

NOTICE OF ORDINARY MEETING

22 JULY 2025



The Mayor and Councillors attendance is respectfully requested:

Mayor: L Anderson (Chair).

Councillors: R Armstrong, G Arnott, C Doohan, N Errington, P Francis, P Le Mottee, B Niland, M Watson, J Wells.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

TIME	ITEM	VENUE
5:30pm:	Public Access (if applied for)	Council Chambers
Followed by:	Ordinary Meeting	Council Chambers

Please Note:

In accordance with the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, you are advised that all discussion held during the Open Council meeting is public information. This will include any discussion involving the Mayor, a Councillor, staff member or a member of the public. All persons present should withhold from making public comments about another individual without seeking the consent of that individual in the first instance. Should you have any questions concerning the privacy of individuals at the meeting, please speak with the Governance Section Manager or the General Manager prior to the meeting.

Please be aware that Council webcasts its Open Council meetings via its website. All persons should refrain from making any defamatory remarks. Council accepts no liability for any defamatory remarks made during the course of the Council meeting.

For the safety and wellbeing of the public, no signs, placards or other props made from material other than paper will be permitted in the Council Chamber. No material should be larger than A3 in size.

Food and beverages are not permitted in the Council Chamber.

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BUSINESS

- 1) Opening meeting.
- 2) Acknowledgement of Country
We acknowledge the Worimi people as the original Custodians and inhabitants of Port Stephens. We acknowledge and pay respects to Worimi elders past and present. May we walk the road to tomorrow with mutual respect and admiration as we care for the beautiful land and waterways together.
- 3) Prayer
 - i. We recognise the rich cultural and religious diversity in Port Stephens and pay respect to the beliefs of all members of our community, regardless of creed or faith.
 - ii. Almighty God, we ask for your blessing as we meet together on behalf of our community. So that today and into the future, you would direct and favour our deliberations to advance the welfare, safety and prosperity of our region. Amen.
- 4) Apologies and applications for a leave of absence from Mayor and Councillors.
- 5) Disclosures of interests.
- 6) Confirmation of minutes.
- 7) Mayoral minute(s).*
- 8) Motions to close meeting to the public.*
- 9) Reports to Council.
- 10) General Manager reports.*
- 11) Questions with Notice.*
- 12) Questions on Notice.
- 13) Notices of motions.*
- 14) Rescission Motions.*
- 15) Confidential matters.*
- 16) Conclusion of the meeting.

**if submitted*

Statement of Ethical Obligations

The Mayor and Councillors are reminded that they remain bound by the Oath/Affirmation of Office made at the commencement of this Council term to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people of Port Stephens and Port Stephens Council and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act, to the best of their skill and judgement.

The Mayor and Councillors are also reminded of the requirement for disclosure of conflicts of interest in relation to items listed for consideration on the Agenda or which are considered at this meeting in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice and Code of Conduct.

PRINCIPLES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Port Stephens Council is a local authority constituted under the Local Government Act 1993. The Act includes the Principles for Local Government for all NSW Councils.

The object of the principles for councils is to provide guidance to enable councils to carry out their functions in a way that facilitates local communities that are strong, healthy and prosperous.

Guiding principles for Council

1) Exercise of functions generally

The following general principles apply to the exercise of functions by Council. Council should:

- a. provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
- b. carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.
- c. plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- d. apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements.
- e. work co-operatively with other councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.
- f. manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way.
- g. work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.
- h. act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community.
- i. be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff.

2) Decision-making

The following principles apply to decision-making by Council (subject to any other applicable law). Council should:

- a. recognise diverse local community needs and interests.
- b. consider social justice principles.
- c. consider the long term and cumulative effects of actions on future generations.
- d. consider the principles of ecologically sustainable development.
- e. Council decision-making should be transparent and decision-makers are to be accountable for decisions and omissions.

3) Community participation

Council should actively engage with their local communities, through the use of the integrated planning and reporting framework and other measures.

Principles of sound financial management

The following principles of sound financial management apply to Council. Council should:

- a. spend responsible and sustainable, aligning general revenue and expenses.
- b. invest in responsible and sustainable infrastructure for the benefit of the local community.
- c. have effective financial and asset management, including sound policies and processes for the following:
- d. performance management and reporting,
- e. asset maintenance and enhancement,
- f. funding decisions,
- g. risk management practices.
- h. have regard to achieving intergenerational equity, including ensuring the following:
 - (i) policy decisions are made after considering their financial effects on future generations,
 - (ii) the current generation funds the cost of its services.

Integrated planning and reporting principles that apply to Council

The following principles for strategic planning apply to the development of the integrated planning and reporting framework by Council. Council should:

- a. identify and prioritise key local community needs and aspirations and consider regional priorities.
- b. identify strategic goals to meet those needs and aspirations.
- c. develop activities, and prioritise actions, to work towards the strategic goals.
- d. ensure that the strategic goals and activities to work towards them may be achieved within council resources.
- e. regularly review and evaluate progress towards achieving strategic goals.
- f. maintain an integrated approach to planning, delivering, monitoring and reporting on strategic goals.
- g. collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals.
- h. manage risks to the local community or area or to the council effectively and proactively.
- i. make appropriate evidence-based adaptations to meet changing needs and circumstances.

PORT STEPHENS COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The Local Government Act requires Council to adopt a Community Strategic Plan (10+ years). The Plan includes a Delivery Program (4 years), Annual Operational Plan and a Resource Strategy, it also includes the Council's budget.

The Community Strategic Plan is organised into 4 focus areas:

OUR COMMUNITY – An accessible and welcoming community respecting diversity, heritage and culture.

OUR PLACE – A liveable and connected place supporting community wellbeing and local economic growth.

OUR ENVIRONMENT – Port Stephens' environment is clean and green, protected and enhanced.

OUR COUNCIL – Port Stephens Council leads, manages and delivers valued community services in a responsible way.

BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

Port Stephens Council is a quality and a customer service focused organisation. We use the Business Excellence Framework as a basis for driving organisational excellence. The Framework is an integrated leadership and management system that describes elements essential to organisational excellence. It is based on 9 principles.

These outcomes align with the following Business Excellence principles:

- 1) Clear direction and mutually agreed plans enable organisational alignment and focus on achievement of goals.
- 2) Understanding what customers and other stakeholders value, now and in the future, enables organisational direction, strategy and action.
- 3) All people work in a system. Outcomes are improved when people work on the system and its associated processes.
- 4) Engaging people's enthusiasm, resourcefulness and participation improves organisational performance.
- 5) Innovation and learning influence the agility and responsiveness of the organisation.
- 6) Effective use of facts, data and knowledge leads to improved decisions.
- 7) Variation impacts predictability, profitability and performance.
- 8) Sustainable performance is determined by an organisation's ability to deliver value for all stakeholders in an ethically, socially and environmentally responsible manner.
- 9) Leaders determine the culture and value system of the organisation through their decisions and behaviour.

MEETING PROCEDURES SUMMARY

Starting time – All meetings must commence within 30 minutes of the advertised time.

Quorum – A quorum at Port Stephens Council is 6.

Declarations of Interest

Pecuniary – Councillors who have a pecuniary interest must declare the interest, not participate in the debate and leave the meeting.

Non-Pecuniary – Councillors are required to indicate if they have a non-pecuniary interest, should a Councillor declare a significant non-pecuniary they must not participate in the debate and leave the meeting. If a Councillor declares a less than significant non-pecuniary they must state why no further action should be taken. Councillors may remain in the meeting for a less than significant non-pecuniary.

Confirm the Minutes – Councillors are able to raise any matter concerning the Minutes prior to confirmation of the Minutes.

Public Access – Each speaker has 5 minutes to address Council with no more than 2 for and 2 against the subject.

Motions and Amendments

Moving Recommendations – If a Committee recommendation is being moved, ie been to a Committee first, then the motion must be moved and seconded at Council prior to debate proceeding. A Councillor may move an alternate motion to the recommendation.

Amendments – A Councillor may move an amendment to any motion however only one amendment or motion can be before Council at any one time, if carried it becomes the motion.

Seconding Amendments – When moving an amendment, it must be seconded or it lapses.

Incorporating Amendments – If a motion has been moved and the mover and seconder agree with something which is being moved as an amendment by others, they may elect to incorporate it into their motion or amendment as the case may be.

Voting Order – When voting on a matter the order is as follows:

- 1) Amendment (If any)
- 2) Foreshadowed Amendments – (If any, and in the order they were moved)
- 3) Motion

NB – Where an amendment is carried, there must be another vote on the amendment becoming the motion.

Voting – an item is passed where a majority vote for the subject. If the voting is tied the Chairperson has a second (casting) vote which is used to break the deadlock.

Closed Session – There must be a motion to close a meeting. Prior to voting on the motion the chairperson will invite the gallery to make representations if they believe the meeting shouldn't be closed. Then Councillors vote on the matter. If adopted the gallery should then be cleared and the matter considered in closed session. Any decision taken in session closed is a resolution. There must be a motion to reopen the Council meeting to the public. If decision occurred in 'closed session', the meeting is advised of the resolution in 'open session'.

Procedural Motion – Is a motion necessary for the conduct of the meeting, it is voted on without debate, eg defer an item to the end of the meeting (however, to defer an item to another meeting is not a procedural motion), extend the time for a Councillor to speak etc.

Points of Order – when any of the following are occurring or have occurred a Councillor can rise on a 'Point of Order', the breach is explained to the Chairperson who rules on the matter.

A Point of Order can be raised where:

- 1) There has been any non-compliance with procedure, eg motion not seconded etc.
- 2) A Councillor commits an act of disorder:
 - a. Contravenes the Act, any Regulation in force under the Act, the Code of Conduct or this Code.
 - b. Assaults or threatens to assault another Councillor or person present at the meeting.
 - c. Moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the Council or Committee, or address or attempts to address the Council or Committee on such a motion, amendment or matter.
 - d. Insults or makes personal reflections on or imputes improper motives to any other Councillor, any staff member or alleges a breach of Council's Code of Conduct.
 - e. Says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the Council or Committee into disrepute.

Declarations of Conflict of Interest – Definitions

Pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated as provided in Clause 7 of the Code of Conduct.

Non Pecuniary interests are private or personal interests the council official has that do not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in the Code of Conduct. These commonly arise out of family or personal relationships or involvement in sporting, social or other cultural groups and associations and may include an interest of financial nature.

The matter of a report to council from the conduct review committee/reviewer relates to the public duty of a councillor or the general manager. Therefore, there is no requirement for Councillors or the General Manager to disclose a conflict of interest in such a matter.

The political views of a Councillor do not constitute a private interest.



Form of Special Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

1. This form must be completed using block letters or typed.
2. If there is insufficient space for all the information you are required to disclose, you must attach an appendix which is to be properly identified and signed by you.

Important information

This information is being collected for the purpose of making a special disclosure of pecuniary interests under clause 4.36(c) of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Code of Conduct).

The special disclosure must relate only to a pecuniary interest that a councillor has in the councillor's principal place of residence, or an interest another person (whose interests are relevant under clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct) has in that person's principal place of residence.

Clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct states that you will have a pecuniary interest in a matter because of the pecuniary interest of your spouse or your de facto partner or your relative or because your business partner or employer has a pecuniary interest. You will also have a pecuniary interest in a matter because you, your nominee, your business partner or your employer is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

"Relative" is defined by clause 4.4 of the Model Code of Conduct as meaning your, your spouse's or your de facto partner's parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descendant or adopted child and the spouse or de facto partner of any of those persons.

You must not make a special disclosure that you know or ought reasonably to know is false or misleading in a material particular. Complaints about breaches of these requirements are to be referred to the Office of Local Government and may result in disciplinary action by the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government or the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

This form must be completed by you before the commencement of the council or council committee meeting at which the special disclosure is being made. The completed form must be tabled at the meeting. Everyone is entitled to inspect it. The special disclosure must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 JULY 2025

Special disclosure of pecuniary interests by [full name of councillor]

in the matter of [insert name of environmental planning instrument]

which is to be considered at a meeting of the PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL

to be held on the _____ day of _____ 20__

Pecuniary interest	
Address of the affected principal place of residence of the councillor or an associated person, company or body (the identified land)	
Relationship of identified land to the councillor [Tick or cross one box.]	<input type="checkbox"/> The councillor has an interest in the land (eg is the owner or has another interest arising out of a mortgage, lease, trust, option or contract, or otherwise). <input type="checkbox"/> An associated person of the councillor has an interest in the land. <input type="checkbox"/> An associated company or body of the councillor has an interest in the land.
Matter giving rise to pecuniary interest ¹	
Nature of the land that is subject to a change in zone/planning control by the proposed LEP (the subject land) ² [Tick or cross one box]	<input type="checkbox"/> The identified land. <input type="checkbox"/> Land that adjoins or is adjacent to or is in proximity to the identified land.
Current zone/planning control [Insert name of current planning instrument and identify relevant zone/planning control applying to the subject land]	

¹ Clause 4.1 of the Model Code of Conduct provides that a pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person. A person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to the matter, or if the interest is of a kind specified in clause 4.6 of the Model Code of Conduct.

² A pecuniary interest may arise by way of a change of permissible use of land adjoining, adjacent to or in proximity to land in which a councillor or a person, company or body referred to in clause 4.3 of the Model Code of Conduct has a proprietary interest.

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 JULY 2025

Proposed change of zone/planning control [Insert name of proposed LEP and identify proposed change of zone/planning control applying to the subject land]	
Effect of proposed change of zone/planning control on councillor or associated person [Insert one of the following: "Appreciable financial gain" or "Appreciable financial loss"]	

[If more than one pecuniary interest is to be declared, reprint the above box and fill in for each additional interest.]

Mayor/Councillor's signature _____

Date _____

[This form is to be retained by the council's general manager and included in full in the minutes of the meeting]



Declaration of Interest form

Agenda item No. _____

Report title _____

Mayor/Councillor _____ declared a

Tick the relevant response:

<input type="checkbox"/>	pecuniary conflict of interest
<input type="checkbox"/>	significant non pecuniary conflict of interest
<input type="checkbox"/>	less than significant non- pecuniary conflict of interest

in this item. The nature of the interest is _____

If a Councillor declares a less than significant conflict of interest and intends to remain in the meeting, the councillor needs to provide an explanation as to why the conflict requires no further action to manage the conflict. (Attach a separate sheet if required.)

OFFICE USE ONLY: (Committee of the Whole may not be applicable at all meetings.)

Mayor/Councillor left the Council meeting in Committee of the Whole at _____pm.

Mayor/Councillor returned to the Council meeting in Committee of the Whole at _____ pm.

Mayor/Councillor left the Council meeting at _____ pm.

Mayor/Councillor returned to the Council meeting at _____ pm.

COUNCIL REPORTS

ITEM NO. 1**FILE NO: 25/138971
EDRMS NO: 16-2024-611-1****DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION (DA) 16-2024-611-1 FOR A TOURIST AND VISITOR ACCOMMODATION (34 CABINS) AT 1107 SWAN BAY ROAD, SWAN BAY**

REPORT OF: RYAN FALKENMIRE - DEVELOPMENT AND COMPLIANCE
SECTION MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: COMMUNITY FUTURES

RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Refuses Development Application (DA) No. 16-2024-611-1 for demolition of existing structures, and construction of tourist and visitor accommodation comprising 34 cabins, a manager's residence and associated communal facilities at 1107 Swan Bay Road, Swan Bay (Lot 14 DP 1177850) as per the Reasons for Refusal contained in **(ATTACHMENT 1)**.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to present a development application (DA) to Council for determination. A summary of the DA and property details is provided below:

Subject Land	1107 Swan Bay Road, Swan Bay
Total Area	5.5ha
Zoning	Part RU2 Rural Landscape and Part R2 Low Density Residential
Submissions	6 submissions
Key Issues	<p>The key issues identified throughout the assessment of the development are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flooding and Drainage• Site Services• Coastal and Rural Character• Traffic Impact• Site Suitability <p>A detailed assessment of these issues is contained within the Planner's Assessment Report (ATTACHMENT 2). The Reasons for Refusal (ATTACHMENT 1) provides grounds as to all the reasons the development is not</p>

	supported and recommended for refusal.
Applicant	Tailored Town Planning Services – Matilda Munn
Land Owner	Mr H El Kazwini

The DA has been reported in accordance with Council's 'Planning Matters to be Reported to Council Policy' as it has been called up by Councillor Wells and Councillor Niland (**ATTACHMENT 3**).

A locality plan is provided at (**ATTACHMENT 4**).

Proposal

The proposed development seeks consent for the demolition of existing structures, and construction of tourist and visitor accommodation comprising 34 cabins, a manager's residence, and communal facilities including:

- Tennis court
- Shared amenities block
- Swimming pool and 2 spas
- Numerous seating areas throughout the site
- Playground
- Outdoor dining tables
- BBQ facilities
- Mini golf.

The 34 cabins are proposed to be built on stilts, 2.3m above existing ground level (to respond to flooding constraints). Half of the cabins (17) comprise 2 bedroom, 1 bathroom units. The other 17 cabins comprise 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom units. The undercroft area of the cabins would provide covered car parking at ground level.

Site Description

The subject site (the 'site') is located at 1107 Swan Bay Road, Swan Bay, formally known as Lot 14 DP 1177850. The site is predominantly zoned RU2 Rural Landscape under the Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013. A small eastern segment of the site is zoned R2 Low Density Residential, although no development or works are proposed on this portion of the site.

The site is 5.498ha in size and can be described as primarily cleared land with scattered vegetation along the site boundaries. The site has access to grid electricity and is not serviced by water and sewer infrastructure by Hunter Water.

The site maintains vehicle access from Swan Bay Road, a dual-carriageway unsealed collector road. The locality contains environmentally sensitive land including estuarine and riparian habitats, national park, and endangered species. The locality is typically constrained by flooding and bushfire hazards, with the natural surrounds mapped as having high biodiversity value.

The population of Swan Bay is low, with dispersed dwellings and access to limited local services, relying on nearby centres such as Raymond Terrace and Karuah for access to commercial, educational and community facilities. With consideration of the Port Stephens Strategic Planning Framework, urban intensification has not been identified in this locality.

Key Issues

The key issues identified during the assessment relate to flooding, site services, rural character, traffic impact and the overall suitability of the site for the proposed development. A detailed assessment of the proposed development and these matters is contained within the Planner's Assessment Report (**ATTACHMENT 2**). The Reasons for Refusal (**ATTACHMENT 1**) provides details as to the specific reasons why the application is not supported.

A summary of the key issues is provided below.

Flooding and Drainage

The proposed development is located on land mapped within the Flood Planning Area. The site is affected by tidal inundation, storm surge and sea level rise with the nominated flood risk level being High Hazard Flood Fringe Area. In accordance with Figure BI of Council's Development Control Plan, the development proposes tourist and visitor accommodation (a sensitive and hazardous land use) in a hazard category considered to be unsuitable and representing a high risk.

In addition to Council's mapped flood data, observed conditions following heavy rainfall indicate localised surface water flooding, likely due to the site's extremely flat topography (with a fall of less than 0.2%) and poor soil infiltration capacity. Parts of the site are often wet, with ponding depths of over 100mm that could remain for extended periods due to the lack of grade and drainage. Further details of site conditions and flooding have been provided within the Planner's Assessment Report (**ATTACHMENT 2**).

The proposed stormwater design is not considered to accommodate the internal stormwater drainage needs of the development adequately. Moreover, the proposed raised loop road has the potential to act as a levee, trapping water within the site and preventing surface drainage, consequently worsening localised nuisance flooding.

The consequence of this proposal is likely to be regular and prolonged surface ponding across the proposed parking area, recreational areas and communal open spaces.

The Flood Impact and Risk Assessment (FIRA) prepared with the DA, included details regarding flood warning and emergency response for the proposed development. The primary response for a flood emergency is proposed as site evacuation and proactively managing site bookings (i.e. cancelling if conditions require). This strategy relies on the site's manager to be aware of the flood

constraints of the site and proactively manage the flood risk to the park inhabitants. This is not considered to be an appropriate risk control for a sensitive land use in a high hazard flood planning category.

While it is acknowledged that cabins are designed above the PMF level and could provide temporary flood refuge for site patrons, this is not considered to be a safe and reliable flood safety measure during major events. Isolation during flood events, even if limited to a few hours, presents serious risks, particularly to vulnerable persons such as children or elderly guests.

The site is also mapped within the Port Stephens Coastal Management Plan (CMP) coastal risk area. Taking a 50 year design life for the proposed development, toward the end of this design life (2070) the site is expected to become inundated multiple times per year (highest astronomical tide level). This presents a level of nuisance flooding that would impact the day-to-day operation of the facility that has not been mitigated or addressed as part of the proposal.

Site Services

The site is not connected to reticulated water and sewer services. The development proposes individual rainwater tanks (1 per cabin), providing a total of 170,000L.

To date, no information has been provided to confirm:

- Whether this volume is sufficient to meet the potable water needs of all occupants (total equivalent population of 114 persons)
- How potable water would be treated to comply with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG)
- Whether additional tanks or systems would service the 2 resident managers and 10 non-resident staff
- How potable supply would be maintained during periods of low rainfall.

The submitted Bushfire Assessment Report also identifies a requirement for 10,000L of static water for every 2 cabins dedicated to firefighting. It must be assumed that this requirement would be met via separate tanks not included in the 170,000L potable water calculation. As above, to date no plans, specifications or commitment to provide the firefighting water supply has been submitted by the applicant.

Coastal and Rural Character

The proposal does not adequately respond to the environmental sensitivities or land use constraints of the coastal setting, and lacks sufficient detail on operational management, including measures to avoid or mitigate impacts associated with increased visitor behaviour, access control and human interaction with natural areas.

Design treatments have been incorporated into the design to assist in softening the visual impact, although the scale and nature of the proposed land use introduces a more intensive, tourism-focused function which may negatively impact the rural

landscape values of the area over time. Tourist and visitor accommodation may be compatible in certain rural contexts, however the subject site is not located within an established or emerging tourism precinct, nor is it associated with a broader agricultural or environmental tourism offering (eg farm stay or eco-tourism). The construction of multiple tourist holiday cabins on a relatively cleared rural site risks introducing built form and human activity that is inconsistent with the open, low-density rural and coastal character of the locality.

Traffic Impact

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) was provided with the DA. The TIA is considered to underestimate traffic generation from the proposal by applying reduced occupancy rates based on survey data from the Mid Coast and Mid Western LGAs during off-peak school term periods. These assumptions are not considered to be reflective of peak summer visitation or holiday periods that typically generate the highest traffic volumes in Port Stephens, particularly in waterfront and tourism-oriented localities.

Considering the context of the current standard of Swan Bay Road, which comprises of approximately 2km section of unsealed pavement to the west of the site, narrow shoulders and existing crash history, the traffic generated by the proposal suggests that the development is likely to have an unacceptable impact on the safety, capacity and ongoing maintenance of the local road network. To date, no plans, specifications or commitment to provide upgrades to the local road network reflective of the impacts generated by the development has been provided.

Site Suitability

The subject site is located within a sensitive coastal environment, including proximity to coastal wetlands and habitat for threatened species. The site is mapped as a High Hazard Flood Fringe Area subject to tidal inundation, storm surge, and nuisance flooding due to minimal site fall and poor drainage. The lack of reticulated water and sewer infrastructure, combined with insufficient certainty on the provision of potable water supply and water supply for firefighting purposes, the site is deemed to have limited capacity to sustainably support development for tourist accommodation purposes.

While the development complies with certain requirements for water quality and wastewater management, the proposal has fundamental constraints related to stormwater drainage, flood risk, and cumulative environmental impacts. The site's current rural landscape character and absence of supporting public amenities or strategic tourism infrastructure further undermine the proposal's compatibility with the zone objectives and local planning framework.

Therefore, the proposed development has not been able to demonstrate that the site is suitable for the proposed development without substantial infrastructure upgrades. To date, no commitment has been made or plans provided for assessment that would overcome these fundamental application issues.

Conclusion

As detailed in the Planner's Assessment Report (**ATTACHMENT 2**), the development proposes a number of non-compliances and inconsistencies with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, and relevant environmental planning instruments and policies, including the Resilience and Hazards State Environmental Planning Policy, Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013 and Port Stephens Development Control Plan. The proposed development is not deemed to be suitable for the site, nor to be in the public interest and subsequently recommended for refusal in accordance with the Reasons for Refusal (**ATTACHMENT 1**).

