop a shared understanding of current and future emerging issues
 - determine whether we have the information needed to make good decisions
 - identify the focus of the new CMP, including effective future management and governance approaches, and
 - provide a preliminary business case for the subsequent stages of CMP development.
- An assessment was undertaken to consider the optimal scale for progression through Stage 2-5 of the CMP, including documentation of opportunities and challenges:
Opportunities:
 - Collaborative and consistent framework to estuary management
 - Strategic approach
 - Ability to consider complex natural processes across arbitrary jurisdictional boundaries
 - Strengthen in numbers – common advocacy voice – political support
 - Establishment of appropriate cost-sharing arrangements (e.g. for the development of CMP and the implementation)
 - Efficiencies/ savings (economies of scale, reducing duplication of studies and community engagement, integrated approach to monitoring)
 - Work collaboratively to attract funding and investmentChallenges:
 - Efficient ‘working’ spatial scale (achieve the granularity required)
 - Engagement of all stakeholders and neighbouring councils – how far upstream /upper catchment
 - Different priorities/ responsibilities i.e. complex land-uses (a good mix of all of them)
 - Consistent management of each coastal management zone
 - Understanding success of past practice
 - Differences in capacity – resources (staff engaged in estuary management)
 - Communication with the new ‘mega department’ DPIE
 - Linking with LSPS and associated new strategies currently developed
- An initial stakeholder engagement workshop was held in September 2019 at which we had representatives from eight different State Government Agencies, Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council and several wider catchment councils (in addition to the 6 partner councils). Feedback was positive from those councils who attended the workshop, and we are

now approaching councils within the wider Hawkesbury drainage catchment to inform them about the project and encourage collaboration.

- Timeline for Stage 1:
 - **June-July 2019 :**
Tendering /evaluation/section consultant
 - **August 2019:**
Start Scoping Study: contract etc
Inception Meeting
Internal website built- internal communication
 - **September 2019:**
Stakeholder Engagement meeting
 - **November 2019:**
Stakeholder and Community Engagement Strategy meeting
Gap analysis / First-pass risk assessment
 - **December 2019:**
Draft Final Report – review period
 - **February 2020:**
Presentation to committee: Findings & Overview
 - **March 2020:**
Stakeholder (government agencies) review of study focusing on their roles and responsibilities and projects currently running in their organisations
 - **April 2020:**
Submission of final draft Scoping Study

- Collaborating in a project like this will bring several benefits to all stakeholders and the health of the river system. Some benefits include:
 - enabling a consistent, sustainable and strategic approach to management of the Hawkesbury estuary (i.e. ensure everyone’s priority objectives are considered)
 - the opportunity to address catchment scale issues independently of jurisdictional boundaries
 - efficiency savings (economies of scale in projects with common goals across councils, reducing duplication of studies, monitoring and community engagement)
 - the ability to develop a framework for interagency co-ordination
 - development of a platform to access funding assistance to address catchment-related issues impacting on the social, economic and environmental values of the Hawkesbury system (i.e. to manage agricultural and diffuse stormwater runoff, bank erosion and sedimentation, biodiversity and riparian management), and
 - improved capacity and provide support when resources are limited.

5. CORRESPONDENCE and MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

There were no outstanding actions from previous meeting.

Key Correspondence:

- **22 March 2019** – Information shared on Community Environmental programs Funds
- **4 April 2019** – Algal bloom notification in Calabash and Bar Island area

- **9 April 2019** – information on have your say – Sustainable Hornsby Future
- **14 April 2019** – Update on upcoming Floating Landcare activities
- **17 April 2019** – Notification of Cane Toad collected at Dooralong, Central Coast
- **3 May 2019** – Information provided on Marine Estate projects
- **3 May 2019** – contribution to Brooklyn’s Gateway Newsletter
- **18 June 2019** – Greater Sydney LLS sent information about Landcare Forum and Awards
- **31 July 2019** – invitation to participate in Community walk-in session PFAS Investigation & Management program at RAAF Base Richmond
- **5 August 2019** – Update on projects undertaken by the Natural resources Branch during April to June 2019
- **15 August 2019** – Notification on a number of awards received by the Hawkesbury Commercial fishers, promotion in Council’s social media
- **26 August 2019** – letter from the president of the VRA Hawkesbury River Rescue Inc appointing Dr. Leong Lim to represent their community in the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Plan Committee. Letter and position accepted
- **Sept 2019** – Discussions with DPI in relation to acceptable limits of PFAS on fish and crustacean

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Acceptance of minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting on Thursday 21st March 2019:

Accepted: Tim **Irwin** Carried: Chris **Taylor**.

6. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LOWER HAWKESBURY ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Hornsby Shire Council

Hornsby Council completed a Waterway review based on ~20 years of long-term data at 35 sites across the LGA. For those interested in seeing a copy of report (use [link](#)- careful as it is a large attachment)

- Waterways are highly valued by the community and Council
- Pressures:
 - ageing stormwater/wastewater infrastructure
 - increasing population and development
 - pollution incidents
 - climate change
- Long-term monitoring – since 1994 (35 long-term sites)
- Key findings:
 - All Freshwater Sites: Stable waterway health despite an ever-growing population and increasing development pressure. Water clarity has improved but there is persistently elevated nutrient concentrations, electrical conductivity and pH. Pulse elevated bacteria levels likely to be rainfall related.
 - Urban sites - poor water quality through time
 - Industrial sites - improvements in phosphorus concentrations have been achieved at Larool Creek, Thornleigh and Sams Creek (in Mt Kuring-gai) but no improvement at Hornsby Creek.
 - Estuarine sites are influenced by impacts from the wider Hawkesbury-Nepean system, particularly in relation to nutrient enrichment in upstream areas (upstream of

Wisemans Ferry). Main arm of estuary has low bacteria levels but there are higher levels in Berowra Creek associated with pulse, or intermittent, pollution events that are likely to be rainfall related.

- Berowra Creek – significant improvements in nitrogen concentrations following the completion of Sydney Water upgrades to the Hornsby Heights and West Hornsby Wastewater Treatment Plants in 2003, however no further improvements are evident since this time
- Continuation of WQ Monitoring program:
 - Catchment Health (long-term)
 - Public Health (long-term)
 - Bacteria-related
 - Harmful Algae
 - Investigations – project specific (targets and timeframes):
 - Dry weather flows (source prevention)
 - Wet weather flows
 - Catchment remediation device performance
 - Former landfill sites
 - Stormwater harvesting
 - Catchment knowledge/ integration of water quality into Water Sensitive Hornsby Strategy and Environmental Sustainability Strategy as part of the LSPS
- Community engagement:
 - Education strategy
 - Signage
 - Web portals – sharing information
 - Estuary committee
 - Presentations to schools, community groups, conference, Clean4Shore
 - Citizen science web portal – new Ecohealth database (rain gauges)

Other items:

-Number 10 Dangar Road – The Arts Cottage – has been renovated and is now being operated by the Brooklyn Community Association. There was a formal opening in oct 2019

-Upcoming Guided bushwalks organised – both are fully booked:

-Explore Dangar Island – Friday 22nd Nov

-Boat Tour – Walk and Talk – Friday 23rd Nov

Central Coast Council –

Umina-Ocean Beach Erosion Management Strategy:

Ocean/Umina Beach is located in Broken Bay at the southern end of the Central Coast Local Government Area. The sedimentary system within Broken Bay is extremely complex manifesting in medium to long term periods of cyclical beach erosion and accretion which appear to correlate with the "wet" and "dry" phases of various climate cycles. During extended periods of erosion the integrity and stability of The Esplanade is often compromised and historically this has been managed through implementing ad hoc protection and beach scraping.

This project aims to set the direction for the long-term management of coastal hazards within this embayment in accordance with the Gosford Beaches Coastal Zone Management Plan. There are two aspects being investigated:

-
1. Nourishment of the beach utilising sand from the Ettalong Shoal offshore of Half Tide Rocks; and,
 2. Terminal protection of The Esplanade between Ocean Beach SLSC and Koorung Street boat ramp.

The project will provide Council with the direction and confidence to pursue an holistic, integrated, long term strategy to address the on-going, cyclical impacts of coastal erosion on beach amenity at Umina/Ocean Beach as well as current and future risks to property and infrastructure landward of the beach.

An integrated approach to managing erosion issues will be identified to enable sustainable ongoing management of Umina/Ocean Beach. The project also presents an opportunity for potential secondary benefits through assisting to address navigation issues currently experienced by owners of large and deep keeled vessels (both private and commercial) at the Brisbane Water entrance.