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction	Delivery Program 2025-2029
Housing, tourism & economy	Develop and implement Council's key planning documents

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	Yes		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

LEGAL, POLICY AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

The proposed development is considered inconsistent with the relevant planning instruments including the Resilience and Hazards State Environmental Planning Policy, Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013 and Port Stephens Development Control Plan.

A detailed assessment against these requirements and provisions is contained within the Planner's Assessment Report provided at (**ATTACHMENT 2**). Based on the recommendation by Council staff, the determination of the DA may be challenged by the applicant in the Land and Environment Court.

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that if the DA is refused, the determination of the DA may be challenged by the applicant in the Land and Environment Court.	High	Determine the DA against the recommendation and reasons for refusal. Noting however, it is within Council's resources to defend such an appeal in the Land and Environment Court.	Yes
There is a risk that if the DA is refused, the determination of the DA may be challenged by the applicant in the Land and Environment Court.	High	Determine the DA against the recommendation and reasons for refusal. Noting however, it is within Council's resources to defend such an appeal in the Land and Environment Court.	Yes
There is a risk that if the DA is approved, the determination of the DA may be challenged by a third party in the Land and Environment Court.	Low	Determine the DA in line with the recommendation and reasons for refusal.	Yes

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Includes Social, Economic and Environmental Implications.

Social and Economic Impacts

The proposal would result in the establishment of a 34 cabin tourist and visitor accommodation development within a rural coastal landscape. This development has the potential to generate moderate economic benefits by attracting visitors and supporting local tourism related expenditure. However, given the site's remote location, absence of supporting infrastructure and limited integration with established tourism precincts, the overall economic uplift is considered to be constrained.

In terms of social impacts, the increased visitation may place pressure on the limited public amenities and natural recreational areas nearby, potentially affecting community enjoyment and the amenity of the locality. Without adequate supporting infrastructure and visitor management, there is a risk of degradation to public open space and conflicts between tourism use and conservation values. Visitor education and management strategies would be essential to mitigate adverse social impacts. Furthermore, the development would increase the overall exposure of people and property to flooding impacts, placing an additional burden on the operational capacity of emergency response facilities and critical infrastructure during flood events.

Impacts on the Built Environment

The proposed development would introduce multiple new buildings and associated infrastructure into a predominantly rural landscape, which may alter the existing low density setting and open character of the area. While design measures such as buffering and site layout have been incorporated with the aim to minimise visual intrusion, the cumulative effect of intensified tourist accommodation represents a shift towards a more built-up environment inconsistent with the prevailing rural and coastal context.

The development proposes a visual magnitude of change through hard infrastructure such as tall cabins, roads, stormwater treatment systems and on-site wastewater management. Additionally, the design has not fully addressed existing drainage and flooding constraints which has the potential to exacerbate nuisance flooding in the area.

Impacts on the Natural Environment

The proposed development would involve the construction and operational activities within close proximity to sensitive coastal wetlands and important shorebird habitat. Visitor activities such as boating, fishing and general recreation could disturb threatened and migratory bird species, while the absence of supporting public infrastructure (toilets, waste disposal, seating) could lead to degradation of the foreshore environment and reduce visual amenity.

The site is also subject to high flood risk from tidal inundation and local surface water ponding, which has not been fully addressed in the design, posing potential environmental and public health risks. The development is considered to conflict with the objectives of coastal environmental protection and biodiversity conservation.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council's Communication and Engagement Strategy uses the IAP2 Framework to identify the level of engagement undertaken. An explanation for each level is shown below.

INFORM	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
CONSULT	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
INVOLVE	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

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COLLABORATE	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
EMPOWER	To place final decision-making and/or developed budgets in the hands of the public.
	No external communications and engagement are required for this report.

The following communication and engagement apply to this report.

External communications and engagement

Public Submissions

CONSULT	<p>The application was exhibited from 16 January 2025 to 30 January 2025 in accordance with the provisions of the Port Stephens Council Community Engagement Strategy. 6 submissions were received during this period.</p> <p>A summary of the submissions is provided in the Planner's Assessment Report (ATTACHMENT 2).</p> <p>The application was referred to the RFS in accordance with s100B of the Rural Fires Act 1997. General Terms of Approval (GTA), were issued by the RFS on 15 January 2025.</p>
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Internal communications and engagement

Consultation has been undertaken by the Development and Compliance Section with:

- Assets Section.
- Strategy and Environment Section.

OPTIONS

- 1) Accept the recommendation.
- 2) Amend the recommendation.
- 3) Reject the recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Reasons for Refusal. [↓](#)
- 2) Planner's Assessment Report. [↓](#)
- 3) Call to Council form. [↓](#)
- 4) Locality Plan. [↓](#)

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

All information relating to this development application (DA) is available on the Councillors' Dashboard.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

**REASONS FOR REFUSAL**

1. The proposed development fails to demonstrate that adequate arrangements have been made for the supply of potable water and firefighting water, as required under Clause 7.6(a) of the Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013 (PSLEP 2013), and is therefore inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act).
2. The proposed development fails to demonstrate suitable arrangements for the drainage of stormwater, particularly in relation to the site's minimal fall, low-permeability soils, surface ponding, and lack of a positive drainage path. The stormwater design fails to provide for gravity drainage to an approved point of discharge, inconsistent with Clause 7.6(d) of PSLEP 2013 and accordingly Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act.
3. The Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) underestimates traffic volumes by relying on low-occupancy off-peak data from other LGAs, rather than applying the standard RTA rate of 0.4 vehicles per hour per cabin. When considered alongside the poor condition of Swan Bay Road, including a 2km unsealed section and known safety issues, the development is likely to result in unacceptable traffic impacts. The proposal fails to provide suitable road access for the proposed high volume of traffic, as required under Clause 7.6(e) of the PSLEP 2013, and is therefore inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act.
4. The proposed development fails to comply with the road access and traffic generation provisions of Chapter B8 Road Network and Parking of the Port Stephens Development Control Plan 2014 (PSDCP 2014), particularly in relation to road safety, capacity, and maintenance of Swan Bay Road. As such, the proposal is inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(a)(iii) of the EP&A Act.
5. The proposed development fails to satisfy the requirements of Section 2.8 of State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) (Resilience and Hazards) 2021, as it is located adjacent to mapped coastal wetlands and the submitted Water Quality Assessment does not adequately address local hydrological impacts, including surface water ponding and shallow groundwater. Council cannot be satisfied that the proposal would not adversely affect the wetland or degrade water quality, thereby inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act.
6. The proposed development does not adequately address the requirements of Section 2.10 of the Resilience and Hazards SEPP, as the site's proximity to environmentally sensitive coastal areas, including known threatened shorebird habitat, introduces potential indirect impacts due to increased visitor activity. In the absence of enforceable visitor management measures and supporting public infrastructure, the proposal is inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act.
7. The proposed development does not satisfactorily respond to the requirements of Section 2.11 of the Resilience and Hazards SEPP, as it intensifies land use in a coastal fringe location without adequate mitigation measures to manage environmental and

ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 REASONS FOR REFUSAL.

scenic impacts. The lack of public amenity infrastructure and operational controls to manage visitor impacts is inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act.

8. The proposed development is inconsistent with the objectives of Section 2.12 of the Resilience and Hazards SEPP, as it introduces intensified human activity and built form to an ecologically sensitive, low-lying site with constrained access and lacking essential infrastructure. The proposal does not protect ecological and scenic values or promote land uses compatible with environmental constraints, contrary to Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act.
9. The proposed development is inconsistent with Clause 5.21 of PSLEP 2013 and Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act, as it is located within a High Hazard Flood Fringe Area and fails to demonstrate flood compatibility or appropriate drainage design without offsite and onsite impacts. Concerns include stormwater ponding, inadequate grades, flood entrapment risks created by the loop road, and the absence of a viable evacuation strategy for guests and staff during events up to and including the 1% AEP. The proposal also fails to consider future sea level rise or inundation flooding.
10. The proposed development is likely to result in adverse environmental and public health impacts, due to poor stormwater drainage, surface ponding, flood risk, and lack of essential services including potable and firefighting water. The site's constraints, combined with the scale and intensity of development, make it unsuitable for the proposed use, inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(b) of the EP&A Act.
11. The site is unsuitable for the proposed development, as it relies on unsealed road access, lacks reticulated water supply, and is subject to drainage and flooding hazards. The proposal fails to appropriately respond to the physical limitations of the land, contrary to Section 4.15(1)(c) of the EP&A Act.
12. The proposed development is inconsistent with the objectives of the RU2 Rural Landscape zone under PSLEP 2013, as it introduces a scale of tourist accommodation and built form that is not compatible with the rural character, is unrelated to primary production or eco-tourism, and is not supported by existing infrastructure or services. The proposal does not demonstrate alignment with the intent to promote rural-compatible tourism, inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) of the EP&A Act.
13. The proposed development is not in the public interest, as it is inconsistent with the applicable planning framework, fails to provide essential infrastructure, and does not demonstrate orderly, coordinated, or sustainable land use outcomes. Approval would set an undesirable precedent for further development in environmentally constrained areas, inconsistent with Section 4.15(1)(e) of the EP&A Act.



DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT REPORT

APPLICATION REFERENCES

Application Number	16-2024-611-1
Development Description	Tourist and visitor accommodation (34 cabins)
Applicant	Tailored Town Planning Services
Land owner	MR H El Kazwini
Date of Lodgement	05/12/2024
Value of Works	\$7,677,851.00
Submissions	6

PROPERTY DETAILS

Property Address	1107 Swan Bay Road SWAN BAY
Lot and DP	LOT: 14 DP: 1177850
88B Restrictions on Title	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The minimum habitable floor level for any future dwelling on any lot burdened must be not less than 3.4m AHD 2. No domestic cats are permitted to be retained as pets on any lots burdened 3. Dogs are permitted to be retained as pets on any lot burdened provided if walked they are on a leash or otherwise fenced within the boundaries of their owners property 4. Direct access from any lot burdened onto Gir-um-bit National Park is prohibited 5. All Asset Protection Zones on any lot burdened are to be maintained in perpetuity and in accordance with the 'Bush Fire Threat Assessment ' undertaken by Geological Survey and Assessment dated 4.2.2008 and the requirements of the Rural Fire Services Standards for Asset Protection Zone documents
Current Use	Rural Residential
Zoning	R2 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL / PART RU2 RURAL LANDSCAPE
Site Constraints	Bushfire Prone Land – Vegetation Category 3 Coastal Wetlands Proximity Area Acid Sulfate Soils – Class 3

ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 2 PLANNER'S ASSESSMENT REPORT.

	CKPoM – Other vegetation & Mainly cleared land Endangered Ecological Communities High Environmental Value Mapping Coastal Zone Combined Corridor Map Dwelling Entitlement Flood Planning Area LEP mapped wetlands
State Environmental Planning Policies	State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021 State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021

PROPOSAL

The proposed development seeks consent for demolition of existing structures, and construction of tourist and visitor accommodation comprising 34 cabins, a manager's residence, and communal facilities including:

- Tennis court,
- Shared amenities block,
- Swimming pool and 2 spas,
- Numerous seating areas throughout the site,
- Playground,
- Outdoor dining tables,
- BBQ facilities, and
- Mini golf.

The 34 cabins are proposed to be built on stilts, 2.3m above existing ground level, as shown in Figure 1 below. Half of the cabins (17) comprise 2-bedrooms, 1 bathroom, and an open plan living, dining and kitchen area. The other 17 cabins comprise 1-bedroom, 1 bathroom, and an open plan living, dining and kitchen area. The cabins are paired with a roof structure to provide covered access over the cabin stairwell. The undercroft area of the cabins will provide covered car parking at ground level.

Access to the site is provided from Swan Bay Road, with a proposed driveway loop connecting the cabins to the site entrance via individual crossovers (as shown on the site plan in Figure 2 below). The development includes associated civil works including earthworks, on-site sewer management systems, and stormwater infrastructure.

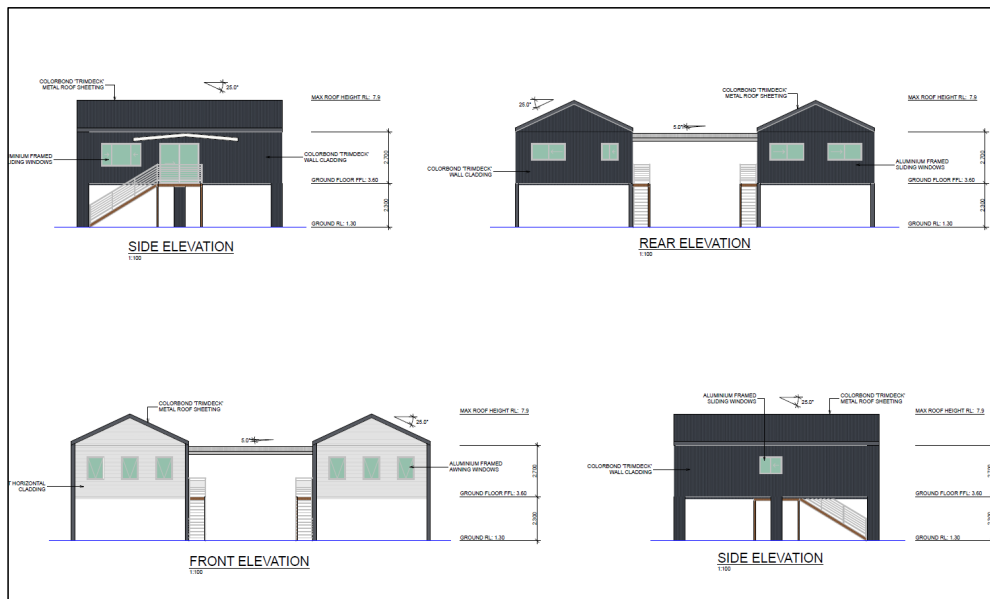


Figure 1: Elevation Plans of Proposed Cabins

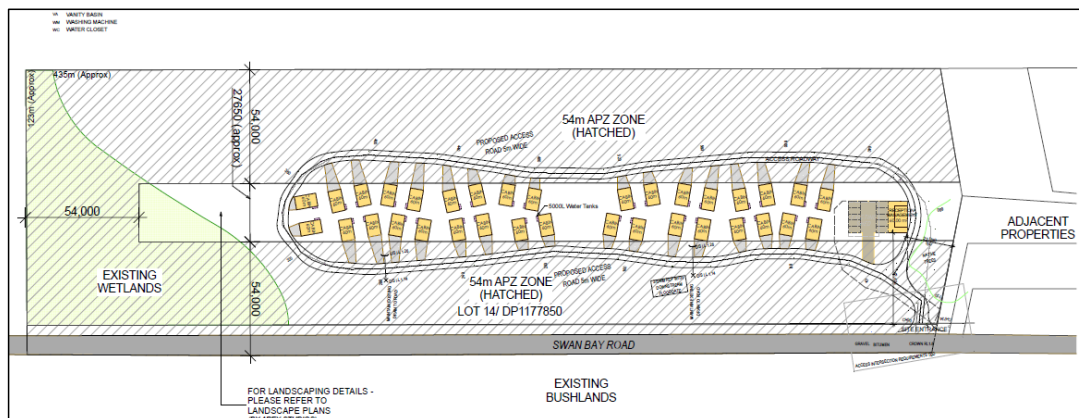


Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

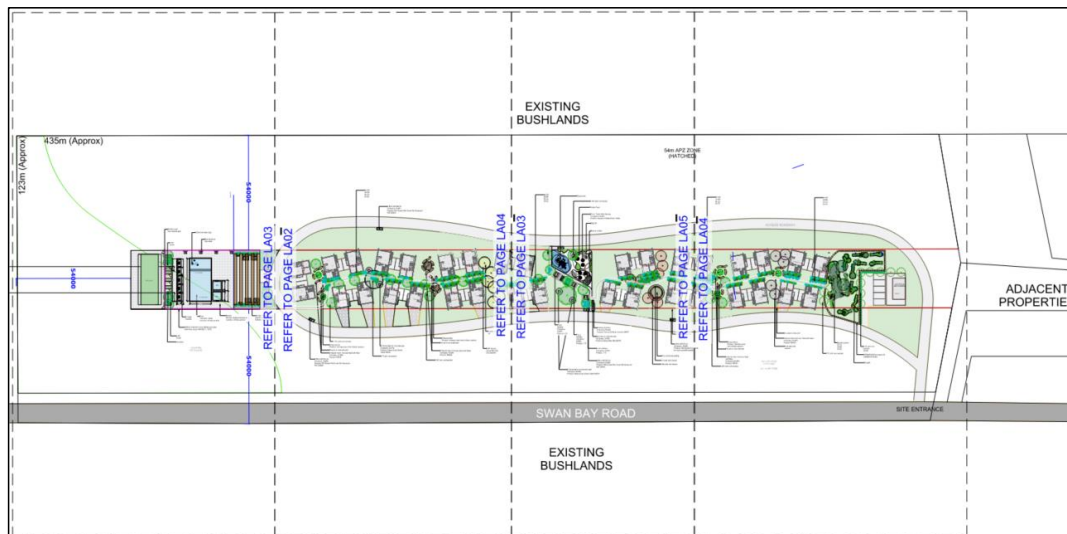


Figure 3: Proposed Landscape Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject site (the 'site') is located at 1107 Swan Bay Road, Swan Bay formally known as Lot 14 DP 1177850. The site is zoned RU2 Rural Landscape under *the Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013*.

The site is 5.498ha in size and can be described as primarily cleared land with scattered vegetation along the site boundaries. The site contains an existing structure located near the eastern boundary which appears to be utilised for rural residential purposes. The site has access to grid electricity, although, the site is not serviced by Hunter Water with regard to fresh potable water or sewer services.

The site maintains vehicle access from Swan Bay Road, a dual-carriageway unsealed collector road. It is noted the section of road servicing the site exists in a dilapidated state, with some areas unsealed and other areas with limited road base (one-way portions of sealed road). Swan Bay is an isolated rural locality characterised by low-density residential development and rural land uses. The locality contains environmentally sensitive land including estuarine and riparian habitats, national park, and endangered species. The majority of the Swan Bay area is not connected to reticulated services such as sewer, water or road infrastructure that is suitable for a high traffic environment, and landholdings are typically constrained by flooding, biodiversity, and bushfire hazards.

The population of Swan Bay is low, with dispersed dwellings and access to limited local services, relying on nearby centres such as Raymond Terrace and Karuah for access to commercial, educational and community facilities. With consideration of the Port Stephens Strategic Planning Framework, urban intensification has not been identified in this locality.

An aerial image of the site is provided in Figure 4 below.

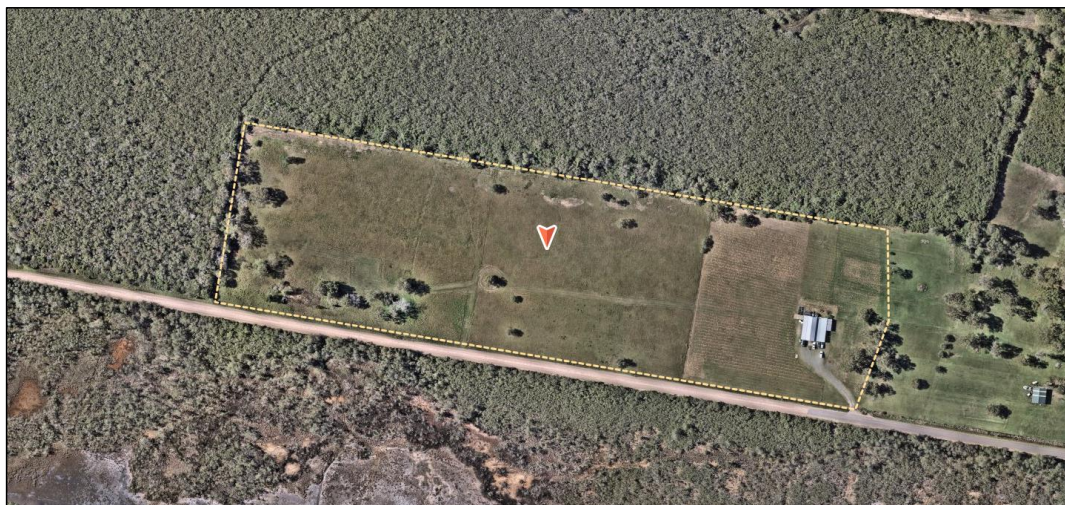


Figure 4: Aerial GIS imagery of the subject site outlined in yellow

SITE HISTORY

There have been a number of applications lodged over the site which are summarised in the following table.

Application #	Proposal Description	Determination	Date Determined
16-2013-768-1	Storage Shed	Approved	19 February 2014
25-2007-1	Torrens Title Subdivision	Approved	24 July 2009

The subject site does not have records of contamination or historical applications that would impact the proposed development.

SITE INSPECTION DETAILS

A site inspection was carried out on 5 February 2025. The subject site can be seen in **Photographs 1 and 2** below.



Photograph 1: Site Image 1



Photograph 2: Site Image 2

REFERRALS

The proposed development was referred to the following internal specialists and external agencies. The comments provided by the specialist staff and external agencies have been used to carry out the assessment against the S4.15 Matters for Consideration below.

Internal

Development Engineering

Outcome	Not supported
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ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 2 PLANNER'S ASSESSMENT REPORT.

Comment	<p>The application was referred to the Development Engineering Section, who did not support the application and requested additional information in regards to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inundation risks from coastal impacts based on data from the Port Stephens Coastal Management Program. The projections indicate that flood levels will increase over time as climate change effects intensify, with the highest astronomical tide expected to inundate the site sometime after 2040. • The internal loop road was proposed at a level of 1.8m AHD, which is 500mm below the current day 1% AEP flood level of 2.3m AHD. However, Council's Engineering Section allowed a concession to a level of 2.0m AHD based on interpolation from the still water 1% AEP level as identified within the supporting Flood Impact and Risk Assessment (FIRA). The applicant submitted revised civil engineering plans demonstrating compliance with the 2.0m AHD road level. • The proposed under-cabin parking is located at approximately 1.3m AHD, substantially below the DCP-required current day 1% AEP level of 2.3m AHD, and no earthworks plan or sufficient details to address this were provided. The applicant's proposition that the perimeter road would act as a levee does not adequately address the flood risk or satisfy DCP design requirements. <p>Given the locality and flood constraints, Councils Development Engineering Section have advised the land itself is increasingly impacted by ponding water for extended periods of time and is therefore unsuitable land for a tourist facility.</p>
Heritage	
Outcome	Supported unconditionally
Comment	<p>The application was referred to Councils Heritage Planner, who supported the proposal. The assessment found no heritage constraints associated with the project, and the Aboriginal Due Diligence assessment identified no potential harm to Aboriginal heritage from the proposal.</p>
Natural Systems	
Outcome	Not supported
Comment	<p>Council's Natural Systems Section requested further information in relation to the potential biodiversity impacts associated with the development. Council's Natural System Officer requested the retention of large mature Eucalypts to the east of the existing on-site shed, noting their scarcity and visual buffering function. Amended site plans demonstrating tree retention were requested. The landscape plan was also requested to replace the proposed <i>Acacia pycnantha</i> with a locally endemic wattle species. The applicant subsequently amended the design to address these matters.</p> <p>An Arborist Report was requested where proximity of structures or roads may impact retained trees, as well as a clear tree removal and retention plan was also requested due to necessary removals for cabins and the wastewater land application area. However, the Arborist Report and Tree Removal/Retention Plan</p>

ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 2 PLANNER'S ASSESSMENT REPORT.

	was not provided. On this basis, insufficient technical information was lodged with the application to assess and manage the environmental impacts associated with the development.
Contributions	
Outcome	Supported with conditions
Comment	S7.11 contributions apply for the proposed 34 tourist and visitor cabins and 1 managers residence. As the property benefits from a dwelling entitlement, 1 dwelling credit has been applied to the manager's residence should the development be approved.
Environmental Health	
Outcome	Supported with conditions
Comment	<p>The application was referred to Council's Environmental Health Section, to assess the proposed on-site sewage management systems, noise, land contamination, and other considerations associated with the development.</p> <p>The site is classified in the 'Very High Hazard' category for On-site Sewage Management Systems (OSMS), with a flood certificate dated February 2023 indicating a minimum wastewater level of 2.7m AHD.</p> <p>Historical evidence from the Preliminary and Detailed Site Investigation reports and GIS imagery dating from 2014 shows non-compliant wastewater disposal practices, and no approvals or details of existing tanks were provided, therefore necessitating a Request for Information (RFI) on the status of any existing tanks or decommissioning evidence. The submitted On-site Wastewater Management Report (Whitehead & Associates, 7 February 2024) considered flood planning levels and proximity to priority oyster aquaculture leases, proposing a commercial Sewage Treatment Plant with raised Subsurface Irrigation and a 100% reserve area.</p> <p>Regarding noise, Councils Environmental Health Officer noted limited information was provided on potential operational noise impacts from the 34 cabins and manager's residence, being approximately 200m from residential receivers. The occupancy and peak periods outlined in the Wastewater Management Report, and recreational facilities such as playgrounds, pool, spas, and tennis court were identified, suggesting potential noise sources including plant equipment and maintenance. An Acoustic Report was requested via RFI to assess cumulative noise impacts and provided by Soundscape Acoustic Consultants (dated 14 March 2025). The Acoustic Report provided concluded that the proposed development will meet the requirements of the EPA Noise Policy for Industry, NSW SEPP and Port Stephens Council DCP.</p> <p>For land contamination, there were no entries on Council's contaminated land registers or notices. Review of Site Investigation and Validation reports provided by the applicant found contamination matters appropriately addressed against the Resilience and Hazards SEPP, with conditions recommended.</p>

	Other environmental health comments included observation that the installation depths for OSMS components are likely to exceed 1m, requiring management of Acid Sulfate Soils (ASS). Should the development be approved, conditions for ASS management plans related to OSMS works were recommended.
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PLANNING ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

Section 1.7 – Application of Part 7 of Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016

The development does not trigger entry into the Biodiversity Offset Scheme, as the proposal does not involve native vegetation clearing within a Biodiversity Values Mapped area, exceed the area clearing threshold or propose significant ecological impact.

Section 4.14 – Consultation and development consent (certain bushfire prone land

The development does not trigger assessment s4.14 of the EP&A Act 1979 due to the development being integrated development in accordance with s100B of the Rural Fires Act 1997 and the NSW RFS being consulted through the integrated development process in accordance with s4.46 of the EP&A Act 1979.

Section 4.46 - Integrated development

Section 4.46 EP&A Act provides that development is integrated development if in order to be carried out, the development requires development consent and one or more other approvals. The proposed development is integrated as it requires approval under the following Acts:

Rural Fire Service

Comment:

The proposed development required an integrated referral under s100B of the Rural Fires Act 1997 due to the development being for a special fire protection purposes, as defined under the Rural Fires Act and Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019. Accordingly, the application was referred to RFS and subsequently supported with conditions under Division 4.8 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act 1979).

General Terms of Approval (GTA), issued by the RFS, and dated 15 January 2025, include conditions related to the following:

- Asset Protection Zones;
- Construction Standards; and
- Water and Utility Services.

The GTAs have been attached to the determination.

The proposed Asset Protection Zone has been provided over area outside of the site boundaries with no formal easement / consent from Council as shown on the APZ Plan within the Bushfire Assessment Report (prepared by BEMC, dated June 2023). Specifically, the APZ appears to include Swan Bay Road. Recent case law suggests this is not an acceptable solution (*Shoalhaven City Council v Easter Developments Pty Ltd* [2024] NSWLEC 49). However, in the GTAs received from NSW RFS, the following statement was made:

"No objection is made for the southern APZ to include Swan Bay Road (i.e. to the southern edge of the formed road surface) within the required 54m APZ for the southern aspect".

Section 3.2.5 of the PBP 2019 stipulates that an APZ area should be contained within the development site to guarantee in-perpetuity management. For an APZ beyond the development site boundary, an 88B agreement under the Conveyancing Act or owners consent should be provided.

Section 4.15 – Matters for consideration

When determining a development application, the consent authority must take into consideration the matters outlined in Section 4.15(1) of the EP&A Act. The matters of relevance to the development application include the following:

- The provisions of any environmental planning instrument, proposed instrument, development control plan, planning agreement and the regulations
 - Any environmental planning instrument, and
 - Any proposed instrument that is or has been the subject of public consultation under this Act and that has been notified to the consent authority (unless the Planning Secretary has notified the consent authority that the making of the proposed instrument has been deferred indefinitely or has not been approved), and
 - Any development control plan, and
 - Any planning agreement that has been entered into under section 7.4, or any draft planning agreement that a developer has offered to enter into under section 7.4, and
 - The regulations (to the extent that they prescribe matters for the purposes of this paragraph),
- That apply to the land to which the development application relates,
- The likely impacts of that development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality,
- The suitability of the site for the development,
- Any submissions made in accordance with this Act or the regulations,
- The public interest.

Section 4.15(a)(i) – Any environmental planning instrument

An assessment has been undertaken against each of the applicable environmental planning instruments (EPI's), as follows:

State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022

State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 encourages the design and construction of more sustainable buildings to meet NSW climate change targets and adapt to more extreme weather, including hotter and drier summers.

Chapter 3 – Standards for non-residential development

Section 3.2(1) – Application of chapter

Section 3.2(1) requires that development for non-residential development provides that in deciding whether to grant development consent to non-residential development, the consent authority must consider whether the development is designed to enable the following:

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- The minimisation of waste from associated demolition and construction, including by the choice and reuse of building materials,
- A reduction in peak demand for electricity, including through the use of energy efficient technology,
- A reduction in the reliance on artificial lighting and mechanical heating and cooling through passive design,
- The generation and storage of renewable energy,
- The metering and monitoring of energy consumption,
- The minimisation of the consumption of potable water.

The applicant has demonstrated consideration of these sustainability principles throughout the design of the proposed development.

Section 3.2(2) – Development consent for non-residential development

Section 3.2(2) requires that development consent must not be granted to non-residential development unless the consent authority is satisfied the embodied emissions attributable to the development have been quantified.

The proposed development includes a NABERS Embodied Emissions Materials Report which complies with Section 3.2.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity And Conservation) 2021

Chapter 3 – Koala habitat protection 2020

This policy aims to encourage the conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to support a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population decline.

Chapter 3 applies to land zoned RU1 (Primary Production), RU2 (Rural Landscape) and RU3 (Forestry) with an area of more than 1 hectare or has, together with adjoining land in the same ownership, an area of more than 1 hectare. The site is zoned RU2 Rural Landscape and has an area of more than 1 hectare, therefore the provisions of this chapter apply.

Section 3.6 to 3.8 – Three step process

Sections 3.6 - 3.8 provide a 3-step assessment process which must be followed by the consent authority for development on land to which this chapter applies. The 3-step assessment is provided in the following table.

Clause	Matter for consideration
3.6 & 3.7	Step 1 and Step 2
	The site is not considered potential koala habitat or core koala habitat.
Comment	The site is not mapped as containing potential koala habitat or core koala habitat. However, six trees are proposed to be removed as part of the development. These trees are not identified as preferred koala feed species under the relevant koala habitat mapping or species lists. Nonetheless, these trees contribute to broader ecological values and landscape connectivity. The applicant has submitted a landscape plan which includes compensatory plantings using locally endemic species to offset those proposed for removal.
3.6 & 3.7	Step 3

	The site contains core koala habitat, however, the proposed development is consistent with Council's Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management.
Comment	N/A – no core koala habitat identified on site.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience And Hazards) 2021

Chapter 2 – Coastal management

The subject land is located with land within proximity to mapped wetlands; as such, the provisions of Chapter 2 of the RH SEPP are required to be considered when determining an application.

Section 2.8 – Development within the proximity area for coastal wetlands

As per Section 2.8 of Chapter 2 of the RH SEPP, development consent must not be granted to development on land identified as 'proximity area for coastal wetlands' unless the consent authority (Council) is satisfied that the proposed development will not significantly impact the biophysical or ecological integrity of the adjacent coastal wetland of the quantity/quality of surface and ground water flows to and from the adjacent wetland.

The site is mapped within the "proximity area for coastal wetlands" and Council's Natural Systems Section has confirmed that mapped coastal wetlands are located directly south of the site.

While the applicant submitted a Water Quality Assessment (MW Civil Consulting, April 2025) outlining a treatment train including grass buffer strips, bio-retention basins, and 5kL rainwater tanks per cabin, the study fails to respond to the broader hydrological challenges of the site, including nuisance flooding and water conveyance constraints associated with the development. Without considering broader catchment wide hydraulic impacts, Council cannot be satisfied that the development will not adversely impact the adjacent coastal wetland or result in water quality degradation, consequently contrary to Section 2.8 of the RH SEPP.

Section 2.10 – Development within the coastal environment area

As per Section 2.10 of Chapter 2 of the RH SEPP, development consent must not be granted for development within the coastal environment area unless the consent authority has considered whether the development will cause impact to the integrity of the biophysical and ecological environment, the values and natural coastal processes, marine vegetation, native vegetation and fauna and existing public open space and access to and along the foreshore.

The development is located approximately 230 metres from a waterbody, and does not directly restrict public access to the foreshore. However, Council's Natural Systems Section has identified that the nearby Waterfront Road (east of the site) is a known habitat for a high number of threatened and migratory shorebirds.

Although the development will not result in direct impacts on this habitat, increased human activity in the area associated with the tourism land use has the potential to disturb sensitive bird species, particularly if guests frequent the foreshore area. It is considered likely that recreational activities such as boating or fishing will occur by users of the proposed tourist accommodation. To mitigate impacts, Council's Natural Systems Section recommended visitor education materials regarding wildlife protection and responsible use of natural areas be included as an ongoing site condition should approval be granted, however this would be difficult to enforce.

It is also noted that the foreshore area is not supported by public infrastructure such as toilets, garbage bins, or seating. The absence of these facilities means increased visitation may negatively affect the natural environment, visual amenity, and public amenity of the area.

Section 2.11 – Development within the coastal use area

As per Section 2.11 of Chapter 2 of the SEPP, development consent must not be granted for a development unless the consent authority has considered existing and safe access to and along the foreshore, overshadowing and loss of views, visual amenity and scenic qualities and heritage values. The consent authority must also be satisfied that the development is designed and sited to avoid adverse impacts and to ensure the development has taken into account the surrounding built environment in its design.

Whilst the proposal does not impact existing view corridors or heritage values, the intensification and use of the site for tourist and visitor accommodation may adversely impact the scenic and natural coastal setting, particularly due to the lack of existing infrastructure to accommodate a significant increase in visitors to the foreshore.

While the development has been sited to avoid direct environmental impacts, however, the broader cumulative impacts from visitor behaviour and infrastructure constraints have not been addressed.

Section 2.12 – Development within the coastal zone generally

Section 2.12 of Chapter 2 of the SEPP requires consideration to whether the development would increase the risk of coastal hazards.

While the proposal may meet certain design and specification standards (e.g., water quality controls), the intensification of the site for tourist purposes on a low-lying, ecologically sensitive site, with limited site access, no public infrastructure, and directly adjacent to mapped coastal wetlands, raises significant concerns regarding the appropriateness of the development in the coastal zone.

The proposal does not adequately respond to the environmental sensitivities or land use constraints of the coastal setting, and lacks sufficient detail on operational management, including measures to avoid or mitigate impacts associated with increased visitor behaviour, access control, and human interaction with natural areas.

Section 2.13 – Development in coastal zone generally—coastal management programs to be considered

The site is mapped on the Coastal Risk Map of the Port Stephens Coastal Management Program (CMP). The CMP sets out actions to manage coastal hazards such as inundation, erosion, and dune movement over the next 10 years. It provides guidance for Council, public authorities, and land managers to reduce risks, protect the environment, support sustainable development, and respond to climate change. The Coastal Management Program Stage 2 Report determined risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities.

The CMP Report identified that the Swan Bay foreshore features a series of informal and degraded coastal protection structures, largely constructed in a piecemeal and reactive manner. There is minimal sand present, and erosion is evident along unprotected areas, extending into the land behind the foreshore. Overall, the foreshore along Waterfront Road is considered largely unprotected. The advanced deterioration of existing structures, caused by inundation, undersized armour, and lack of proper construction, indicates that the shoreline is unstable and will likely continue to erode unless active management and remediation measures are undertaken.

While it is considered that direct impacts to the coastal foreshore are unlikely to result from the proposed development, indirect impacts may arise through increased visitor activity, uncontrolled access, and interactions with sensitive coastal areas. The proposal has not addressed these environmental sensitivities or the land use constraints of the coastal setting.

Chapter 4 – Remediation of land

Section 4.6 – Contamination and remediation to be considered

In accordance with Section 4.6 of Chapter 4 of the Resilience and Hazards SEPP, the consent authority must consider whether the site is contaminated and if it is suitable for the proposed use.

A Preliminary and Detailed Site Investigation (Qualtest Report, 1 September 2023) identified total recoverable hydrocarbons (TRH) in the soil. The contaminated material was subsequently excavated and disposed of at a licensed waste facility on 26 September 2023.

Following remediation, a validation sample confirmed TRH concentrations were below relevant human health and ecological investigation criteria. The post-remediation model indicated no exposure pathways to human or ecological receptors, including wildlife.

It is unclear whether the remediation works were undertaken with development consent, no record of consent nor notification to Council of these works were found within Council's system. Despite this, the Validation Report (Qualtest, 11 October 2023) confirms the site is now suitable for the proposed cabin accommodation. Accordingly, the proposal satisfies the requirements of Chapter 4 of the Resilience and Hazards SEPP.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021**Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013 (PSLEP2013)****Clause 1.9A – Suspension of covenants, agreements and instruments**

Clause 1.9A identifies that development on land in any zone to be carried out in accordance with this Plan or with a consent granted under the Act, any agreement, covenant or other similar instrument that restricts the carrying out of that development does not apply to the extent necessary to serve that purpose.

Clause 2.3 – Zone objectives and land use table

Clause 2.3 identifies that each land use zone in the land use table specifies the following:

- The objectives for development, and
- Development that may be carried out without development consent, and
- Development that may be carried out only with development consent, and
- Development that is prohibited.

This Clause outlines that the consent authority must have regard to the objectives for development in a zone when determining a development application in respect of land within the zone.

The proposed development is defined as tourist and visitor accommodation (specifically titled holiday cabins), which is permissible with consent in the RU2 Rural Landscape zone. PSLEP 2013 defines tourist and visitor accommodation as:

“A building or place that provides temporary or short-term accommodation on a commercial basis, and includes any of the following—

- (a) backpackers' accommodation,*
 - (b) bed and breakfast accommodation,*
 - (c) farm stay accommodation,*
 - (d) hotel or motel accommodation,*
 - (e) serviced apartments,*
- but does not include—*
- (f) camping grounds,*

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(g) caravan parks, or
(h) eco-tourist facilities.”

In the PSLEP 2013, the RU2 Rural Landscape zone expressly prohibits certain subtypes, including backpackers' accommodation, hotel or motel accommodation, and serviced apartments. However, tourist and visitor accommodation is a group term that includes both listed subtypes and other forms not specifically defined.

In accordance with the Department of Planning's Practice Note PN 11-003, where a group term is permissible in a zone, forms of development that fall within that group term but are not individually defined, such as holiday cabins or tourist cabins, are considered permissible with consent (see Figure 5 below).

A relevant extract from the Practice Note is provided below, illustrating that 'other tourist and visitor accommodation not specifically defined' is permissible under the group term.

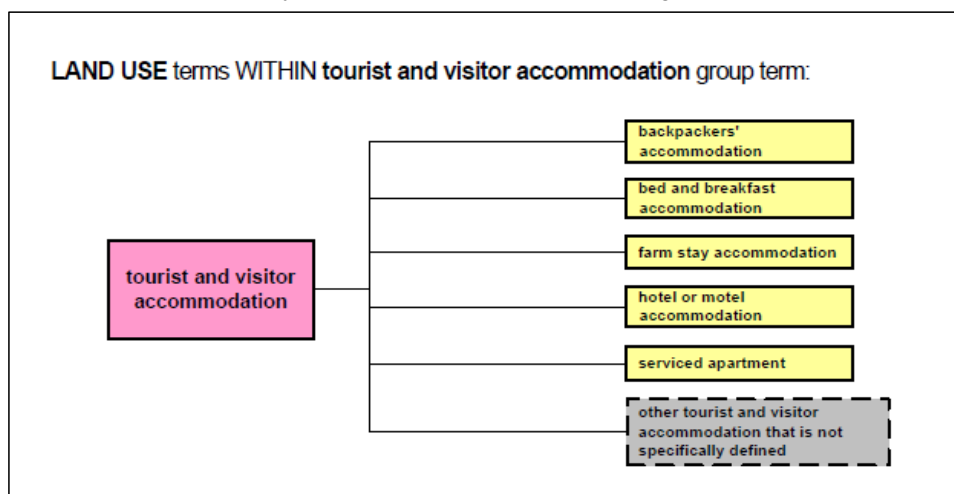


Figure 5: Extract of Department of Planning's Practice Note PN 11-003

The objectives of the RU2 Rural Landscape zone are as follows:

- *To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.*
- *To maintain the rural landscape character of the land.*
- *To provide for a range of compatible land uses, including extensive agriculture.*
- *To facilitate a variety of tourist and visitor-orientated land uses that complement and promote a stronger rural sector appropriate for the area.*

An assessment against the RU2 zone objectives is outlined below.

Objective	Response
Objective 1: To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable. The proposed development does not support or relate to primary industry production.

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Objective	Response
Objective 2: To maintain the rural landscape character of the land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The construction of multiple tourist holiday cabins on a relatively cleared rural site risks introducing built form and human activity that is inconsistent with the open, low-density rural character of the locality. While design treatments may assist in softening the visual impact, the scale and nature of the proposed land use introduces a more intensive, tourism-focused function which may impact the rural landscape values of the area over time.
Objective 3: To provide for a range of compatible land uses, including extensive agriculture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While tourist and visitor accommodation may be compatible in certain rural contexts, the subject site is not located within an established or emerging tourism precinct, nor is it associated with a broader agricultural or environmental tourism offering (e.g. farm stay or eco-tourism). The absence of supporting rural activity, agricultural operations, or environmental interpretation limits the compatibility of the proposal with other rural land uses in the locality.
Objective 4: To facilitate a variety of tourist and visitor-oriented land uses that complement and promote a stronger rural sector appropriate for the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the development proposes a tourism-related land use, it does not demonstrate how it would actively contribute to the strength or sustainability of the local rural sector. Swan Bay is not identified in the Port Stephens strategic planning framework as a key tourism node or an area targeted for rural tourism growth. The locality lacks the essential infrastructure typically required to support tourist activity, including public toilets, local parks, signage, waste facilities, and other community amenities provided or maintained by Council. The limited availability of services, combined with environmental constraints, unsealed roads, and lack of essential services (i.e. fresh potable water and sewer), further reduces the suitability of the area to accommodate visitor accommodation without placing pressure on the environment or limited local infrastructure.

Although the proposed development is permissible with consent under the RU2 Rural Landscape zone, it is not considered consistent with the objectives of the zone. The proposal does not support or enhance rural productivity, is unlikely to maintain the rural landscape character, and does not integrate with or support broader rural or agricultural uses. The locality lacks the infrastructure and strategic support required to accommodate the scale of tourism proposed, and as such, the proposal is considered inconsistent with the objectives of the zone.

The site supports a split zone, noting a very small portion of the eastern part of the lot is zoned R2 Low Density Residential. Whilst tourist and visitor accommodation is not permissible in the R2 zone, there are no works or development proposed within this segment of the site. Accordingly, the

development is only being considered against the objectives of the RU2 Rural Landscape zone as outlined above.

Clause 2.7 – Demolition requiring development consent

Clause 2.7 identifies that the demolition of a building or work may be carried out only with development consent, unless identified as exempt development under an applicable environmental planning instrument.

The proposed development requires the demolition of an existing shed/residential structure. Accordingly, conditions of consent could be included in order to mitigate potential impacts during demolition works.

Clause 4.3 – Height of buildings

The objectives of this clause are to ensure the height of buildings is appropriate for the context and character of the area and to ensure building heights reflect the hierarchy of centres and land use structure. Clause 4.3(2) provides that the height of a building on any land is not to exceed the maximum height shown for the land on the Height of Buildings Map.

The proposed development has a maximum height of 6.6 metres, which is below the maximum permissible building height of 9 metres specified on the Height of Buildings Map.

Clause 5.10 – Heritage conservation

The objectives of this clause are to conserve the environmental heritage of Port Stephens, to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, settings and views, to conserve archaeological sites, and to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.

In accordance with Clause 5.10(4) the consent authority must, before granting consent under this clause in respect of a heritage item or heritage conservation area, consider the effect of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the item or area concerned.

The proposed development is not located within or in proximity to any local or state listed heritage items or conservation areas. An Aboriginal Heritage Management Systems (AHIMS) search and an Archaeological Due Diligence Assessment was provided with the application, which showed that there are no recorded Aboriginal heritage sites or items within the subject site, or in close proximity to the subject site. The application was also referred to Council's Heritage Planner who concluded that there are no heritage constraints associated with the project. The Aboriginal Due Diligence assessment did not identify that any harm would be caused to Aboriginal Heritage from this proposal.

As such, no adverse impact to Aboriginal heritage from the development is expected.

Clause 5.21 – Flood planning

The objectives of this clause are to minimise the flood risk to life and property associated with the use of land, to allow development on land that is compatible with the flood function and behaviour on the land, taking into account projected changes as a result of climate change, to avoid adverse or cumulative impacts on flood behaviour and the environment, and to enable the safe occupation and efficient evacuation of people in the event of a flood.

Clause 5.21(2) provides that the consent must not be granted to development on land the consent authority considers to be within the flood planning area unless the consent authority is satisfied the development complies with the following matters:

- Is compatible with the flood function and behaviour on the land.

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- Will not adversely affect flood behaviour in a way that results in detrimental increases in the potential flood affectation of other development or properties.
- Will not adversely affect the safe occupation and efficient evacuation of people or exceed the capacity of existing evacuation routes for the surrounding area in the event of a flood.
- Incorporates appropriate measures to manage risk to life in the event of a flood.
- Will not adversely affect the environment or cause avoidable erosion, siltation, destruction of riparian vegetation or a reduction in the stability of river banks or watercourses.

Clause 5.21(3) provides that in deciding whether to grant development consent on land to which this clause applies, the consent authority must consider the following matters:

- The impact of the development on projected changes to flood behaviour as a result of climate change.
- The intended design and scale of buildings resulting from the development.
- Whether the development incorporates measures to minimise the risk to life and ensure the safe evacuation of people in the event of a flood.
- The potential to modify, relocate or remove buildings resulting from development if the surrounding area is impacted by flooding or coastal erosion.

Compatibility and flood affection

The proposed development is located on land mapped as being Flood Planning Area. The mapped flood mechanism impacting on the site originates from the coast and is a result of tidal inundation, storm surge and sea level rise with the nominated flood risk level being High Hazard Flood Fringe Area. In accordance with Figure BI of the DCP, the development would comprise tourist and visitor accommodation which is a sensitive and hazardous land use and is considered to be an **unsuitable land use** for the 'High Hazard Flood Fringe Area' flood risk category of the site. The relevant finished floor levels to the development are:

- **Probable Maximum Flood Level (PMF)** = RL 3.2 metres AHD.
- **Flood Planning Level (FPL)** = RL 3.6 metres AHD.
- **Current 1% AEP Level** = RL 2.3 metres AHD.
- **Adaptable Minimum Floor Level (AMFL)** = RL 3.3 metres AHD.
- **On-Site Waste Water Level (OSWWL)** = RL 2.7 metres AHD.

In addition to Council's mapped flood data, observed conditions following heavy rainfall indicate localised surface water flooding, likely due to the site's extremely flat topography (with a fall of less than 0.2%) and poor soil infiltration capacity. Geotechnical investigations within the On-site Wastewater Management Report (WMR) prepared by Whitehead & Associates Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd confirm that the soil profile comprises a thin horizon of silty clay loam overlying a dense, massive clay subsoil (Category 6), with extensive mottling observed throughout. While a shallow water table was not encountered at the time of testing, the presence of mottling and low-permeability soils indicates restricted vertical drainage and result in water retention/ponding following rainfall. These conditions are typically not captured in Council's flood mapping data.

Current site images as shown in Figure 6 below, and Nearmap imagery demonstrate that parts of the site are often wet, with ponding depths of over 100mm that could remain for extended periods due to the lack of fall and drainage.