In summary, key outcomes of this project will include:

- improved understanding of the coastal processes and sediment dynamics of Broken Bay which, among other things, will inform management of the Brisbane Water entrance channel;
- improved strategies for managing beach access and amenity and the risks associated with vertical erosion scarps; and,
- a long term solution for protecting The Esplanade and other landward property and infrastructure including water and sewer mains, telecommunications services and the electricity grid from coastal erosion.

National Parks and Wildlife Service –were an apology but Tegan **Burton** sent a report:

- On Hornsby Shire side of the river, NPWS continues to focus efforts on maintaining/improving sensitive environments such gentleman Halt, Singleton Rd, Peats Bight, Crosslands, Calna Creek.
- Exciting to see growing interest from river foreshore communities including Milsons Passage, Coba Point and Marramarra Creek in their neighbouring bushland by getting involved in Bushcare. They have also received enquiries about more bushland friendly gardens
- Working with EPA and Sydney Water to better collect information on cumulative impact of sewer overflows e.g. particularly in Berowra Valley Nat Park
- Floating Landcare received the Grand Champion Award in the Australian Government Partnerships category of the 2019 NSW Landcare Awards
- Model used to manage Floating Landcare most likely will change in 2019 – under development
- Information on Twin beaches has been added to the NPWS website <https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/camping-and-accommodation/campgrounds/twin-beaches-campground>

Greater Sydney Local Land Service - no report as they were an apology. We were notified that Bec Mooy has taken a secondment in the Snowy Mountains. The new LLS rep is Robert Leslie, we hope that Robert will be able to attend future meetings.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Other Business

-Dangar Island League: Wildlife Refuge for the rocky spit on the eastern side of Bradleys Beach.

Council and Dangar Island residents Have been working to identify measure to reduce the impact of visitors and domestic dogs on this sensitive area. . The area of concern is managed by Crown Lands, with the Dangar Island League planning to send a letter to Crown Lands recommending the rocky spit be designated as a Wildlife Refuge. It was discussed that the condition of ‘wildlife refuge’ means you need to enter into voluntary agreement between the Biodiversity Conservation Trust and the landholder. Further info at: <https://www.bct.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-05/WRA%20web%20version.pdf> It is unlikely that a voluntary agreement is going to be effective in managing the current threats to rocky spit.

-Dangar League: Jet skis rental at Hawkesbury River Marina – enquiry about their operational conditions

The following information was provided by RMS and sent to Dangar Island League. Operational conditions for the PWC hire drive are as follows:

- Ensure that an adequate briefing is given to all vessel operators prior to the commencement of the activity.
- A minimum age of 16 years for PWC operators.
- Each tour leader is responsible for supervising no more than three unlicensed operators.
- Ensure all tour leaders, officials and controllers associated with the activity wear appropriate official identifying clothing or clearly display official identification.
- Ensure all hire and drive personal watercraft have a NSW ‘PWC Behaviour Label’ affixed.
- Maximum speed of unlicensed rider vessel’s is limited to 35 knots.
- Area of operation -Brooklyn to Spencer
- Hawkesbury River and connected tributaries bounded by a line drawn from the eastern extremity of Flat Rock Point in an easterly direction to the western extremity of Croppy Point and a line drawn from the east cardinal mark (CHR807) at the convergence of Mangrove Creek and the Hawkesbury River in a southern direction to Gentleman’s Halt Wharf on the opposite shore of the Hawkesbury River.

Leong Lim: Inspections of on-site wastewater systems on river settlements

Hornsby Council is reviewing its wastewater management strategy for on-site septics to consider a range of educational and compliance measures can support environmental and human health outcomes. As part of this program the Committee were informed that a number of information sessions via pop-ups will be organised in different areas.

Central Coast Council is also working on an Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan which will review on-site waste water systems and will determine which areas could potentially benefit from connection to the reticulated sewer system. River settlements were highlighted as part of this work.

Future Meetings

Next meeting – it will be coordinated with the consultation required for the completion of Stage 1 Scoping Study as part of the Hawkesbury River System Coastal Management Program (CMP). Dates to be advised as Stage 1 of CMP develops. Draft Report is scheduled to be completed by early April. A meeting will be organised afterwards (*)

You can access information on meeting dates and previous minutes from <http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/environment/water-catchments/hawkesbury-estuary/lower-hawkesbury-estuary-management-committee-meetings>

CLOSE Meeting closed at 8:15pm

(*) In the current situation of COVID-19 we are considering the best way of informing you about the key outcomes that have come out of the completion of the Scoping Study