Figure 6: Site image showing surface water flooding (January 2025)

It is considered that this nuisance flooding/inundation has not been adequately considered during the design of the proposed tourist facility. The proposed raised loop road has the potential to act as a levee, trapping water within the site and preventing surface drainage, consequently worsening localised nuisance flooding.

This issue is compounded by the lack of information or clarity around stormwater management. While the stormwater design is expected to consider existing conditions, it is unclear how water is intended to reach the proposed headwalls. With such minimal natural fall (0.2%), achieving a compliant flow, typically requiring around a 2% grade, is unfeasible without introducing fill or alternative drainage solutions. As no fill is proposed within the loop road, the site lacks any identified path for discharge. As designed, the loop road will likely trap water internally, resulting in ponding that may only clear via evaporation or slow seepage into the ground. There is no identified path for surface water drainage.

This condition poses health risks, including:

- Breeding of mosquitoes and increased risk of diseases such as Ross River Virus
- Spread of waterborne diseases
- Promotion of mould and fungal growth
- Attraction of vermin and pests
- Slip and fall hazards

It's noted that these issues will intensify into the future with climate change. The development includes a pool, play equipment and other recreational facilities. If these are to be located at existing ground level, these facilities are likely to be impacted by frequent nuisance flooding, potentially at

recurrence intervals greater than 5% AEP events. Additionally, the Coastal Management Program (CMP) data indicates that the Highest Astronomical Tide (HAT) could inundate the development within approximately 20 years.

Occupation and evacuation

The proposed development includes 34 tourist cabins and a manager's residence. The submitted Waste Management Report prepared by Whitehead & Associates Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd estimates cabin occupancy at two (2) equivalent population per bedroom, resulting in an assumed capacity of six (6) per cabin cluster/pair. On this basis, a maximum occupancy of 102 people has been assumed. It is proposed a maximum of two (2) resident managers will be accommodated in the residence, and up to 10 non-resident full time equivalent staff members will attend the site daily to provide cleaning and maintenance services. This equals a total of **114 people** onsite exposed to high risk flood prone land.

A Request for Information (RFI) was issued on 19 February 2025 which required that proposed internal loop road provide flood free access. Council's Engineering Section endorsed a level of 2m AHD instead of strict compliance with the 1% AEP (2.3m AHD). This concession was made due to the still water 1% AEP level of 1.9m as suggested by the Flood Impact Risk Assessment and interpolating to current day (i.e. 2024). The applicant responded with revised civil engineering plans demonstrating compliance with the 2m AHD road level. Should the application be supported, conditions of consent will be recommended requiring evacuation design at the 2m AHD road level, and preparation of a Flood Emergency Response Plan.

Risk to life and property

In accordance with Figure BJ in the DCP, tourist and visitor accommodation, being a type of *sensitive and hazardous development*, is required to have habitable and non-habitable rooms with an FFL equal to PMF level of 3.2 metres. The development plans submitted with the proposal show the FFL of the development at RL 3.6m AHD which design to the FPL and above the PMF.

The under-cabin parking does not need to meet the 1% AEP flood level. The applicant's rationale for this is that the perimeter road is 2m AHD and provides a levee between flooding and the under-cabin parking. Swan Bay Road is at a level of approximately 1.6m AHD and therefore flooding will occur long before it reaches the levee/perimeter road. In this sense, an emergency management plan should identify the level at which an evacuation should take place, which should be long before Swan Bay is inundated. Should the application be supported, conditions of consent requiring structural certification of buildings and structures to withstand a PMF flood event will be recommended to manage the inherent risk to life and property. Although given the isolated nature of the site and flood risk, safe evacuation and measures to mitigate damage to property in accordance with cl. 5.21 of the PSLEP have not been adequately addressed.

The environment and off-site flooding impacts

The proposed development includes a Flood Impact Risk Assessment (FIRA) which confirms the proposal would not cause any adverse offsite flooding impacts by way of increased velocity and flood inundation. The flood assessment was reviewed by Council's Flooding Engineer who concurred with the findings of the FIRA.

The site is mapped within the draft Port Stephens Coastal Management Program (CMP), noting the FIRA assessed that the site is elevated at around 1.5 m AHD. Taking a 50-year design life for the proposed development, toward the end of this design life (2070) the site is expected to become inundated multiple times per year (highest astronomical tide level). This presents a level of nuisance

flooding that will impact the day-to-day operation of the facility that has not been mitigated or addressed as part of the proposal.

Clause 5.22 Special flood considerations

Clause 5.22 provides the development consent must not be granted to development on land to which this clause applies unless the consent authority has considered whether the development will affect the safe occupation and efficient evacuation of people in the event of a flood, incorporates appropriate measures to manage risk to life in the event of a flood, and will adversely affect the environment in the event of a flood.

The Flood Impact and Risk Assessment (FIRA) provided with the DA, included details about flood warning and emergency response for the proposed development. The primary response for a flood emergency is proposed as site evacuation and proactively managing site bookings (i.e. cancelling if conditions require). This strategy relies on the site manager to be aware of the flood constraints of the site and proactively manage the flood risk to the park inhabitants.

The FIRA proposes a flood response strategy based on early evacuation and proactive site management, including cancellation of bookings when required. However, this strategy is dependent on the ongoing presence and competence of on-site management, and there is no mechanism for Council to ensure these behaviours are maintained in perpetuity.

While it is acknowledged that cabins are designed above the PMF level and could provide temporary flood refuge, this is not a substitute for safe, reliable evacuation infrastructure. Isolation during flood events, even if limited to a few hours, presents serious risks, particularly to vulnerable persons such as children or elderly guests.

It is recommended that any consent (if granted) require the certification of the cabins' structural capacity to withstand PMF impacts, and that an enforceable, site-specific Flood Emergency Response Plan be submitted and updated regularly. However, such conditions do not overcome the fundamental unsuitability of the site for this form of development.

Clause 7.1 – Acid sulfate soils

The objective of this clause is to ensure that development does not disturb, expose or drain acid sulfate soils and cause environmental damage.

The subject land is mapped as containing potential Class 3 acid sulfate soils. Should the application be supported, the proposed piers are expected to be anchored substantially below surface level to withstand the forces of flood waters. Should the application be supported, a condition of consent will also be included requiring preparation of an ASSMP.

Clause 7.2 – Earthworks

The objective of this clause is to ensure that earthworks for which development consent is required will not have a detrimental impact on environmental functions and processes, neighbouring uses, cultural or heritage items or features of the surrounding land.

In accordance with Clause 7.2(3), before granting development consent for earthworks (or for development involving ancillary earthworks), the consent authority must consider the following matters:

- The likely disruption of, or any detrimental effect on, drainage patterns and soil stability in the locality of the development.
- The effect of the development on the likely future use or redevelopment of the land.
- The quality of the fill or the soil to be excavated, or both.

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- The effect of the development on the existing and likely amenity of adjoining properties.
- The source of any fill material and the destination of any excavated material.
- The likelihood of disturbing relics.
- The proximity to, and potential for adverse impacts on, any waterway, drinking water catchment or environmentally sensitive area.
- Any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development.

The proposed development includes significant earthworks to facilitate construction of the internal loop road, raised mound for the reception and parking areas, and the proposed on-site sewer management system. The reception building and associated parking will be constructed on a raised pad built up to RL 2.00m AHD, with the existing level at approximately RL 1.30m AHD, requiring about 700mm of compacted fill.

Earthworks associated with the loop road are extensive, with an estimated 2,600 cubic metres of fill to establish road levels and provide functional vehicle circulation. Additionally, 3,210 cubic metres of topsoil is required to construct the Surface Irrigation System Land Application Area (SSI LAA), which must be raised above the On-Site Sewage Wastewater Level (OSWWL) of RL 2.70m AHD, including allowances for batter slopes.

As discussed under Clause 5.21, the design of the loop road has the potential to impede natural drainage and cause localised nuisance flooding within the site. While indicative levels are provided, a detailed bulk earthworks plan has not been submitted to demonstrate how drainage and erosion risks will be managed.

There is low likelihood of disturbing any relics, as outlined under Clause 5.10.

The functional need for the proposed fill and earthworks is noted, however the absence of a bulk earthworks and satisfactory drainage plan limits the ability to fully assess compliance with Clause 7.2 of the PSLEP. Further information would be required to confirm that the proposed works will not result in adverse impacts on environmental processes, amenity, or site stability, which has not been provided.

Clause 7.6 – Essential services

Cause 7.6 provides that development consent must not be granted to development unless the consent authority is satisfied that services that are essential for the development are available or that adequate arrangements have been made to make them available when required. The essential services include the following:

- The supply of water.
- The supply of electricity.
- The disposal and management of sewage.
- Stormwater drainage or on-site conservation.
- Suitable vehicular access.

The proposal is for tourist and visitor accommodation comprising 34 cabins, associated infrastructure, and services on an un-serviced rural site. The following assessment is made against each subclause of Clause 7.6:

a) Supply of Water

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The site is not connected to a reticulated water supply. The applicant proposes 34 x 5,000L rainwater tanks (1 per cabin), providing a total of 170,000L. However, no information has been provided to confirm:

- Whether this volume is sufficient to meet the potable water needs of all occupants (total equivalent population of 114 persons),
- How potable water will be treated to comply with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG),
- Whether additional tanks or systems will service the two (2) resident managers and 10 non-resident staff, and
- How potable supply will be maintained during periods of low rainfall.

The submitted Bushfire Assessment Report identifies a requirement for 10,000L of static water per pair of cabins dedicated to firefighting. It must be assumed that this requirement will be met via separate tanks not included in the 170,000L potable water calculation. However, no plans, specifications or commitment to provide the firefighting water supply have been submitted.

As such, the application does not currently demonstrate that adequate arrangements have been made for the supply of potable water or firefighting water, and further information is required to satisfy subclause (a).

(b) Supply of Electricity

The Statement of Environmental Effects submitted with the application states that the development will be connected to the local electricity network. Connection is considered feasible based on existing infrastructure in the locality. Adequate arrangements are likely to be in place, subject to standard conditions.

(c) Disposal and Management of Sewage

The site is not connected to a reticulated sewer network, so on-site wastewater treatment is proposed. The On-Site Wastewater Management Report (Whitehead & Associates, Ref. 3659_Letter_003, 4 March 2025) confirms that relevant constraints, such as flood planning levels and the proximity of priority oyster-aquaculture leases, have been properly addressed. The proposal involves a commercial sewage treatment plant discharging to an elevated subsurface irrigation area. A full (100%) reserve area will have to be conditioned and must satisfy all buffer requirements to stormwater infrastructure and other wastewater systems (e.g. raingardens and pool backwash lines). A Section 68 approval would be required should the development be approved.

(d) Stormwater Drainage or On-site Conservation

The Civil Design (Figure 7) proposes the development of a cabin park accessed via a raised internal loop road and serviced by an underground stormwater system that includes 375mm reinforced concrete pipes (RCP) with headwalls and floodgates. The proposed design also includes swale drains, diversion drains along the northern and western boundaries, and connection points for individual cabin sites. Some aspects of the civil design respond to site constraints include the raised loop road, which has been designed to remain functional during flooding. Additionally, the inclusion of floodgates to prevent backflow into the site, and the use of diversion drains to manage overland flow from adjacent properties, demonstrate an attempt to mitigate external flood risk sources.

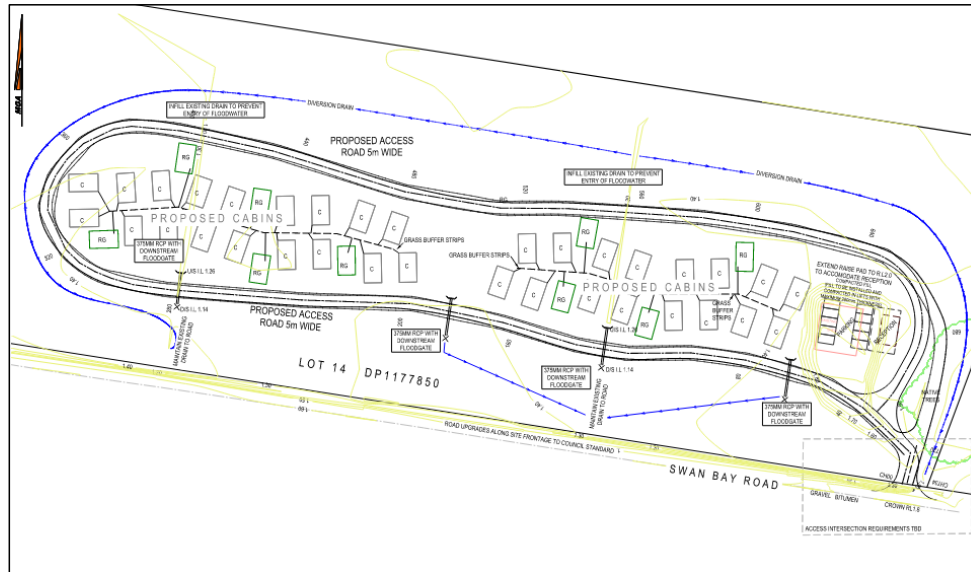


Figure 7: Proposed Civil Design

However, the design does not accommodate the internal stormwater drainage needs of the development adequately. As discussed in response to clause 5.21 above, the site has extremely limited gradient (less than 0.2%) and underlying soils with very low permeability that restricts vertical drainage. Extensive soil mottling and site observations confirm that surface water ponding and saturation occur frequently following rainfall. Photographic and Nearmap evidence indicating standing water depths of over 100mm across portions of the site. Despite these existing constraints, the stormwater drainage system does not demonstrate how water will be directed toward the proposed headwalls, nor does it show how positive drainage grades, typically requiring a minimum of 1–2%, will be achieved. The lack of fill across the entire development site and absence of any engineered drainage layer or pumping solution likely worsens this issue.

Furthermore, the raised loop road may inadvertently act as a levee, creating an enclosed basin within which stormwater and surface flows may be trapped. This design flaw has not been addressed or mitigated through the provision of breaks in the road alignment or culverts to allow for internal surface water escape. The consequence of this is likely to be regular and prolonged surface ponding across parking area, recreational areas, and communal open spaces. This has significant implications for public health and safety, with potential risks including mosquito breeding (and associated vector-borne diseases), waterborne pathogens, fungal growth, and slip hazards.

In summary, while some components of the Civil Design demonstrate consideration for access and external flooding, the design as a whole does not respond adequately to the site's known internal drainage limitations, frequent ponding issues, or broader flood and coastal risks. Without significant redesign to incorporate a viable drainage solution, site filling, or mechanical drainage solutions, the proposed development is likely to experience ongoing nuisance flooding, poor amenity outcomes, and heightened public health and environmental risks.

(e) Suitable Road Access

Access to the site is available via Swan Bay Road. When considered in the context of the current conditions of Swan Bay Road, including an approximately 2km section of unsealed pavement to the west of the site, narrow shoulders, and existing crash history, the proposed traffic generation, which has not been accurately calculated, indicates that the development is likely to have an unacceptable impact on the safety, capacity and ongoing maintenance of the local road network. This is further assessed in response to Section B8 of the PSDCP 2014 below.

Given these constraints, the proposal does not currently provide suitable road access and fails to demonstrate compliance with Clause 7.6(e).

The proposed development does not currently satisfy Clause 7.6(a) or (e) of the PSLEP 2013. Further information is required to confirm the adequacy of potable and firefighting water supply, on-site sewage and stormwater management, and road access. Consent cannot be granted until these matters are resolved.

Clause 7.9 – Wetlands

The objective of this clause is to ensure that wetlands are preserved and protected from the impacts of development. Before determining a development application for development on land to which this clause applies, the consent authority must consider:

- Whether or not the development is likely to have any significant adverse impact on the following:
 - The condition and significance of the existing native fauna and flora on the land,
 - The provision and quality of habitats on the land for indigenous and migratory species,
 - The surface and groundwater characteristics of the land, including water quality, natural water flows and salinity, and
 - Any appropriate measures proposed to avoid, minimise or mitigate the impacts of the development.

In addition, development consent must not be granted to development on land to which this clause applies unless the consent authority is satisfied that—

- The development is designed, sited and will be managed to avoid any significant adverse environmental impact, or
- If that impact cannot be reasonably avoided—the development is designed, sited and will be managed to minimise that impact, or
- If that impact cannot be minimised—the development will be managed to mitigate that impact.

Site plans identify an ephemeral watercourse in the southwestern corner of the site, which is being retained and not impacted by the proposal.

A small portion of land along the southern boundary is mapped under the PSLEP as containing wetlands. However, site inspection by Council's Natural Systems Section confirms this area is dominated by cleared, exotic vegetation and lacks the ecological characteristics typical of freshwater wetlands. As such, the PSLEP mapping is considered to be inaccurate for this location, and the application of the Wetlands provisions under the PSLEP is not considered applicable in this instance.

Section 4.15(a)(ii) – any draft environmental planning instrument that is or has been placed on public exhibition

The site is mapped on the Coastal Risk Map of the draft Port Stephens Coastal Management Program (CMP). The draft CMP sets out actions to manage coastal hazards such as inundation, erosion, and dune movement over the next 10 years. It provides guidance for Council, public

authorities, and land managers to reduce risks, protect the environment, support sustainable development, and respond to climate change.

The *Coastal Management Program Stage 2 Report* determined risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities. The report identified that Swan Bay foreshore features a series of informal and degraded coastal protection structures, largely constructed in a piecemeal and reactive manner. There is minimal sand present, and erosion is evident along unprotected areas, extending into the land behind the foreshore.

Overall, the foreshore along Waterfront Road is considered largely unprotected. The advanced deterioration of existing structures, caused by inundation, undersized armour, and lack of proper construction, indicates that the shoreline is unstable and will continue to erode unless active management and remediation are undertaken.

Section 4.15(a)(iii) – Any development control plan

Port Stephens Development Control Plan 2014 (PSDCP 2014)

The Port Stephens Development Control Plan 2014 (DCP) is applicable to the proposed development and has been assessed below.

Chapter B – General Provisions

B2 – Natural Resources

This Chapter applies to development located within 500m of environmentally sensitive areas, development that contains koala habitat, noxious weeds or development that is seeking to use biodiversity credits.

The objectives of this Chapter are:

- To ensure adequate consideration is provided to the protection and conservation of items of environmental significance;
- To provide further guidance for the use of biodiversity offsets within the Port Stephens local government area;
- To reduce the negative impact of biosecurity risks (weeds) on the economy, community and environment by eliminating or restricting their geographical spread; and
- To encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide koala habitat to ensure a permanent free-living population over their present range and reverse the current trend of koala population decline.

This Chapter requires assessment of the proposed development in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and Port Stephens Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPoM). See these sections for further details.

The site is located within proximity to sensitive ecological features, including estuarine and foreshore environments located approximately 230 metres to the east. Council's Natural Systems Section has confirmed that the nearby area, particularly around Waterfront Road, is a known habitat for migratory and threatened shorebird species.

While the development does not involve the direct removal of mapped habitat, the anticipated increase in human activity from the proposed tourist accommodation has the potential to indirectly impact nearby ecologically sensitive areas. Activities such as walking, boating, and fishing near shorebird roosting and foraging sites could disturb fauna, particularly during breeding or migratory periods. These risks are likely increased by the absence of supporting public infrastructure, such as

toilets, bins, or designated walkways, along the foreshore, which may lead to increased littering, trampling of native vegetation, and general environmental degradation.

The development originally proposed the removal of nine (9) trees without the support of an Arborist Report. Council's Natural Systems Section advised that while the removal of small trees from the central portion of the site may be acceptable, a cluster of large, mature Eucalypts on the eastern side of the existing shed were recommended for retention. A Request for Information was issued on 19 February 2025 requesting these amendments. The applicant responded by modifying the layout to retain the trees, including relocating the manager's residence. However, the removal of six (6) trees remains proposed, with no supporting Arboricultural Assessment Report to verify the condition, value, or justification for removal. As such, the environmental impact associated with tree removal remains unresolved and inconsistent with the intent of this chapter.

B3 – Environmental Management

This Chapter applies to development that has the potential to produce air pollution, has the potential to produce adverse offensive noise, or involves earthworks.

The objectives of this chapter are:

- To ensure air quality is not negatively impacted on by dust and odour in recognition of the associated human health impacts;
- To identify potentially offensive noise to ensure it is managed within the relevant legislative requirements; and
- To facilitate earthworks so as to minimise potential environmental impacts, such as erosion or the release of sulfuric acids as identified by the Local Environmental Plan.

Noise

A Noise Impact Assessment was prepared by Soundscape Consulting Pty Ltd (14 March 2025) for the proposed development. A noise survey was conducted for 7 days to obtain statistical noise data at the critical location to determine the background noise levels. Noise modelling was employed to predict the noise levels at surrounding sensitive receivers for assessment against the EPA Noise Policy for Industry criteria.

The report concluded that the proposed development will meet the requirements of the EPA Noise Policy for Industry, NSW SEPP and Port Stephens Council DCP.

Air Quality

Dust generated during construction, can be managed, subject to conditions of consent, requiring erosion and sediment control be carried out in accordance with the guidelines set out in the NSW Department of Housing manual 'Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction Certificate' (the Blue Book) and the 'Do it Right On-Site, Soil and Water Management for the Construction Industry' (Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils and the Natural Heritage Trust). The proposed tourist and visitor accommodation land use would not cause any ongoing air quality impacts during the operational phase of the development.

Earthworks

As discussed at Clause 7.2 above, the proposed development involves earthworks. Development may need to provide a bulk earthwork plan in order to adequately address the above matters when cut exceeds 2m in depth, fill has a total area of 100sqm or more, is within 40m of the top bank of a riparian corridor as defined under the Water Management Act 2000.

The proposed development involves substantial earthworks to support the construction of the internal loop road, raised building pads, and the Surface Irrigation System Land Application Area (SSI LAA).

- **Reception and Parking Area:** The site plan shows the reception building and parking area located on a pad that will be raised to RL 2.00m AHD using compacted fill placed in lifts no greater than 200mm. The existing ground level in this area is approximately RL 1.30m AHD, meaning the pad will be raised by approximately 700mm.
- **Loop Road Construction:** Earthworks associated with the internal loop road are extensive, with an estimated 2,600 cubic metres of cut and fill required to establish the road alignment and levels. These works are necessary to enable vehicle circulation throughout the site but have the potential to impede natural drainage and create areas of localised nuisance flooding, as discussed in the clause 5.21 stormwater assessment.
- **SSI LAA (Surface Irrigation System Land Application Area):** Additional filling is proposed to raise the SSI LAA above the On-Site Sewage Wastewater Level (OSWWL) of RL 2.70m AHD. Preliminary calculations indicate this will require approximately 3,210 cubic metres of topsoil, including batter slopes. This area must be constructed to maintain appropriate separation distances from groundwater and to ensure effective effluent disposal.

Given the combined fill quantity of nearly 6,000 cubic metres, and the fact that filling will occur over large portions of the site, the extent of earthworks is considered significant. While the application contains indicative levels and design, a formal bulk earthworks plan has not been submitted.

While the extent and purpose of earthworks are acknowledged, the application does not currently demonstrate compliance with the environmental objectives of Chapter B3.

B4 – Drainage and Water Quality

This section applies to development that increases impervious surfaces, drains to the public drainage system, or involves a controlled activity within 40m of waterfront land.

The objectives of this chapter are:

- To ensure a stormwater drainage plan is submitted when development either increases impervious surfaces or drains to the public drainage system;
- To ensure the stormwater drainage plan details a legal and physical point of discharge to minimise impacts on water balance, surface water and groundwater flow and volume regimes and flooding;
- To implement sustainable mitigation systems that can be maintained using resources available to the maintainer;
- To regulate the impacts on the capacity of the public drainage system, to ensure development does not detrimentally impact on water quality through the use of water quality modelling, such as small scale stormwater water quality model (SSSQM) or model for urban stormwater improvement conceptualisation (MUSIC), and subsequent water sensitive urban design (WSUD) measures;
- To safeguard the environment by improving the quality of stormwater run-off, to ensure water quality is protected and maintained during the construction phase through the conditioning of appropriate measures; and
- To provide further guidance to clauses in the local environmental plan relating to water quality for development in drinking water catchments, and to protect and retain riparian corridors as localities of environmental importance.

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At lodgement of the application, the proposal lacked adequate drainage information. An RFI was issued on 19 February 2025 requesting:

- That site drainage be revisited in greater detail, particularly once site levels are adjusted to meet DCP requirements.
- That stormwater quality be addressed through submission of MUSIC modelling to demonstrate compliance with water quality targets.

The application proposes the development of a cabin park serviced by a raised internal loop road and an underground stormwater drainage system. The drainage infrastructure includes 375mm RCP pipes with headwalls and floodgates, supported by swale and diversion drains along the site's boundaries. The Civil Design seeks to address external flooding risk by incorporating a flood-resilient access road, floodgates to prevent backflow, and diversion drains to manage overland flow from adjacent properties.

While these measures demonstrate partial responsiveness to the site's flood-prone location and high-hazard classification, the Civil Design fails to adequately address internal drainage and stormwater management within the site. The following deficiencies are noted:

- Insufficient fall across the site (less than 0.2%) and poor soil infiltration capacity result in frequent surface ponding, with evidence of standing water reaching depths of approximately 100mm based on site images.
- Positive drainage toward proposed headwalls is not demonstrated, and the design lacks details on how minimum drainage grades (typically 1–2%) will be achieved.
- There is no indication of fill, subsurface drainage layers, or pumping systems to facilitate drainage, despite known site saturation issues.
- The raised loop road, while functional for flood access, may act as a levee, creating an internal basin that traps surface water. No culverts or breaks in the alignment have been included to allow stormwater escape, exacerbating ponding and increasing flood risk to the cabin sites and communal areas.

A MUSIC model was submitted in response to Council's RFI dated 19 February 2025 and includes water quality controls to meet pollutant load reduction targets. While this addresses part of the water quality objective, water quantity and drainage performance remain unresolved, particularly in relation to the storage, movement, and disposal of surface water during minor and major rainfall events. Demonstration of NorBE was not provided through water quality modelling to demonstrate no adverse impact on local and RH SEPP mapped wetlands.

The development, as proposed, does not satisfy the objectives of this section of the DCP. Although the design includes some stormwater quality measures and flood mitigation for external inflows, it fails to address the internal drainage limitations posed by site topography, poor fall, shallow groundwater, and absence of positive drainage solutions. Without these changes, the development is likely to result in regular nuisance flooding, and public health risks resulting in a significant lack of amenity.

B5 – Flooding

This section applies to all development on flood prone land.

The objectives of the chapter are:

- To ensure development satisfies the provisions of the LEP;

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- To provide detailed controls for the assessment of development proposed on flood prone land in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979;
- To ensure flood risk is considered as early as possible in the planning and development process, based on the best available flood information, to reduce the impact of flooding and flood liability on individual owners and occupiers of flood prone land;
- To treat floodplains as an asset, specialising in uses that are productive and minimise risk to life during major weather events;
- To ensure that the use and development of flood prone land includes risk consequences that are manageable, to implement the principles of the NSW Government 'Flood Risk Management Manual' (as updated from time to time), Construction of Buildings in Flood Hazard Areas (Australian Building Codes Board) and Council's Floodplain Risk Management Policy and flood hazard maps as identified within Figure BF;
- To ensure that appropriate controls are applied to development on land where more than a minimal risk is present;
- To ensure development on land identified as floodway is restricted to low risk development; and
- To ensure the capacity of the floodway to convey and contain floodwaters is not diminished.

Following from the discussion against Clause 5.21 of the PSLEP above, the proposed development is **not acceptable** in this regard. The principles of the NSW Government 'Flood Risk Management Manual' (as amended), Construction of Buildings in Flood Hazard Areas (Australian Building Codes Board) and Council's Floodplain Risk Management Policy and flood hazard maps as identified within Figure BF have been considered in the assessment below.

Flood compatibility

The subject site is mapped within a Flood Planning Area and identified as a 'High Hazard Flood Fringe Area'. Under Figure BI of the DCP, tourist and visitor accommodation is not a suitable land use in this flood risk category.

Flood impact and risk

Figure BJ of the DCP a sensitive and hazardous land use, is required to have all habitable and non-habitable rooms constructed to at least the PMF level (RL 3.2m AHD). The development nominates an FFL of RL 3.6m AHD, compliant with this control.

Notwithstanding, the site's extremely flat topography (falling less than 0.2%) and poor soil infiltration capacity limits the feasibility of achieving viable drainage through gravity-based systems. Frequent surface ponding, already observed in Nearmap imagery (depths of up to 300mm), suggests the site will experience nuisance flooding under minor rainfall events, not just in major events.

The internal stormwater system includes a raised loop road, swale drains, diversion drains, and underground pipes, however:

- No sub-grade drainage, pumps, or mechanical systems are proposed;
- The raised loop road may inadvertently form a levee, trapping stormwater and intensifying localised flooding;
- No culverts or overland flow relief points have been identified through the raised access loop.

This site characteristic presents a risk to the ongoing usability of the development and poses potential public health issues, including mosquito breeding, mould growth, and impacts to water quality and resident safety.

Off-site impacts

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The application includes a Flood Impact Risk Assessment (FIRA) which concludes that no adverse off-site flooding impacts will occur as a result of the development. The FIRA was reviewed by Council's Flooding Engineer, who concluded that the development does not significantly alter external flood flows, velocities, or inundation extent. However, the absence of off-site impacts does not override the internal drainage deficiencies and flood risk incompatibility of the development with the land's high hazard classification.

The site is mapped within the draft Port Stephens Coastal Management Program (CMP) and sits at an average elevation of 1.5m AHD. Based on a conservative 50-year design life, the site is expected to be subject to frequent inundation due to the Highest Astronomical Tide (HAT) by 2070, resulting in regular nuisance flooding.

B7 – Heritage

This Chapter applies to development that is situated on land that contains a heritage item or within a heritage conservation area.

The objectives of this chapter are:

- To ensure satisfactory consideration of the objectives for LEP clause 5.10;
- To ensure that maintenance or repairs do not distract from the heritage significance of an existing item;
- To ensure evidence is provided for the demolition of a building of heritage significance; and
- To ensure due diligence is followed before carrying out development that may harm Aboriginal objects.

The proposed development is not located within or in proximity to any local or state listed heritage items or conservation areas. A search of the Aboriginal Heritage Management Systems did not reveal any previously recorded Aboriginal sites in proximity to the proposed development. The site is not located within 200m of any Aboriginal sensitive landscape features.

B8 – Road Network and Parking

This section applies to development with the potential to impact on the existing road network or create demand for on-site parking.

The objectives of this chapter are:

- To ensure that the impacts of traffic generating development are considered and that the existing level of service of the road network is maintained;
- To ensure development provides adequate on-site parking, loading and servicing spaces;
- To ensure that vehicle access is in a safe location and has minimal impacts on existing transit movements;
- To ensure driveways have adequate sight distances for traffic and pedestrians on footpaths;
- To ensure that vehicle access is located in a safe location, where it least impacts on existing transit movements;
- To ensure driveway exits maximise intersection sight distances for traffic and pedestrians on footpaths;
- To ensure visitor parking is conveniently located and easily identifiable;
- To ensure loading facilities do not adversely impact on the road network and are visually concealed;

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- To encourage more active lifestyles and ecologically sustainable development by providing convenient and accessible public transport options;
- To recognise the increasing use and demand for electric vehicles and ensure new development is designed to reflect this; and
- To ensure development includes adequate infrastructure to provide for the charging of electric vehicles.

Traffic impacts

A Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) was prepared by RoadCulture (2023). It is assessed that the TIA underestimates traffic generation by applying a 60% occupancy rate based on survey data from the MidCoast and MidWestern LGAs during off-peak school term periods. These assumptions do not reflect the peak summer or holiday periods that typically generate the highest traffic volumes in Port Stephens, particularly in waterfront and tourism-oriented localities.

Council considers the appropriate basis for assessment to be the RTA Guide to Traffic Generating Developments (2002), which recommends a rate of 0.4 vehicles per hour per cabin for casual accommodation uses such as motels. Applying this rate to the proposed 34 cabins results in a PM peak traffic generation of 13.6 vehicles/hr, significantly higher than the estimate provided by the applicant.

When considered in the context of the current standard of Swan Bay Road, including an approximately 2km section of unsealed pavement to the west of the site, narrow shoulders, and existing crash history, the revised traffic generation suggests that the development is likely to have an unacceptable impact on the safety, capacity and ongoing maintenance of the local road network.

Accordingly, the application is not supported in its current form and fails to demonstrate that traffic impacts have been appropriately considered or mitigated, as required by the objectives of this Chapter.

On-site parking provisions

Parking is proposed at existing ground level, underneath each cabin. Council's Drainage and Flooding Engineer has confirmed that it is not expected that vehicles be anchored to resist buoyancy given that they can be moved to higher ground during evacuation. The Development Control Plan (DCP) restricts car parking to be above the current day 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood level (2.3m AHD), which reduces the risk of vehicles being impacted or unavailable for evacuation in a large flooding event.

The proposal's under-cabin parking is located at approximately 1.3m AHD, substantially below the DCP-required 1% AEP (Current Day) level of 2.3m AHD. This means the site would require filling of over 1.0m to comply, yet no earthworks plan or sufficient details to demonstrate this have been provided. The applicant is relying upon the perimeter road at 2m AHD serving as a levee between flooding and the under-cabin parking, and that Swan Bay Road flooding at 1.6m AHD will occur before the levee is inundated. Although this fails to adequately address the risk or comply with Council's DCP requirements.

Furthermore, locating parking at existing ground level raises concerns regarding nuisance flooding. Even in smaller, more frequent flood events below the 1% AEP, the parking areas are likely to experience inundation. This would result in practical difficulties such as limited vehicle access, potential damage to vehicles, and an overall reduction in site usability during moderate flooding or tidal events. These factors could compromise evacuation readiness and the safety of residents and

visitors. Hence, parking below the required flood level contravenes the intent of the DCP to ensure safe, accessible, and reliable vehicle access under both emergency and routine conditions.

On-site parking access

A Request for Information (RFI) issued on 19 February 2025 required that the proposed internal loop road provide flood-free access. Council's Engineering Section endorsed a road level of 2.0m AHD, in concession to the strict 1% AEP level of 2.3m AHD, based on local hydrological data (Stillwater 1% AEP level of 1.9m, interpolated to current day). The applicant responded with revised civil engineering plans demonstrating compliance with this 2m AHD road level.

Despite this reduced level concession, the discrepancy between parking levels and flood level still presents as a flood risk to the users of the site. The internal road meeting flood-free access standards does not mitigate the hazard posed by parking areas vulnerable to flooding and nuisance inundation. This design approach ultimately undermines safe and convenient parking provision, further justifying refusal.

Section 4.15(1)(a)(iv) – The regulations (to the extent that they prescribe matters for the purposes of this paragraph)

None of the regulations to the extent that they prescribe matters for the purposes of this paragraph apply to the development.

Section 4.15 (1)(b) The likely impacts of that development, including environmental impacts on both natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality

Social and Economic Impacts

The proposal will result in the establishment of a 34-cabin tourist and visitor accommodation facility within a rural coastal landscape. This development has the potential to generate moderate economic benefits by attracting visitors and supporting local tourism-related expenditure. However, given the site's remote location, absence of supporting infrastructure, and limited integration with established tourism precincts, the overall economic uplift may be constrained.

In terms of social impacts, the increased visitation may place pressure on the limited public amenities and natural recreational areas nearby, potentially affecting community enjoyment and the amenity of the locality. Without adequate supporting infrastructure and visitor management, there is a risk of degradation to public open space and conflicts between tourism use and conservation values. Visitor education and management strategies will be essential to mitigate adverse social impacts. Furthermore, the development will increase the overall exposure of people and property to high risk flood prone land, placing an additional burden on the operational capacity of emergency response facilities and critical infrastructure during flood events.

Impacts on the Built Environment

The proposed development will introduce multiple new buildings and associated infrastructure into a predominantly rural landscape, which may alter the existing low-density and open character of the area. While design measures such as buffering and site layout have been incorporated with the aim to minimize visual intrusion, the cumulative effect of intensified tourist accommodation represents a shift towards a more built-up environment inconsistent with the prevailing rural and coastal context. The development includes hard visual infrastructure such as roads, stormwater treatment systems, and on-site wastewater management. Additionally, the proposal's design has not fully addressed existing drainage and flooding constraints, which may exacerbate nuisance flooding and impact the usability and safety of adjoining built facilities such as recreational areas. Overall should the

development be approved, diligent operational and infrastructure management to avoid adverse impacts on the built environment's functionality and character is necessary.

Impacts on the Natural Environment

The proposed development will involve construction and operational activities within close proximity to sensitive coastal wetlands and important shorebird habitats. Visitor activities such as boating, fishing, and general recreation could disturb threatened and migratory bird species, while the absence of supporting public infrastructure (toilets, waste disposal, seating) could lead to degradation of the foreshore environment and reduce visual amenity.

The site is also subject to high flood risk from tidal inundation and local surface water ponding, which has not been fully addressed in the design, posing potential environmental and public health risks through waterlogging, vector breeding, and contamination. The development is considered to conflict with the objectives of coastal environmental protection and biodiversity conservation.

Section 4.15(1)(c) The suitability of the site for the development

The subject site is located within a sensitive coastal environment, including proximity to coastal wetlands and habitat for threatened species, and is mapped as being within a 'High Hazard Flood Fringe Area' subject to tidal inundation, storm surge, and nuisance flooding due to minimal site fall and poor drainage. The lack of reticulated water and sewer infrastructure, combined with insufficient certainty regarding potable water supply and firefighting water provisions, raises significant concerns about the site's ability to sustainably support intensified tourist accommodation. While the development complies with certain technical requirements for water quality and wastewater management, there remain unresolved issues related to stormwater drainage, flood risk, and cumulative environmental impacts.

The site's rural landscape character and absence of supporting public amenities or strategic tourism infrastructure further undermine the proposal's compatibility with the zone objectives and local planning framework. Therefore, the site is considered marginally suitable for the proposed development without substantial modifications, including major infrastructure upgrades, enhanced visitor management, and more robust environmental protections to address the cumulative risks posed by intensified use in this fragile coastal setting.

Overall, the site is highly isolated, constrained and with insufficient infrastructure to cater for the major site intensification proposed as part of the development. Swan Bay is also not identified for future growth as part of Councils Strategic Planning Framework, thereby lacking strategic site merit for the development.

Section 4.15(1)(d) Any submissions made in accordance with this act or the regulations

Public Submissions

The application was exhibited from 16 January 2025 to 30 January 2025, in accordance with the provisions of the Port Stephens Council Community Engagement Strategy. A total of 6 submissions were received during this time. The matters raised during the exhibition period have been detailed in the table below.

Item	Matter Raised	Council Response
1. Environmental Issues		
1.1	Risk of septic pollution due to high groundwater, flooding, and blackouts	The applicant submitted an On-site Sewerage Management (OSSM) report demonstrating compliance with the 5% AEP flood level. However, the report did not

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Item	Matter Raised	Council Response
		address surface water flooding or system operation during power outages.
1.2	Proximity to National/Marine Parks and aquaculture areas; risk of untreated waste	While water quality controls are proposed, concerns remain due to the site's sensitive coastal setting and lack of public infrastructure. The cumulative impacts may conflict with Chapter 2 of the SEPP (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021, which seeks to protect ecological and scenic coastal values. Further mitigation (e.g. access controls, visitor education, restricted recreational use) is required to align with SEPP objectives, although has not been provided.
1.3	Uncontrolled tourist access, sediment runoff, and illegal boating risks	These impacts highlight the need for site management protocols and compliance mechanisms. A comprehensive operational management plan should be prepared to prevent environmental degradation of sensitive areas should the development be approved.
1.4	Potential for contaminated fill	This issue can be typically addressed via conditions of consent requiring evidence that imported fill is Virgin Excavated Natural Material (VENM).
1.5	Noise and light pollution impacting fauna	A Noise Impact Assessment (Soundscape Consulting, 14 March 2025) concluded that the proposal complies with the EPA Noise Policy for Industry and Council's DCP. However, operational lighting controls and curfews should be considered to reduce impacts on wildlife should the development be approved.
2. Flooding, Water Management, and Fill		
2.1	Flood-prone land and drainage limitations	The proposal includes a raised loop road and underground stormwater drainage (375mm RCP with floodgates and diversion swales). However, critical deficiencies have been identified including, insufficient drainage fall, no details on sub-surface drainage or pumping, and risk of internal ponding due to road acting as levee. The proposal does not meet DCP objectives for stormwater quantity and site drainage performance.
2.2	Drainage maintenance, redirected flows, and flood evacuation risks	Fill and drainage changes may impact adjacent properties and National Park land. The lack of culverts or overland flow paths may redirect water and increase flood risk. These impacts require further modelling.
3. Road Safety and Access		
3.1	Swan Bay Road condition and traffic increase	The applicant's Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) underestimates vehicle generation by assuming low

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Item	Matter Raised	Council Response
		occupancy rates. Swan Bay Road comprises 2km of unsealed pavement and known road safety issues, indicating the road infrastructure cannot support the proposed increased volume. Council does not support the current access and traffic arrangements.
3.2	On-site parking below flood level	Under cabin parking is at 1.3m AHD, below the DCP-required 2.3m AHD. No fill or design solutions provided to raise these areas. Parking in flood-prone areas raises practical and emergency management concerns.
3.3	Internal access road level	Civil plans show compliance with the agreed 2.0m AHD road level for access. However, this does not resolve flood vulnerability of parking as outlined in this report.
3.4	Crash history, access to waterfront, pedestrian safety	The unsealed road and lack of footpaths in a 100km/h zone presents ongoing risks. Increased traffic could worsen emergency response delays and endanger non-vehicular users. This forms a ground for the recommendation of refusal.
4. Amenity and Infrastructure Capacity		
4.1	Lack of public infrastructure	The foreshore lacks toilets, bins, and seating. Increased visitation could degrade the natural environment and limit public enjoyment. The locality is not identified in Council's infrastructure contributions plan for increased public infrastructure upgrades.
4.2	Congestion, maintenance strain, and cost to Council	Without infrastructure upgrades or contributions, the development will impose additional maintenance and operational costs on Council assets as outlined in this report.

Section 4.15(1)(e) The public interest

The subject site is located within a sensitive rural and coastal environment that provides important ecological, recreational, and community functions. The proposed development, as currently designed, raises significant concerns relating to environmental sustainability, infrastructure capacity, road safety, and compatibility with the zoning objectives. These concerns directly impact the broader public interest by potentially compromising the natural values of the area, increasing risks to public safety, and imposing undue burdens on local infrastructure and services.

The development's failure to adequately address flooding and drainage issues, its inconsistency with the RU2 Rural Landscape zone objectives, and its limited provision for essential public infrastructure collectively diminish its alignment with community expectations and long-term strategic planning goals. Moreover, the cumulative impacts on sensitive coastal ecosystems, public amenity, and emergency access pose risks that may negatively affect both current residents and future visitors.

Given these factors, approval of the development in its current form would not be consistent with the public interest. It is essential that any future proposal for this site demonstrates clear environmental stewardship, integrates effectively with existing infrastructure, respects the rural and coastal character of the locality, and prioritizes community safety and amenity. On these grounds, refusal is warranted to protect the public interest.

Section 7.11 – Contribution towards provision or improvement of amenities or services (developer contributions)

S7.11 development contributions apply to the development.

Section 7.12 – Fixed Development Consent Levies

Fixed development contributions apply to the proposal in accordance with the Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan and conditions of consent have been included requiring the payment of contributions.

CONCLUSION

This development has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the EP&A Act and the Regulations as outlined in this report. Following a thorough assessment of the relevant planning controls, issues raised in submissions and the key issues identified in this report, it is considered that the application cannot be supported and recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

The application is recommended to be refused under delegated authority pursuant to s4.15 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, subject to reasons for refusal provided as contained in the notice of determination.



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

CALL TO COUNCIL FORM DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

Development application (DA) call to Council request:

I/We (Mayor/Councillor/s) Cr Jason Wells and Cr Ben Niland request that DA number 16-2024-611-1 for DA description Tourist and Visitor Accommodation located at 1107 Swan Bay Road, Swan Bay be reported to Council for determination.

Reason:

Public interest

Declaration of Interest:

I/We have considered any pecuniary or non-pecuniary conflict of interest (including political donations) associated with this DA on my part or an associated person.

I/We (Mayor/Councillor/s) Cr Jason Wells and Cr Ben Niland have a conflict of interest:

☒ No

☐ Yes

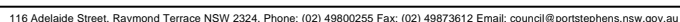
If **yes**, please provide the nature of the interest and reasons why further action should be taken to bring this DA to Council:

Signed:
Please sign or type name & attached to an email.
Cr Jason Wells

Date: 23/03/2025

Signed:
Please sign or type name & attached to
Cr Ben Niland

Date: 23/03/2025



ITEM NO. 2

FILE NO: 25/143891
EDRMS NO: PSC2025-01326

DRAFT SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE PLACE PLAN

REPORT OF: BROCK LAMONT - ACTING DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY
FUTURES
DIRECTORATE: COMMUNITY FUTURES

RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Place the draft Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan (**ATTACHMENT 1**) on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.
- 2) A further report to be provided to Council upon completion of the public exhibition period seeking endorsement of the Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's support to exhibit the draft Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan (the draft Place Plan) (**ATTACHMENT 1**).

Place plans put people and places first. Place plans start with our community values and priorities using our Liveability Survey data as a baseline. They identify the unique local character of a place and the ways our community can shape, enhance or protect the places in which they live, work and play.

Place plans include an analysis of potential opportunities for a place in line with the community's vision. Actions in place plans guide the way we plan for future land use, invest in new infrastructure, attract investment and create vibrancy.

As part of the preparation of the draft Place Plan, Council sought input from the community by inviting comments on an online map, holding community drop-in sessions, hosting a community workshop and meeting with key stakeholders and businesses located within the Salamander Bay Town Centre. More detail about this engagement program is provided in the Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan Engagement Report (**ATTACHMENT 2**).

As an outcome of this engagement, the draft Place Plan has been developed to include key actions to:

- Develop vacant Council-owned land surrounding the Salamander Bay Town Centre.
- Invest in the local environment.
- Make it easier to move around and access the Town Centre.

- Improve the look and feel of the Town Centre.

Develop vacant Council-owned land surrounding the Salamander Bay Town Centre

A key feature of the draft Place Plan is communicating the future of the vacant Council-owned land surrounding the Salamander Bay Town Centre.

The Salamander Bay Town Centre precinct is currently zoned E2 Commercial Centre, serving as the hub for business, retail, community and cultural activity. Within the Town Centre precinct, Council owns 4.7ha of land that is zoned E2 (155 Salamander Way and 10 Central Avenue, Salamander Bay). This land is considered suitable for development but remains vacant. This excludes the area currently improved by the Tomaree Library and Community Centre, the child care centre and areas with a high environmental value.

The Council-owned land is the only remaining undeveloped commercial zoned land left in the Salamander Bay Town Centre. Environmental studies undertaken for the property indicate that most of this land is suitable for development.

The proposed future land uses envisaged for parts of the 155 Salamander Way site includes commercial and mixed-use development. At 10 Central Avenue, the proposed future land uses would include a mix of commercial development and health premises. To realise this vision for the land, a concept plan would be developed to confirm the structure and layout required to best achieve this goal.

During the consultation on the Place Plan, the community were generally supportive of developing the Council-owned land, particularly for medium-density residential development. However, concerns were raised about the environmental impacts of removing vegetation, and draining into the adjacent Mambo-Wanda Wetlands.

Investing in the local environment

The Liveability Survey completed in 2024 found that the protection of the natural environment is considered the highest priority for the Port Stephens community. It is important as we plan for the future of Port Stephens that opportunities are identified to facilitate growth and housing, while also protecting and enhancing natural areas with high environmental value.

Approximately 1.41ha of land at 155 Salamander Way adjoins the Mambo-Wanda Wetlands and has been identified through a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) as high value environmental land. It is proposed that this area is preserved to support important environmental functions and conservation efforts in the surrounding area. In response to community feedback, it is proposed to provide a green gathering space on the periphery of this bushland. This space could be improved by nature trails to be accessed and enjoyed by the community subject to future funding opportunities.

Council would be seeking to invest funds generated from the development and sale of Council-owned land in the Town Centre toward the conservation and management of the Mambo-Wanda Wetlands site.

Make it easier to move around and access the Town Centre

During Council's community engagement activities, community feedback highlighted a desire to improve access in and around the Town Centre, for both cars and pedestrians. The existing access to the Town Centre from Salamander Way has been identified as a particular concern.

In response to this, the potential for a new intersection at this location is proposed to improve vehicle movements to and from the centre. This intersection design work would be part of a future development application and delivered as part of the development of the Council-owned land in the Salamander Bay Town Centre.

Further to the infrastructure improvements listed above, Council heard during community engagement activities about the car parking issues in the centre, particularly relating to the number of spaces, safe access through the car parking areas and the dimensions of parking spaces.

In response to this, a Traffic, Transport and Parking Study is proposed to be undertaken to identify opportunities for improvements in the Town Centre. The draft Place Plan also includes actions for landowners and individual businesses in the Town Centre to work collectively to improve car parking and access for customers on privately owned land.

Improve the look and feel of the Town Centre

During community engagement activities, Council heard from the community that the Town Centre area could benefit from investment in the look and feel of the place. As much of the Town Centre area and public domain works (such as garden beds, footpaths, seating and shelter) is privately owned, improving the look and feel of the area would require both Council, landowners and local businesses to work together.

The desire for a public domain that is modern, that creates an improved sense of place and that encourages people to stay and play for longer is a shared action. The draft Place Plan proposes an action for Council to prepare a streetscape guide for the Town Centre, which would provide a clear, consistent direction for Council, landowners and local businesses regarding the look and feel of the Town Centre. The development of such a document would provide a contemporary guide to support projects in the Town Centre into the future.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction	Delivery Program 2025-2029
Housing, tourism & economy	Implement the Local Housing Strategy, focusing on housing diversity, affordability and supply for our community

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The public exhibition of the draft Place Plan and associated community engagement activities would be undertaken using existing budgets.

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

LEGAL, POLICY AND RISK IMPLICATIONSPort Stephens Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)

The draft Place Plan is consistent with the LSPS, in particularly the following Planning Priorities:

- Make business growth easier (Planning Priority 2)
- Increase diversity of housing choice (Planning Priority 5)
- Create people friendly spaces in our local centres where people can come together (Planning Priority 10)

Port Stephens Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and Housing Supply Plan (HSP)

The draft Place Plan is consistent with the LHS, in particularly the following priorities:

- Ensure adequate supply of new housing (Priority 1.1)
- Increase the proportion of infill housing (Priority 1.3)
- Provide more affordable housing near jobs (Priority 2.2)
- Encourage a range of housing types and sizes (Priority 3.2)
- Housing enhances local character (Priority 4.1)

The HSP notes that the inclusion of more low-rise and mid-rise housing would support the growth of the existing shopping centre precinct.

Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013 (LEP)

The Town Centre, including the undeveloped Council-owned land, is zoned E2 Commercial Centre and the height of buildings is 15 metres (4 – 5 storeys). The proposed future uses of the Council-owned land at 155 Salamander Way and 10 Central Avenue are permissible under the existing zoning.

Port Stephens Development Control Plan 2014 (DCP)

The current site-specific DCP for the Town Centre includes a number of objectives which have been incorporated into the Place Plan as ‘character principles’. The existing site-specific DCP lacks detailed and tailored controls to effectively guide development and ensure it reflects the community’s vision for the area.

The draft Place Plan contains an action for Council to undertake a review of the site-specific DCP. This review would determine whether additional site-specific controls are required to ensure that future development delivers high-quality outcomes and contributes positively to the evolving identity of the Town Centre.

Draft Port Stephens Development Control Plan 2025 (draft DCP)

The draft DCP does not propose changes to the site-specific chapter for the Town Centre.

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that the draft Place Plan does not meet community expectations.	Medium	Accept the recommendations. Extensive community engagement during the exhibition period would assist Council to understand community expectations and identify possible changes to be made to the draft Place Plan prior to it being adopted.	Yes

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Includes Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

Social

The draft Place Plan contains actions to inspire the community and businesses to create a better place through education workshops, the provision of an outdoor gathering space, improving the accessibility of the centre and beautification projects. There is limited housing supply and diversity on the Tomaree Peninsula, which impacts housing affordability. Housing diversity allows for members of our community to 'age in place', downsizing from large freestanding housing to smaller, lower maintenance homes or apartments in the neighbourhood and community that they love. The Town Centre is considered an ideal location for medium-density housing as residents can easily access services and public transport, with communities living in a town centre creating vibrancy and improving public safety.

Economic

The Port Stephens Centres and Employment Land Study 2024 (CELS) found that without expanding the capacity of existing commercial zoned land, there may not be enough commercial land available across Port Stephens to meet demand by 2041. By increasing capacity within the Town Centre, including vacant and undeveloped sites, future demand for commercial space can be accommodated without impacting on natural areas or rezoning additional land.

Environmental

While the future development of Council-owned land would have an impact, land that has been identified as having high environmental value would be protected and enhanced as part of the wider approach to achieving the vision for the Salamander Bay Town Centre. Environmental impacts of future development activity would be assessed under subsequent development application processes and relevant planning legislation.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council's Communication and Engagement Strategy uses the IAP2 Framework to identify the level of engagement undertaken. An explanation for each level is shown below.

INFORM	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
CONSULT	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
INVOLVE	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 JULY 2025

COLLABORATE	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
EMPOWER	To place final decision-making and/or developed budgets in the hands of the public.
	No external communications and engagement are required for this report.

The following communication and engagement applies to this report.

External communications and engagement

CONSULT	<p>If supported, the draft Place Plan would be placed on public exhibition for 28 days and would be notified through social media, direct email to stakeholders, print advertising and Council's website.</p> <p>A drop-in session would be held during the exhibition period where Council staff would be available to talk to the community about the draft Place Plan.</p>
INVOLVE	<p>The draft Place Plan was developed following an intensive engagement period.</p> <p>The engagement activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liveability Surveys completed in 2020 and 2024• An online mapping tool and noticeboard for the community to provide written comments (151 comments on map and 66 comments on noticeboard)• Community drop-in held at the Salamander Square Shopping Centre from 5 May to 7 May 2025 and at the Community Connect Day held at the shopping centre on 16 May 2025 (390 visitors to drop in session and 30 visitors to community connect day)• A community workshop held on 8 May 2025 (16 participants)• Stakeholder meetings with businesses and property owners (6 meetings held) <p>The Salamander Bay Town Square Place Plan Engagement Report is found in (ATTACHMENT 2).</p>

Internal communications and engagement

Consultation has been undertaken by the Strategy and Environment Section with:

- Office of the Director of Corporate Strategy and Support
- Assets Section
- Capital Works Section

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 JULY 2025

- Community Services Section
- Public Domain and Services Section
- Development and Compliance Section
- Communications and Customer Experience Section

OPTIONS

- 1) Accept the recommendations.
- 2) Amend the recommendations.
- 3) Reject the recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Draft Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan. [↓](#)
- 2) Salamander Bay Town Centre Engagement Report. [↓](#)

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.



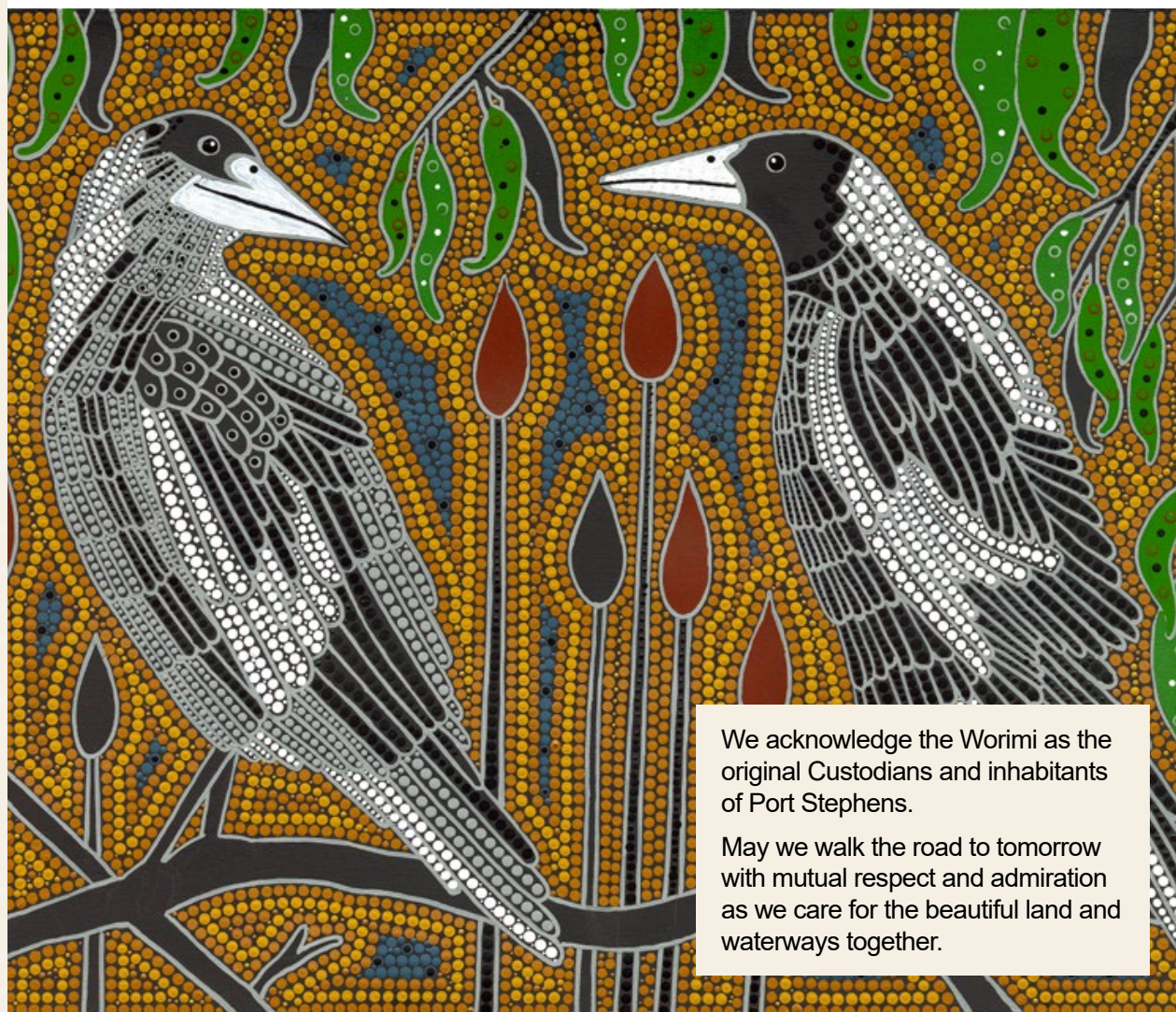
July 2025 – This document is for public exhibition purposes and is expected to change with community feedback received.

Guudji Yiigu

(Goo-jee ik-koo)

We welcome you to
Port Stephens – part of
the Worimi Aboriginal
Nation who speak the
Gathang language.

Artwork by Regan Lilley.



We acknowledge the Worimi as the
original Custodians and inhabitants
of Port Stephens.

May we walk the road to tomorrow
with mutual respect and admiration
as we care for the beautiful land and
waterways together.

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What is a Place Plan?

Place plans are a new way of planning for the growth of the unique towns and villages across Port Stephens. Place plans provide a local filter on the Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan and other strategic documents to create actions which improve the liveability and wellbeing of our communities.

Actions

The actions in our local place plans create alignment in the way we plan for future land use, invest in infrastructure, attract investment and bring life to our streets. Place plans recognise the importance of our public spaces in creating great places to live, work and visit.

Community

Most importantly, place plans start with our community. They respond to the community's values and aspirations; they enable partnerships between residents, business and council and guide a collaborative approach to the delivery of great place outcomes.

Our place planning approach



Local values

Through the Port Stephens Liveability Index, we know the values and priorities of our individual communities. This information provides the foundations of our place plans and helps guide planning and decision making across our community.



Start with yes

A culture that supports innovation and ideas is critical to the success of our place plans. By starting with yes, we can encourage new thinking, new ideas and attract more people to share in creating great places.



Test and trial

Great places don't appear by accident – they take time, effort and a shared understanding that not every project will work every time. By testing and trialling low cost, short term ideas, we learn by doing and create the stepping stones to bigger and better things.



Civic pride

The Port Stephens community is abundant with energy and expertise and people who want to be involved in planning and creating for their place. Place plans provide opportunities for collaboration, foster pride and create meaningful community connection.



Measure and benchmark

When we trial a new idea, launch a new program or invest in our public spaces, we need to understand what works and what doesn't. Measuring the success of our projects and comparing them to the best possible examples we can find will help build amazing places where people will want to live, work and play.

About Salamander Bay Town Centre

Located in the heart of the Tomaree Peninsula, the Salamander Bay Town Centre is a key commercial and community hub, offering a wide range of services and shopping experiences. It includes several large-scale retailers alongside a variety of smaller businesses across the retail, hospitality, health, entertainment, and professional services sectors.

The Centre also provides important community and educational facilities, including the Tomaree Connected Learning Centre, a community childcare centre, the Tomaree Library and Community Centre, and is in close proximity to both public and private schools – making it a focal point for both commerce and learning.

As the only dedicated shopping precinct on the Tomaree Peninsula, the Salamander Bay Town Centre services a broad catchment area beyond its immediate surroundings. Its strong retail offering enables the nearby town of Nelson Bay to focus on boutique shopping and tourism experiences.

The **Town Centre** is primarily made up of low-rise buildings and is surrounded by a mix of land uses, including residential areas, visitor accommodation, recreational facilities, schools, churches, commercial developments, and conservation land.

To the west of the Centre lies the **Mambo-Wanda Wetlands**, covering approximately 175 hectares. This environmentally significant area supports a diverse range of native flora and fauna and holds cultural significance for the Worimi people, the Traditional Custodians of the Port Stephens region.

The **Tomaree Peninsula** is a popular tourist destination, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Tourists come to enjoy the area's beaches, coastal parks, and natural attractions within the Port Stephens–Great Lakes Marine Park and Tomaree National Park, including the recently completed Tomaree Coastal Walk. The region also features a variety of experiences, from wildlife encounters and sand dune tours to dining, heritage sites, arts and crafts, and whale and dolphin watching.

As a result, the local population increases significantly during peak holiday periods. During these times, the Salamander Bay Town Centre becomes a busy hub, placing pressure on traffic flow and parking availability.

Currently, the Centre's layout—with a focus on vehicle access and separation of land uses—can make it challenging to create a vibrant, walkable and inviting environment. However, with improvements to the public domain, including the addition of community gathering spaces, activation initiatives, public art and cohesive landscaping, the Centre has strong potential to develop a unique identity.

As the Tomaree Peninsula continues to grow, the focus will be on enhancing pedestrian access and traffic circulation, strengthening community connections, protecting and showcasing natural assets, and creating new opportunities for housing, health services, and commercial development—supporting a dynamic and sustainable future for the Salamander Bay Town Centre.

Character principles



To create a sense of identity for a unified community and commercial precinct



To ensure future development is sympathetically integrated with the existing surrounds and appropriately activates the precinct



To ensure an integrated pedestrian and vehicular network promotes improved connectivity between developments within the precinct, and reaffirms the precinct as a hub



To ensure appropriate intersections are considered to accommodate for the expansion of the precinct



To ensure future development respects neighbours and users of the precinct



To ensure future development protects the ecological systems within and adjacent to the precinct



To ensure future development is designed with the safety of neighbours and users in mind



To ensure future development supports and is consistent with community activities

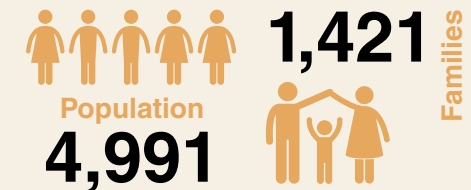


To ensure different design styles are developed with people in mind and are brought together holistically



To ensure future development offers economic advantages to the community in the immediate and long term

The residents of Salamander Bay are unique. Knowing who they are helps us understand their values and priorities.



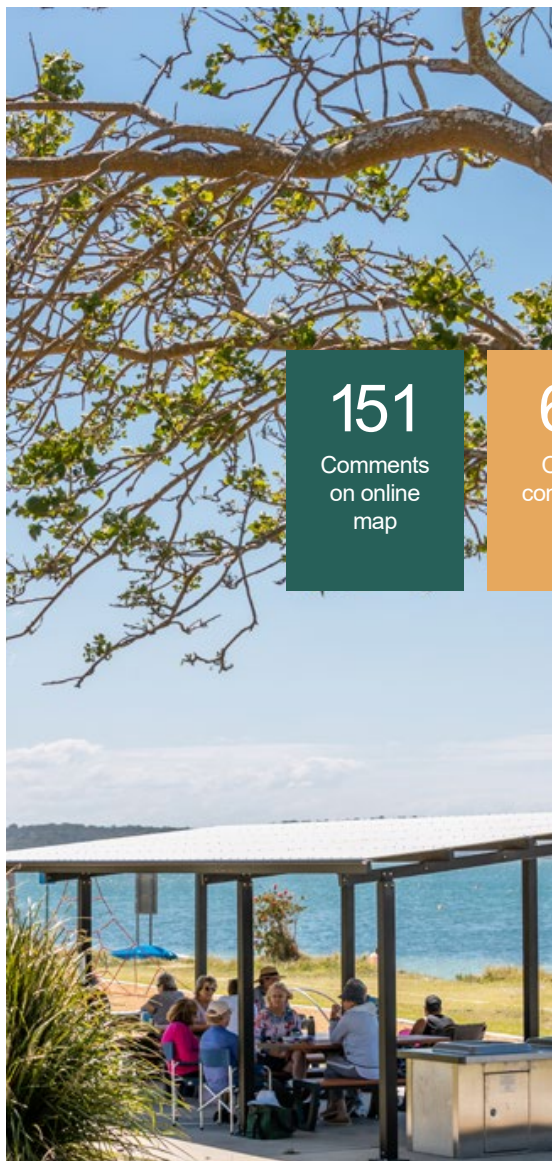
4.3% Aged care residential services (NSW 2.2%)

3.4% Cafés / restaurants (NSW 2%)

2.9% Accommodation (NSW 0.8%)

2.8% Supermarket / grocery stores (NSW 2.5%)

2.7% Takeaway food (NSW 1.8%)



We've been listening

The community explored the future of the Salamander Bay Town Centre through an extensive community engagement process. Here's a snapshot of the *Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan Engagement Report*.

151

Comments
on online
map

66

Online
comments

390

Visitors to
Salamander
Bay Shops
Drop In

16

Workshop
participants

30

Community
Connect
Day

6

Stakeholder
meetings

331

Emails to
businesses
and community
groups

What makes Salamander Bay a great place to live?

In September 2020, 243 people and in 2024, 170 people from Salamander Bay and Taylors Beach completed the Liveability survey, telling us what they value about their community and their priorities for their place. We used this data to shape the Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan – to set the vision, and define the actions that deliver the best outcomes for the community.

Key themes

The Liveability survey results indicate that the 6 most important themes of liveability for the people of Salamander Bay are:

- **Economy**
- **Housing**
- **Environment**
- **Character**
- **Access**
- **Community wellbeing**

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE PLACE PLAN.

Most valued

These are the things that are most important to you in your ideal neighbourhood.



Elements of natural environment (natural features, views, vegetation, topography, water, wildlife)



Local businesses that provide for daily needs (grocery shops, pharmacy, banks)



Locally owned and operated businesses



Access to neighbourhood amenities (cafés, shops, health and wellness services etc)



Sense of neighbourhood safety (from crime, traffic, pollution)



Sense of belonging in the community



Sense of personal safety (for all ages, genders, day or night)

Top strengths

These are the things you care about most and you believe are performing well. We'll continue to celebrate and protect these.



Protection of the natural environment



Landscaping and natural elements (street trees, planting, water features etc.)

Top priorities

These are the things most important to you, but you believe they're under performing. We'll work together to improve these.



General condition of public open space (streets, trees, footpaths, parks etc.)



Evidence of recent public investment (roads, parks, schools etc.)



Walking / jogging / bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity (shops, parks etc.)



Quality of public space (footpaths, verges, parks etc.)



Access and safety of walking, cycling / public transport (signage, paths, lighting)





Emerging themes for Salamander Bay Town Centre

Economy: Creating more opportunities for local business

The community told us that they value local businesses that meet their daily needs. The Town Centre is anchored by the Salamander Bay Square Shopping Centre, which is surrounded by a variety of small businesses that provide essential goods and services to residents of the Tomaree Peninsula and nearby areas.

There is a desire from the community for more shopping options within the Town Centre, and for businesses, particularly food and coffee vendors, to be open for longer hours. They also want a lively and inviting atmosphere, with outdoor dining, community activities and vibrant public spaces. Improving the overall design, adding better landscaping and making the area more accessible is likely to enhance the character and vitality of the Centre.

A recent study found that to meet growing demand, the amount of commercial floor space in the Tomaree Peninsula needs to increase. This includes developing existing undeveloped Council-owned land surrounding the Town Centre.

Guiding the future use of undeveloped commercially zoned land within the Town Centre precinct is a key part of this Place Plan, to support local businesses and create a thriving, accessible shopping and community hub.

Housing: Increasing housing diversity in the Tomaree

Council is committed to facilitating a diverse range of housing to meet our growing community over the next 20 years. Undeveloped land, known as greenfield land is becoming scarce in Port Stephens for development, and a greater focus on more diverse housing options in our town centres is required.

Higher density housing close to town centres means there is a larger concentration of people in the centre. When more people live within walking distance, it leads to more activity and foot traffic throughout the day and evening. This constant presence of people creates a lively and safe atmosphere and supports businesses and public transport services that rely on regular customers.

People have different housing needs based on income, household size, age, and lifestyle. A mix of housing types helps everyone find a home that suits their needs. Housing diversity makes it easier for people to downsize and age in place, and provides more supply and choice for first home buyers and people looking for a low maintenance property.

Environment: Investing in the environment

The Port Stephens community highly values the natural environment. In Salamander Bay, a balance is needed between protecting areas of high environmental value, the need to accommodate the growing population, and commercial enterprises that contribute to the local economy and local jobs. Increasing density in town centres is a key way to minimise urban sprawl and reduce car trips.

Protecting our environment requires ongoing investment and management in order to control weeds, feral animals and other environmental threats, and to restore and improve biodiversity values.

To enhance the sustainability of the Town Centre and reduce carbon emissions, we will explore innovative solutions – such as

installing solar panels on more buildings or structures within the Town Centre, increasing shaded car parks or providing electric vehicle chargers.

The community have told us they would like more opportunities to access surrounding bushland areas for recreational activities and educational purposes, and have a desire to see more street trees and native landscaping in the Town Centre.



Public Domain and character: A thriving and vibrant Town Centre

The Town Centre functions as a shopping precinct, that provides essential goods and services to the community. Although functional, there are opportunities to create more vibrancy and character by introducing cohesive landscaping and public art that celebrates the adjoining Mambo-Wanda Wetland. Additionally, creating inviting spaces for community gatherings and entertainment would foster a lively and engaging atmosphere.

People living in higher density homes in the Town Centre can also help create more vibrancy, as residents are more likely to use and activate public open space, walk around the Centre and provide passive surveillance.

The Town Centre is an employment hub. Workers in the centre have told us that they don't have access to a suitable outdoor space to enjoy their lunchbreak, or a nice space for passive recreation. Creating spaces for people

to recreate and gather will improve liveability in the centre, and create a place that is more than just a functional shopping centre. These spaces could also be used for community events and activities.

In response to the Place Plan, a future review of the site-specific chapter of the Development Control Plan (DCP) for the Town Centre will be undertaken. This review will assess whether planning controls are needed to ensure future development enhances the character of the centre, creating a more attractive and vibrant place for residents, workers and visitors.

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE PLACE PLAN.

Community wellbeing: A healthy, accessible and well-connected town centre

Wellbeing is achieved when individuals and communities feel healthy, happy, safe, and connected. It is essential that the Town Centre is a place where everyone—regardless of age, gender, cultural background, or ability—feels welcome and included.

Supporting wellbeing in the Town Centre involves ensuring accessible and reliable transport options, hosting inclusive events and activities that encourage social interaction, and providing access to affordable and appropriate housing, education, and employment opportunities.

Equally important is ensuring the community knows how to access local services, participate in group activities, and respond to emergencies such as bushfires, floods, or storms. Easy access to the natural

environment also contributes significantly to physical and mental wellbeing, offering spaces for recreation, relaxation, and connection with nature.

By focusing on inclusivity and connection, the Town Centre can play a central role in supporting the wellbeing of the broader community.

Traffic and Movement: Moving around the Town Centre

A town centre that is welcoming and accessible for everyone, whether using public transport, walking or cycling, or traveling by mobility scooter or private car, is important in ensuring that everyone can participate in community life and access essential services.

Currently, the design of the Town Centre prioritises cars over pedestrians, making movement around the area difficult and unsafe for pedestrians, parents with small children, cyclists, or mobility scooters.

Community feedback has highlighted the need to enhance access to the Town Centre and improve movement between businesses within the area. Key improvements include better intersection control at access points, upgraded pedestrian facilities both within and around the Town Centre, and more effective traffic management strategies.

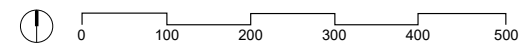
As part of any future Council-led development, improving the current intersection on Salamander Way will be investigated.



Planning for the future of Salamander Bay Town Centre

Key

- 1 Commercial
- 2 Health/Commercial
- 3 Mixed use/housing
- 4 Environment
- 5 Community facilities
- 6 Existing commercial
-  New intersection control
-  Landscape buffer







Commercial

The Salamander Bay Town Centre precinct is zoned E2 Commercial Centre, serving as the hub for business, retail, community and cultural activity. Within the Town Centre precinct, Council owns 4.7ha of land that is zoned for E2, which remains undeveloped. This land does not include the Tomaree Library and Community Centre, the child care centre, or land with a high environmental value. However, it offers opportunities for future development that can enhance the vibrancy and functionality of the Town Centre.

Strategic planning of this land can support a mix of uses that contribute to a more dynamic and connected centre, while meeting the evolving needs of the community.

Increase capacity of existing zoned land

The Port Stephens Centres and Employment Land Study 2024 (CELS) found that without expanding the capacity of existing commercial zoned land, there may not be enough commercial land to meet demand by 2041. However, by increasing the capacity within the Town Centre—including vacant and undeveloped sites—future demand for commercial space can be accommodated without rezoning additional land.

Achieving higher density on these sites would require redevelopment, which involves significant private investment from property owners. The Council's role in this process is limited but may include facilitating change through planning strategies. Existing development within the Town Centre could increase by adding extra floors (currently, the maximum building height is 15m, or approximately 4-5 storeys), increasing site coverage, or providing underground car parking.

A review of planning controls for the Town Centre will help determine if changes are needed in order to guide redevelopment that meets future needs while maintaining the area's character and community value.

New commercial development

The Council-owned land at 155 Salamander Way and 10 Central Avenue is the only remaining undeveloped zoned commercial land left in the Salamander Bay Town Centre. Environmental studies undertaken for the precinct indicate that most of this land is suitable for development.

As shown on the Planning Map (page 15), future uses of the land are proposed to include commercial development fronting Salamander Way, and mixed-use development — located behind the Library and Community Centre. At 10 Central Ave, future uses include a mix of commercial development and health premises.

To realise this vision for the land, future development applications would be required to subdivide the 155 Salamander Way and 10 Central Avenue sites.

All development applications over the land will be required to include detailed environmental and engineering studies, and will undergo a thorough and robust assessment process.

Community facilities

Tomaree Library and Community Centre

Port Stephens Libraries are welcoming, vibrant spaces that help our community connect and interact. They offer a wide variety of programs designed to inform, educate, and entertain, encouraging participation, creativity, and lifelong learning.

Tomaree Library opened in March 2000, was constructed as a purpose-built building and is well located close to local schools, public transport, and the shopping centre. The total floor space of the centre is 1,822 square metres. The library occupies 749 square metres with an additional 33 square metres of library space used by Port Stephens Historical Society and the Tomaree Museum Association.

An upgrade to the Tomaree Library and Community Centre is not being considered at this time or as part of this Plan. However, Council is preparing a Library Strategy to investigate the future needs for libraries in Port Stephens.

The proposed subdivision retains land around the library, leaving sufficient room for an outdoor gathering space for the community to use for passive recreation. It is intended to enhance this space so it can be used for recreational activities and educational opportunities.

Precinct facilities

The Salamander Bay Town Centre Precinct is also home to a range of community services that support local residents.

The Tomaree Neighbourhood Centre provides essential services like emergency relief, food support, and community outreach programs.

Salamander Early Education is a community based not-for-profit child care centre that has been serving the Port Stephens community since 1992.

Jupiter is a creative hub that supports local entrepreneurs and artists by providing flexible workspaces, events, and programs aims as fostering innovation and collaboration.

Port Stephens FM (100.9) operates as a community-run radio station, sharing local news, music, and events, and fostering a strong sense of local identity and connection.





Housing

Like many regional communities across Australia, Port Stephens is facing the challenge of housing supply, diversity, and affordability. The NSW Government forecasts that over the next 20 years, Port Stephens will need to accommodate an additional 20,000 residents. Specifically, the Tomaree Peninsula is projected to require around 2,680 new homes to support population growth.

With limited opportunity for new greenfield housing developments, housing prices continue to increase, pushing low to middle-income families out of the market.

To address this issue, Council adopted the Port Stephens Local Housing Strategy. This strategy identifies areas for potential rezoning, recommends housing types suitable for different locations, and outlines infrastructure required to facilitate new development.

In preparing the Port Stephens Local Housing Strategy, Council surveyed residents to better understand their satisfaction with available housing choices in Port Stephens. The results provided valuable insights into resident needs, including a desire for more diverse housing options such as smaller lot homes, higher-density housing types like duplexes,

apartments, and terrace houses, as well as senior-friendly housing. The survey highlights that the current supply of these housing types is limited, despite a strong demand.

Port Stephens has long been a desired destination for retirees and older people seeking a more relaxed lifestyle in beautiful surroundings. As the median age of residents continues to rise, the demand for homes suitable for older people is likely to continue. Facilitating downsizing options can help free up larger family homes for buyers and renters, ensuring that existing residents can remain in the area.

To help facilitate the delivery of new housing, Council is progressing the development of Council-owned land in Salamander Bay. These initiatives aim to create a pipeline of new housing types across Port Stephens, meeting population growth, improving affordability and meeting workforce demands.

These projects will provide a variety of housing densities and types, offering suitable options for different community members. The development of these sites can also generate income that can be reinvested into infrastructure improvements and environmental initiatives.

155 Salamander Way

Land surrounding the existing Town Centre offers a valuable opportunity to accommodate both additional commercial development and diverse housing options. Introducing new housing in this area would enable more people to live close to established services, including shops, healthcare, community facilities, and public transport.

The site is already zoned for mixed-use development, allowing for ground floor commercial uses with residential apartments above. Current planning controls support this form of development with building heights of up to 15 metres (approximately 4–5 storeys).

To increase housing supply and support urban consolidation, there is potential to pursue a planning proposal to allow greater building heights on parts of the site—enabling more homes within walking distance of the Town Centre.

Infrastructure

Community feedback highlighted the need to improve access to the Town Centre for both cars and pedestrians. The existing access to the Town Centre from Salamander Way has been highlighted as a particular concern as it only allows for left-turning vehicles. This has allegedly led to dangerous U-turns by drivers when approaching the centre from the east. To address this, Council intends to deliver a new intersection control at this access point. In consultation with Transport for NSW, further studies and design will need to be undertaken to determine the most appropriate treatment.



Did you know?

The process of changing planning controls, such as building heights, starts by identifying an investigation area in a Council strategy, like a place plan. This helps us inform the community about upcoming developments in their area over the next few years.

Next, we perform detailed studies to determine whether an area can accommodate additional development.

We then prepare a planning proposal that explains in detail the proposed changes to the planning controls contained in a Local Environmental Plan (LEP). The planning proposal is processed in accordance with a legislated process that is overseen by the NSW Government. This process includes mandatory community consultation.



Environment

Protecting the natural environment is a top priority for the Port Stephens community. As the area grows, it is essential to balance the need for new housing and development with the preservation of environmentally significant land.

To support this, detailed environmental studies have been undertaken to guide the future use of Council-owned land, ensuring that areas with the highest environmental value are identified and protected.

Proceeds from the sale of Council-owned land will be reinvested into environmental projects—helping to preserve, enhance, and restore the local natural environment for current and future generations.

Town Centre

Approximately 1.41ha of land at 155 Salamander Way, that adjoins the Mambo-Wanda Wetlands, has been identified through a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) as high value environmental land, containing Koala feed trees. This area will be preserved to support conservation.

Further environmental studies will be undertaken at the Development Application stage to guide further development activities.

While expanding the Town Centre may involve some vegetation removal, the BDAR confirms that the land designated for development is not of high environmental value. However, additional environmental studies will be undertaken to determine how development can proceed within legislative frameworks, including biodiversity offsetting mechanisms, to ensure the ongoing protection and proper management of the site.

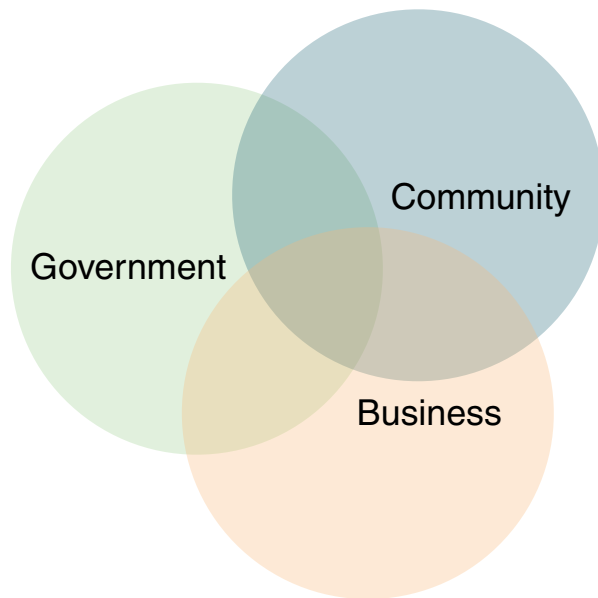
Mambo-Wanda Wetlands

The Mambo-Wanda Wetlands adjoins the Town Centre and is greatly valued by the community as a place of environmental and cultural significance. The land is zoned C2 Environmental Conservation and is owned by Port Stephens Council. As the landholder, Council is responsible for ensuring that this significant area is well looked after and continues to undertake pest and weed management, fire trail management and bush regeneration works. Council relies on volunteers from the community to help look after this important natural asset.

To help maintain this area, Council will be investing money from the sale of the Council-owned land in the Town Centre into the conservation and management of the Mambo-Wanda Wetlands.



A shared responsibility for our place



Individual responsibilities with opportunities for partnerships



Residents

Residents make an important contribution to their place through individual or collective efforts. The impact on the look and feel of a place is through the diversity of people; their rich heritage, lived experience and their sense of ownership of public and private space. Place making activities are developed in partnership with the residents and consider the cultural values with the Traditional Owners of the Land, the Worimi people.



Local workers

Local workers contribute to a place in many ways, and have a connection to a place even if they don't live there. Their presence activates a place and makes it vibrant and they support local business. Some workers even volunteer their time to activities that improve the place.



Visitors

Visitors and tourists, including day trippers, overnight visitors, or those just passing through, play an important role in a place. They provide a customer base that may result in new local businesses, like cafés and restaurants, or key attractions that also benefit residents by offering a larger variety of things to see and do.



Business

Businesses have many opportunities to contribute to placemaking. These could include funding and supporting community projects, collaborating with other businesses, sharing resources or training local workers. Businesses make a vital contribution to the character of the place. Maintaining an attractive shopfront that presents positively to the streetscape contributes to an appealing and welcoming town centre.



Port Stephens Council

Council has 4 different roles in implementing place plans – as a coordinator by providing guidance and assistance for a project; as a supporter by providing permission, inspiration or project funding; as a partner that works with community groups and business to undertake projects; or as the primary organisation that funds and delivers the project.



Investors and developers

A town or city needs people and organisations that believe in its potential, and who are able to invest in its future. Investors, including families, businesses, and developers play an active role in ensuring that development aligns with the strategic direction of a place. They're in a position to deliver and maintain housing, infrastructure, and business opportunities that improve and grow places.



Community groups and volunteers

Community groups and volunteers with a can-do and proactive attitude are vital for placemaking projects. They include sporting clubs, schools, charities, churches, clubs, social groups and environmental custodians. Community groups and volunteers contribute significantly to their community.



State Government

State Government has 3 roles in placemaking – as an authority, setting strategic direction and a funding body. Importantly, they have a significant role in the management of roads and other infrastructure, parks and heritage, which are all essential contributors to the identity of a place.



Look and feel for Salamander Bay

Creating an attractive streetscape brings people into town and compels people to stay and linger. The use of a consistent colour palette and materials can help to create a beautiful town with its own, unique 'look and feel'.

Small projects such as shop front renovations, fence replacements and street furniture may all present opportunities to create a more cohesive town centre and a sense of belonging to the community.

The colour palette represents the many attributes of the Salamander Bay area and celebrates the outstanding natural beauty of the broader Port Stephens East Ward region.



Green for the vibrant foreshore parklands and mangroves that line our waterways.

C: 41% **M:** 0% **Y:** 58% **K:** 0%

R: 91 **G:** 208 **B:** 230

HEX: 5BD0E6



Deep green for the native bushland supporting our wildlife.

C: 91% **M:** 44% **Y:** 66% **K:** 35%

R: 0 **G:** 86 **B:** 78

Hex: 00554D



Blue for the ocean against the horizon line.

C: 89% **M:** 52% **Y:** 44% **K:** 11%

R: 33 **G:** 102 **B:** 119

HEX: 206677



Sandstone for the sandy shores of the East Ward and coastal parts of Port Stephens.



Orange for the stunning skies at dawn and dusk.

C: 0% **M:** 32% **Y:** 68% **K:** 9%

R: 233 **G:** 158 **B:** 75

HEX: E99E4B



Brown for the pale tones of the bark and sedges in the dappled shade of the Mambo Wetlands.

C: 29% **M:** 41% **Y:** 56% **K:** 3%

R: 181 **G:** 146 **B:** 117

Hex: B59275



Sandy white for the glittering sand and boats dotted throughout our waterways.

C: 3% **M:** 4% **Y:** 9% **K:** 0%

R: 244 **G:** 240 **B:** 228

Hex: F4F0E4



Actions

Timeframe

This Place Plan has a planning horizon of 5 years. Timeframes denote when delivery of an action is expected to start.

Short term – 0 to 2 years



Medium term – 2 to 4 years



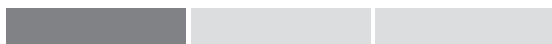
Long term – 4 to 5+ years



Cost

Cost indicates whether an action is a relatively cheap or a costly undertaking.

Low



Medium



High



Lead

Each action will be lead by Council or a specific group associated with the action.

Council role

Salamander Bay's Liveability Index results have inspired a series of action items. Port Stephens Council has 4 possible roles in delivering these actions:

- **Coordinate** – As a coordinator, we'll provide guidance on how to start your project, help by identifying approvals required, advise you about funding opportunities, get you in touch with other organisations, or advocate for your project.
- **Support** – As a supporter, we may provide support, permission, inspiration or funding.
- **Deliver** – In delivering, we'll fund and deliver the project.
- **Partner** – As a partner, we'll work with the community, business, developers, and state agencies to undertake projects or programs.

Emerging themes

The Liveability survey results indicate that the 6 most important themes of liveability for the people of Salamander Bay are:

- **Economy**
- **Housing**
- **Environment**
- **Character**
- **Access**
- **Community wellbeing**

Please note: Cost estimates and delivery timeframes are indicative only and subject to further investigation.

The order for commencement of actions is flexible and will be based on timing and availability of funding and resources, and community initiative.

1. Establish a Salamander Bay Town Centre Precinct group

Businesses and property owners play a vital role in shaping a vibrant and welcoming Salamander Bay Town Centre. To harness this local energy and drive positive change, it is proposed to form a dedicated Salamander Bay Precinct Group under the umbrella of the Port Stephens Business Chamber.

This precinct group would bring together property owners and business operators, who are passionate about revitalising the Salamander Bay Town Centre. Acting as a united voice and catalyst for action, the group would lead to initiatives that improve

the appearance of the Town Centre, develop collaborative approaches to revitalisation, create a distinct local identity, and foster a stronger sense of place for the community.

Several priority projects outlined in this Plan provide immediate opportunity for the precinct group to get started, delivering visible, community-driven improvements from the outset.

Council will provide support to bring together the key stakeholders and guide actions to commence this initiative.

Timeframe (ongoing)



Cost



Lead: Port Stephens Business Chamber **Council role:** Support



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2. Attracting local businesses to Salamander Bay Shopping Centre

Locally owned businesses play a vital role in creating a distinctive, engaging, and community-connected retail experience. In partnership with the Port Stephens Business Chamber, there is an opportunity to develop a targeted program aimed at attracting locally owned and operated businesses to the Salamander Bay Shopping Centre.

By focusing on local entrepreneurs and independent operators, this initiative would bring together property owners, centre management, business leaders, and community advocates to help shape a more vibrant and locally relevant tenant mix.

This may include identifying suitable tenancies for activation, developing flexible leasing models and pop-up opportunities, partnering with the Port Stephens Business Chamber to promote opportunities and attract local businesses and supporting fit-out and design initiatives to ensure a high-quality presentation aligned with centre standards

This approach would not only enhance the shopping experience but also build stronger ties between the Centre and the local community.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Port Stephens Business Chamber **Council role:** Support

3. Unlocking new commercial, community and housing opportunities

The development of vacant Council-owned land surrounding the Salamander Bay Town Centre presents a major opportunity to deliver vibrant public spaces and a wider range of housing options across the Tomaree Peninsula.

The next step is to prepare and lodge a Development Application for the subdivision of the land, supported by a visionary concept plan that outlines future land uses. Council will undertake detailed environmental studies and design work to ensure the proposal reflects both environmental values and community needs before formally submitting the application for assessment.

Following subdivision and sale, future Development Applications will be required for the construction of new buildings—potentially including commercial, residential, and mixed-use spaces.

The community will have opportunities to provide feedback during the formal public notification periods, helping shape the future character and function of Salamander Bay.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Deliver





4. Integrating health services into future development

The community have told us that health services in the Tomaree are under increasing pressure and have long expressed the need for expanded health care access. Council recognises that services are stretched thin and providers that once offered bulk billed services are no longer able to do so. This has far reaching consequences, and urgent action is required.

With an ageing population, along with rising housing affordability challenges and the cost of living pressures, many in our community are facing increasing disadvantage.

Council will continue to advocate to State and Federal Governments for more health services in Port Stephens, particularly those that bulk-bill.

Once Council-owned land is subdivided, we will proactively seek to include additional health facilities in the Town Centre.

Expressions of Interest will be sought for a developer to construct and manage a health facility in the northern section of the development footprint, as shown on the "Planning Map" on Page 15. While the market will determine what this facility will include, Council will look to support those submissions that deliver quality community health outcomes.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Deliver

5. Review and strengthen planning controls for the Town Centre

The current site-specific Development Control Plan (DCP) for the Town Centre includes a number of broad objectives, which have been incorporated into this Place Plan as 'character principles' to help shape future development. However, the existing DCP lacks the detailed and tailored controls needed to effectively guide development and ensure it reflects the community's vision for the area.

In the absence of specific provisions, assessment relies on criteria from other DCP chapters, which may not fully address the unique character and planning needs of the Town Centre.

Following approval of the land subdivision, Council will undertake a comprehensive review of the DCP. This review will determine whether additional site-specific controls are required to ensure that future development delivers high-quality outcomes and contributes positively to the evolving identity of the Town Centre.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Deliver





6. Increase housing diversity in the Tomaree

The Port Stephens Local Housing Strategy aims to increase housing supply and diversity in the Tomaree Peninsula. Council will continue to encourage housing investment in Port Stephens by working to streamline assessment process and reduce planning approval times, making it easier and more cost effective for developers to invest in a variety of housing types.

Council will actively work with developers to ensure diverse housing options are available including houses on smaller lots, higher density housing developments and seniors housing to meet our growing community's needs.

There is a relatively high rate of unoccupied dwellings in the Tomaree Peninsula compared to rates in NSW and Australia. This may

reflect the popularity of short-term rental accommodation (STRA) in Port Stephens, which supports our tourist and visitor economy. However, the data also shows that many of these are holiday or secondary homes that don't contribute to the long-term rental market or support the local economy.

Council will continue to monitor short and long-term rental availability across the Tomaree Peninsula, to inform future actions.

In collaboration with the NSW Government, which oversees the state-wide regulatory framework for STRA, Council will advocate for reforms and explore initiatives aimed at reducing the negative impacts of short-term rentals on neighbourhood amenity and Councils resources.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Deliver

7. Investigate increased building heights in the Town Centre

Increasing building heights within town centres limits urban sprawl, boosts housing capacity, reduces car reliability and helps improve safety and vibrancy.

While current planning controls permit buildings up to 15 meters (approximately 4-5 storeys), the Council may consider a planning proposal to increase building heights and facilitate additional housing.

For shop-top housing that is within 400m of a town centre or train station in nominated areas, State Planning Policy (Housing) 2021 (SEPP) allows buildings to be up to 24 metres, or 6-8 storeys. While Salamander Bay is not a nominated area, given the close proximity

of retail, health and community services, and public transport, matching the height limits set by the SEPP might be a suitable maximum building height in the Town Centre.

A planning proposal would be required in order to increase building heights, including community engagement, to ensure community feedback is incorporated and developments align with community values.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Partner



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8. Environmental education and sustainability

Education is one of the most powerful tools for protecting the natural environment. There is strong community interest in learning more about the local ecology—particularly the Mambo-Wanda Wetlands.

Expanding environmental education programs, including sustainability workshops tailored to both residents and businesses, offers a valuable opportunity to raise awareness and support practical action to reduce the Town Centre's carbon footprint.

We will work closely with local community groups, environmental experts, Tomaree Education Centre, St Phillips Christian College and Salamander Child Care Centre to explore and deliver engaging, place-based learning opportunities that inspire long-term stewardship of the local environment.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Partner

9. Connect with nature

The Town Centre currently lacks a welcoming outdoor space where people can gather, socialise, play, or simply relax in nature. Accessible green space is particularly important for those living in medium-density housing with limited private open areas and for workers seeking a place to enjoy a break during the day.

To address this need, Council will preserve the environmentally significant land north of the library as a public green space. Options to improve access will be explored, including the introduction of nature trails through the site. Enhancements such as picnic tables,

wayfinding signage, and outdoor learning areas may also be incorporated to support both recreation and education, particularly around the adjoining Mambo-Wanda Wetland.

Council will also explore partnerships with local community groups, such as Landcare, to help maintain walking trails and enhance native vegetation and habitats—encouraging biodiversity and providing safe havens for local fauna.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Deliver





10. A sustainable Town Centre

The Port Stephens Emissions Reduction Action Plan outlines the short, medium and long-term actions to reduce or remove Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

A number of initiatives have already been implemented on Council-owned buildings in the Town Centre, including the installation of photovoltaic systems and energy-saving LED lighting at the Library. The Salamander Early Education Centre has also installed a number of solar panels, at their own cost, to improve the energy efficiency of the building.

A number of property owners in the Town Centre have already invested in solar panels on their buildings. However, to further improve the efficiency of the centre, there is an opportunity for more buildings to utilise solar power.

Additional shaded parking areas could also be installed to reduce the amount of heat absorbed by vehicles and to help mitigate the urban heat island effect.

With the increasing use of Electric Vehicles, businesses are encouraged to investigate opportunities to install public EV fast chargers in the Town Centre. The community have expressed a need for additional options for fast charging in the Tomaree Peninsula.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Business **Council role:** Partner

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11. Alternative options for staff parking

Customers highly value easy access to shopping centre. Ensuring parking is safe, convenient and located close to entrance points is important for delivering a positive customer experience.

To optimise parking availability for customers, staff parking should be designated on the periphery of a parking lot. While further away, the turnover of staff parking is significantly less as they spend far more time in the Centre. This approach not only reserves parking for shoppers but also contributes to a more organised and efficient parking system.

To encourage staff to park in designated parking, communications around the importance of designated parking and incentives for compliance could be introduced.

In addition, Salamander Bay businesses could engage with nearby schools to open car parks for staff parking during school holidays, freeing up parking closer to the Centre for customers.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Business **Council role:** Support

12. Improving community connectivity and access

We want to make it easier and safer to get around Salamander Bay Town Centre — whether you're walking, driving, or parking. To do this, Council will carry out a detailed Traffic, Access and Parking Study. This study will help us understand what improvements are needed and guide future decisions. It will:

- Identify the best spots for new pedestrian crossings and pathway upgrades to keep everyone safe.
- Look at ways to better connect Town Centre Circuit for cars, bikes, and pedestrians, while respecting the environment at 155 Salamander Way.
- Explore options to improve traffic flow, including possible one-way street changes.

- Review parking availability and check if it meets Australian standards.
- Examine intersections, especially near Salamander Way, to improve vehicle access in partnership with Transport for NSW.
- Find new opportunities to improve pedestrian access, including potential new pathways along Salamander Way.

As many parking areas within the Town Centre are privately owned, successful implementation of the recommendations in the study will require collaboration with local property owners and / or the proposed precinct group.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Deliver

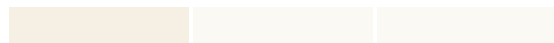
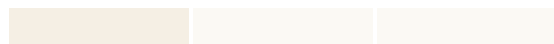
ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE PLACE PLAN.

13. Create a sense of identity

Establishing a distinct identity and brand for the Town Centre will help differentiate it from nearby shopping areas and make it easier for residents and visitors to find and recognise the Centre.

This could be achieved through the installation of welcoming gateway signage at key entry points, along with improved wayfinding from major roads like Nelson Bay Road and Port Stephens Drive.

Businesses and the proposed precinct group can play an important role in bringing this identity to life by sponsoring gateway signage and advocating for enhanced directional signage, reinforcing a strong, consistent image of the Town Centre.

Timeframe**Cost**

Lead: Business **Council role:** Support

14. Make our Town Centre more beautiful together

Most of the public spaces in the Town Centre are owned by local businesses and property owners. To make the area more attractive and welcoming, Council, businesses, and property owners need to work together — the Council, businesses, and property owners.

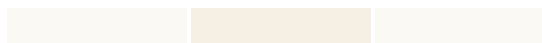
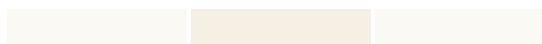
A connected, clear, and visually appealing environment will give our Town Centre a unique feeling and encourage visitors to stay longer, helping local shops and services.

In collaboration, Council, Port Stephens Business Chamber and the Precinct Group will guide this process, by developing a Streetscape Guide for the Town Centre. This guide will give clear direction on the design, layout, materials, and landscaping

of public spaces—to make public spaces look great and feel consistent across the area.

Businesses and property owners will be encouraged to use the guide when planning upgrades or new developments. A precinct group could support implementation on private land, or businesses may choose to sponsor community groups to deliver landscaping projects and help with ongoing maintenance.

The Streetscape Guide may also be integrated into a future Development Control Plan (DCP) for the Town Centre, with elements such as landscaping to be considered as part of development applications for new buildings.

Timeframe**Cost**

Lead: Business **Council role:** Support

15. Improve connection to community services

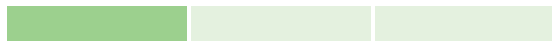
Social connection and knowing where to find help are vital for community wellbeing.

The Tomaree Library and Community Centre offers a range of services, including free internet and Wi-Fi access, regular programs and author visits. A variety of permanent and casual tenants, groups, services and activities operate from the Centre on a regular basis. These include recreation and social activities, healthy lifestyle, spiritual, educational, cultural and hobby groups.

If you're looking for a space for your group to operate from, there are a number of meeting spaces at the Tomaree Library and Community Centre available for hire. For more information, visit:

pscouncil.info/tomaree-library

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Support

Council's Community Support Fund aims to build sustainable local communities, and enhance the wellbeing and development of the Port Stephens community. This grant welcomes applications from community groups and not-for-profit organisations seeking support for projects, activities and events that address community needs. For more information, visit:

pscouncil.info/grants-scholarships

The Tomaree Neighbourhood Centre plays a vital role in supporting vulnerable and marginalised members of the Port Stephens community. Currently operating from the Tomaree Library and Community Centre building, the Centre can be difficult to locate.

To improve its visibility and accessibility, a new sign will be installed in a prominent location, making it easier for community members to find and access the essential services it provides.



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16. Preparing for our library's future

Libraries are important community hubs that offer access to resources, programs, and welcoming spaces for everyone. To make sure our libraries keep serving us well into the future, Council will develop a Library Strategy looking ahead to 2041.

This plan will look at what the community needs, how we can deliver services more effectively, and what new or improved facilities might be needed — including the possibility of expanding the Tomaree Library and Community Centre in the next 10+ years to keep up with growth.

Community members have also shown interest in having a café at Tomaree Library. The courtyard outside could be a great spot for this, and Council will explore working with private partners to make it happen.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Council **Council role:** Deliver

17. An accessible Town Centre

Ensuring accessible infrastructure is essential to creating a Town Centre where everyone can participate fully—regardless of age, ability, or mobility needs. Features such as ramps, safe and even footpaths, tactile paving, clear signage, accessible transport infrastructure, and inclusive digital platforms all contribute to a more welcoming and usable environment.

Community feedback has highlighted several barriers to accessibility in the Salamander Bay Town Centre, including uneven footpaths and a lack of appropriate parking for community buses—making it difficult for people with mobility issues and care providers to visit the area.

Council, Port Stephens Business Chamber and the Precinct Group will conduct a Disability Access Audit to identify specific areas for improvement. The findings will be shared with local property owners and businesses, and Council will work collaboratively with them to support necessary upgrades.

By making these targeted improvements, we can create a Town Centre that not only supports people with disabilities, but also benefits older residents, families with prams, and anyone experiencing temporary mobility challenges.

Timeframe



Cost



Lead: Business **Council role:** Support

22. Community connect

We heard that at times, the Tomaree community can find it hard to access information and feel that they miss opportunities to participate and contribute. A community noticeboard is one way for the community to know what is going on in their place.

There's lots of ways to create a community noticeboard – it could be a digital noticeboard hosted via social media or a physical noticeboard on the wall in the shopping centre. This could be developed and managed through a local community group or business.

Council also provides information on events, projects and engagement opportunities through social media, a digital newsletter, Your Port and printed newsletters.

Council will work on ways to increase the distribution of the Your Port newsletter and other information to ensure it reaches as many Tomaree residents as possible.

Destination Port Stephens provide information on their website about 'what's on' and visitor services that are available.

For further information head to portstephens.org.au/events

Timeframe





Cost




Lead: Community **Council role:** Deliver





council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au | 02 4988 0255 | portstephens.nsw.gov.au    



Communications and Engagement Report

Salamander Bay Town Centre

Place Plan

June 2025



Salamander Bay Town CentrePlace Plan

The place planning process aims to capture the character of the unique communities within Port Stephens and to give voice to their residents. By giving ownership to the community of the roadmap for the future, it not only enhances their connection to place but also ensures that the priorities and actions within the plan are created by those who it will impact. The Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan is an action-oriented strategy informed and guided by community input.

What we've been up to



Community
Drop Ins

393 visited



Online Ideas

216 responses



Webpages

1438 visitors



Direct emails

331 sent



Social media

5860 reached

Top 5 Salamander Bay & Taylors Beach Values - Liveability Index Care Factors

For liveability reporting, each neighbourhood includes one or more suburbs



76%

Elements
of natural
environment

(LGA 75%)



65%

Local
businesses that
provide for daily
needs

(LGA 53%)



65%

General
condition of
public open
space

(LGA 66%)



61%

Access to
neighbourhood
amenities

(LGA 51%)



58%

Locally owned
and operated
businesses

(LGA 53%)



ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE



Top things we've been hearing

High rise to offices and housing look over wetlands

Link road right around to carpark to ease traffic

The Mambo wetlands should be kept as they are and not encroached upon.

Top strengths Salamander Bay & Taylors Beach overall

Elements of natural environment
Local businesses that provide daily needs
Locally owned and operated businesses
Access to neighbourhood amenities
Sense of neighbourhood safety
Sense of belonging in the community
Sense of personal safety

Top priorities Salamander Bay & Taylors Beach overall

General condition of public open space
Evidence of recent public investment
Walking/jogging/bike paths
Quality of public space
Access and safety of transport options
Elements of natural environment

Emerging themes

- Community Wellbeing
- Economy
- Environment
- Housing
- Infrastructure & Movement
- Public Domain

Most Mentioned Ideas from Social Map

Day Surgery or urgent health clinic
Youth activities or Centre
Mixed-use buildings with housing above shops
Protect Mambo Wetlands
Improve bike and walking paths
Link road around shopping centre

Project timeline



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Summary

The place planning process aims to capture the character of the unique communities within Port Stephens and to give voice to their residents. By giving ownership to the community of the road map for the future, not only does it enhance their connection to place but also ensures that the priorities and actions within the plan are created by those whom it will impact.

In engaging with the local community, we are able to ensure community input into the development of the draft plan for Salamander Bay Town Centre.

The introduction of a Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan to the community will work through a phased three phased engagement approach:

- Phase 0 – Liveability survey 20220 and 2024
- Phase 1 – Engagement to help guide the development of the draft Salamander Bay Place Plan (current phase)
- Phase 2 – Public Exhibition of the draft plan
- Phase 3 – Revised plan reported to Council with changes and adopted

The key objectives of the communication and engagement plan for this phase were:

- Ensure community input into the development of the draft place plan for Salamander Bay Town Centre
- Educate the community on the planning process including key milestones and opportunities for input

Phase 0 and Phase 1 of the engagement has been completed, and this report provides the engagement findings,

Key engagement findings – Phase 0

Liveability Index survey - see Appendix A for full details

In late 2024 we partnered with Place Score to conduct our second Liveability Survey. This helps us focus on what matters most to our community, guiding our planning and decision making to have the greatest impact on community wellbeing. We were able to compare these findings with the results from our 2020 survey to see how priorities have shifted over time.

The Liveability Index 2024 for Salamander Bay and Taylors Beach

In 2024 there were 179 people from Salamander Bay and Taylors Beach completed the survey and told us what they value about their place and how it is performing.

Top five values:

1. Elements of the natural environment (natural features, views, vegetation, topography, water wildlife).
2. Local businesses that provide for daily needs (grocery stores, pharmacy, banks).
3. General condition of public open space (street trees, footpaths, parks)
4. Access to neighbourhood amenities (cafes, shops, health and wellness services etc.)
5. Locally owned and operated business.

High priorities:

1. General condition of public open space (streets, trees, footpaths, parks etc.)
2. Evidence of recent public investment (roads, parks, schools etc.)
3. Walking/jogging/bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity (shops, parks etc.)
4. Quality of public space (footpaths, verges, parks etc.)
5. Access and safety of walking, cycling and/or public transport (signage, paths, lighting etc.)

The Liveability Index 2020 for Salamander Bay and Taylors Beach

The Liveability Index 2020 for Salamander Bay and Taylors Beach was completed by 243 people and told us what they value about their place and how it is performing.

Top five values:

1. Elements of the natural environment (natural features, views, vegetation, topography, water wildlife).
2. General condition of public open space (street trees, footpaths, parks)
3. Protection of the natural environment
4. Local businesses that provide for daily needs (grocery stores, pharmacy, banks).
5. Walking/jogging/bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity (shops, parks etc.)

**ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

High priorities:

1. Evidence of recent public investment (roads, parks, schools etc.)
2. Quality of public space (footpaths, verges, parks etc.)

While similar values emerged in the 2020 and 2024 survey results, participants in 2024 placed a higher value on local businesses.







Also, the 2024 results show public spaces and footpaths as higher priorities for residents.

For more detail, see **Appendix A**.

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Phase 1 Engagement

Phase 1 provided three levels of engagement, inform, consult, and involve by using different methods of engagement.

Engagement level	Phase 1 Early engagement	Phase 2 Public Exhibition	Phase 3 Adoption
Level 1 – Inform Provide stakeholders with information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.			
Level 2 – Consult Obtain stakeholder feedback on the project to aid decision making.			
Level 3 – Involve Work with stakeholders throughout the project, ensuring issues and concerns are understood and incorporated in decision making.			
Level 4 – Collaborate Partner with stakeholders throughout the project to develop alternatives and identify the preferred solution.			

The themes which formed a part of the Phase 1 engagement were drawn from those used in other place plans and also from the Liveability Survey results for Salamander Bay from both 2020 and 2024. These themes included Community Wellbeing; Economy; Environment; Housing and Movement and Infrastructure.

The Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan communications and engagement approach was also significantly refined through the input of the Communications and Engagement Advisory Group in April 2025. This group provided input and direction into communication and engagement plan including suggesting the use of vacant shop fronts at Salamander Shopping Centre to help garner additional feedback from local people.

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Communication methods – Phase 1

COMMUNICATION METHODS		
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Website	Planning for you place Council website page https://haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/salamander-bay-town-centre-place-plan Used to host information and supporting documents	1438
Social media	Port Stephens Council Facebook	5860
	1 paid post	(1820 -clicks) 1640
	1 organic post	(139 – clicks)
Poster with QR code	Promotional posters and leaflets in temporary shop at Salamander Bay Shopping Centre 5 May to 9 May 2025 Promotional leaflets provided to Tomaree Library for additional circulation 5 May to 24 May 2025	Unknown
Printed your port	Printed Quarterly Newsletter accompanying Rates Notice, Autumn 2025	20,000
Direct emails	Direct email to identified known stakeholders, interest groups for Salamander Bay via haveyoursay@portstephens.nsw.gov.au dated 29 April 2025	331 emails
Media release	Media release 'Have your say on the future of Salamander Bay Town Centre' distributed to Council's media distribution list dated 29 April 2025	109
News item	News item are included on the Council's home page here 29 April 2025	234
E-newsletter	E-Newsletter YourPort May 2025 'Get involved in planning for the future of Salamander Bay Town Centre' dated 7 May 2025	4,502
Letterbox drop	Letterbox drop to adjoining houses north of shopping centre	150
Print advert	Included in DA Notices:	
	News of the Area, 15 May 2025	10,000
	Port Stephens Examiner, 15 May 2025	22,231

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Related Media	Help Shape Salamander Bay, Port Stephens Examiner, 15 May 2025, p. 8	22,231
	NBN News story – 5 May 2025 Link	28,000

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Engagement methods – Phase 1

ENGAGEMENT METHODS		
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Liveability Survey	Salamander Bay & Taylors Beach	
	Liveability Survey 2024	170 responses
	Liveability Survey 2020	243 responses
CEAG	Communication and Engagement Advisory Group (CEAG) agenda item 16 April 2025. Advice and provided regarding proposed approach, stakeholders.	1 group
Online Engagement	Online engagement tools open from 28 April 2025 to 24 May 2025	
	Have your say mapping tool	150 comments
	Join the conversation tool	66 responses
	Written submissions (emails and letters)	3 submissions
Community Drop In #1	Salamander Bay Shopping Centre Community Drop In Monday 5 May 2025 to Friday 9 May 2025, 9am-1pm each day	390 visited
Community Drop In #2	Tomaree Community Connect Day Salamander Bay Shopping Centre 16 May 2025, 9:30am -2:30pm	30 visited
Workshop	Structured deliberative workshop to allow for deeper exploration of local situation and exploration including ideas and solutions generation. 8 May 2025	16 participants
Doorstep discussions	Doorstep discussion with local businesses	7
Key Stakeholder Meetings	Meeting with representatives from key local businesses	5 meetings

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Key engagement findings – Phase 1

A key component of Phase 1 engagement included a dedicated online have your say website page which featured two online engagement tools, 'Join the conversation' and 'Have your Say Mapping tool'. These tools were used to collate not only online feedback but also the feedback received from conversations undertaken at the Salamander Bay Shopping Centre drop ins. This feedback totalled over 220 individual responses. This together with the feedback from the community workshop (16 attendees) and also individually addressed letters (3) has been summarised as follows:

Community wellbeing

Feedback received revealed support for a more connected, inclusive and vibrant place. Respondents highlighted the need for improved community infrastructure, including health services, youth activities, and recreation space for all. A recurring opinion centre on a lack of character for the town centre together with a desire to revitalise it through improved design and social spaces.

Economy

Many comments received viewed that the local economy as underperforming with the current Charter Hall centre not at capacity. There was support for a more diverse retail and commercial precinct particularly for local unique businesses. There was support to modernise the current shopping centre and include a night time economy.

Environment

A primary concern was the environment especially with regard to the neighbouring Mambo Wetlands. Feedback received emphasised that any new development must be environmentally conscious, climate resilient and preserve natural assets.

Housing

Feedback reflected support for affordable options for local residents alongside concern for holiday letting. Responders suggested integrating diverse multilevel development with mixed commercial use.

Movement and infrastructure

Many comments were focused on improving walkability, bike access, traffic flow and public transport. There was a clear desire to link the road around the current shopping precinct and to provide safe and accessible pathways for all.

The following provides a more detailed breakdown of the various engagement tools and feedback for Phase 1

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Have Your Say Webpage – see Appendix B for full details

Have Your Say Mapping Tool – 150 responses

Join the Conversation - 66 responses

Written submissions (emails, letters) – 3 responses

Categories	Social Map	Join the conversation	Other (letters, emails etc)	Total
Community Wellbeing	21	22	1	44
Economy	16	23	2	41
Environment	27	26	6	59
Housing	15	19	1	35
Infrastructure and Movement	56	27	2	85
Public Domain	16	19	2	37

**PLEASE
NOTE**

These key findings were drawn from the engagements using data collected from the Salamander Bay Drop in Centre, along with direct contributions from the webpage through Join the Conversation comments and the Have Your Say mapping tool.

Place Plan Key Themes

Community Wellbeing

1. Concerns
 - Lack of specific medical practices to support an ageing and growing population, with long travel times to alternatives
 - Lack of youth-specific activities
 - Perception the Town Centre is uninviting and sterile.
 - Absence of spaces for social gathering
 - Concerns about insufficient lighting and community safety in public areas
2. Supportive themes
 - Desire to support connected communities and use spaces to support young people, families, and seniors
 - Interest in a Community Centre or hub for shared activity
 - Support for an all-inclusive and culturally safe space
 - Support on incorporating nature into future space to support mental wellbeing
3. Suggestions
 - Incorporate outdoor recreation spaces, seating, gardens, small amphitheater and playgrounds, for intergenerational use.

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- Integrate services such as health care and community services in accessible locations. For example, a day surgery
- Include space for local events and markets
- Provide youth specific zones such as a skate park, sports courts for example basketball, indoor activities (e.g. pool/snooker, central movie theatre)

Economy

1. Concerns
 - The existing shopping centre is viewed by some participants as underachieving due to shop vacancies and an observation it is outdated.
 - Lack of variety in shops and café/restaurant options.
 - Limited employment opportunity for young people
2. Supportive themes
 - Desire for unique, local businesses and cafes
 - Support for uses that attract locals and visitors alike
3. Suggestions
 - Improving current shopping centre with suggestion to add multiple stories
 - Encouraging a night-time economy with well lit dining precincts
 - Desire to produce ground floor commercial such as cafes with upper level offices and units
 - Introduce incentives or grants for local businesses

Environment

1. Concerns
 - Opposition to any development that would reduce or encroach on green space, the Mambo Wetlands.
 - The wetlands provide critical ecosystem services like flood mitigation and wildlife habitat for koalas and other species.
 - The wetlands are an integral place for early learning for the Salamander Bay Childcare Centre.
 - Lack of shade
 - Climate change impacts
2. Supportive themes
 - The proposed area for development is adjacent to the wetlands.
 - Supportive comments for development are conditional on it being environmentally friendly and climate resilient.
 - Preference for urban design that is energy efficiency and water-sensitive
 - Emphasis on biodiversity preservation and native landscaping
3. Suggestions
 - Design new development to complement the surrounding natural landscape.
 - Protect existing vegetation and shaded areas

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- Incorporate green infrastructure such as rain gardens and green roofs
- Develop educational signage and trails along wetlands

Housing

1. Concerns
 - Mixed concern for high-rise especially located near wetlands.
 - Concern around flooding risks
 - Not to use for holiday letting restrict to residential
 - Concern that new residential area may not cater to diverse needs
2. Supportive themes
 - Affordable housing designed for local workers and young people
 - Densification within existing footprints by multilevel development to include commercial and residential
 - Interest in sustainable, climate resilient housing
 - Support for diverse and affordable housing for workers, young people, single families
3. Suggestions
 - Include affordable housing as part of development
 - Mix use housing above shops and cafes
 - Ensure new housing is flood resilient and accessible
 - Consider housing cooperative to maintain affordable and sustainable housing

Infrastructure and Movement

1. Concerns
 - Inadequate pedestrian and bike connections
 - Congestion and poor traffic flow around the shopping centre
 - Insufficient public transport connections and bus shelters
 - Insufficient parking
2. Supportive themes
 - Support for accessible pathways and safe roads
 - Desire for safe crossings around shops
 - Support for bike and walk pathways to reduce car dependency
3. Suggestions
 - Link road around current shopping centre
 - Improve and expand current footpaths and bike lanes and add seating and shade
 - Upgrade public infrastructures including bus shelters and timetables
 - Add wayfinding signage and mobility friendly infrastructure for people with disabilities

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Workshop – see Appendix C for full details

As part of early engagement for the Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan, Council hosted a structured community workshop on Thursday, 8 May 2025, at the Tomaree Library. The workshop was designed to engage local residents and key stakeholders in a deeper conversation about the town centre's values, challenges, and opportunities.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Share background and vision for the Place Plan.
- Present Liveability Index findings and mapping results.
- Identify shared values and concerns across key themes.
- Co-develop ideas and actions to inform the draft Place Plan.

A total of **16 participants** attended the in-person session, representing a mix of residents, business operators, environmental stakeholders, and users of the existing town centre.

Workshop Format

The session included the following activities:

1. **Place Plan Introduction & Education** – including purpose, scope and project timeline.
2. **Immersion in Local Context** – Review of Liveability Index data
3. **World café focusing on SWOT analysis of the various themes** – Group discussions to refine ideas and test support for different directions.

Place Plan Key Themes

Community Wellbeing

- Strong desire for enhanced medical services, with specific mention of a day surgery or urgent care clinic.
- Recognition of the Tomaree Library and childcare centre as key social infrastructure. Calls for expansion and protection of these assets.
- Lack of dedicated youth spaces and activities was highlighted as a gap. Participants supported the idea of a youth hub, intergenerational public space, or small-scale amphitheatre for community events.

Environment

- Widespread concern about impacts to the Mambo Wetlands and local habitat, particularly for koalas and endangered frog species.
- Participants emphasised the educational and ecological value of the wetlands, especially for the adjacent childcare centre.

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- Environmental protection was viewed as a non-negotiable design principle, with suggestions to integrate green buffers, maintain trees, and design with climate resilience.

Economy

- Mixed views about current commercial offerings. Some participants expressed concern that the shopping centre felt tired and underutilised, with a high number of vacant stores.
- There was strong support for attracting local, independent businesses, including grocery options like Harris Farm, and suggestions to develop a night-time economy with restaurants and outdoor dining.
- Several participants called for multi-level mixed-use development, noting the opportunity to include retail, office, medical and residential uses in a compact footprint.

Housing

- Broad support for affordable and diverse housing, especially for local workers and young people.
- Concerns were raised about multi-storey residential buildings near sensitive ecological areas, including flooding risks and visual impacts.
- Suggestions included housing above commercial precincts, and controls to prevent holiday letting in affordable units.

Infrastructure and Movement

- Participants noted significant traffic congestion, particularly around Bagnall Beach Road and the Centre entry points.
- Suggestions included a loop road behind Kmart, reintroducing right-hand turns, and widening key thoroughfares to reduce choke points.
- Concerns about car dominance led to ideas for shared pedestrian and bike paths, better wayfinding, and safer crossings between the library, childcare centre and shopping areas.

Public Domain

- The Town Centre was frequently described as feeling “sterile” and lacking identity.
- Suggestions for placemaking included public art, green space activation, and multi-use public areas that support events, gathering and recreation.
- Support for introducing an urban design identity, possibly referencing the nearby wetlands or Tomaree Peninsula history.

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Written Submissions - Emails and Letters – see Appendix D for full details

We received 3 separate emails and letters.

These are included in full in Appendix D.

Submission 1: Email received 1 May 2025

- Provision of examples of urban renewals

Submission 2: Written materials from Salamander Child Care received in person at shop 5-7 May 2025.

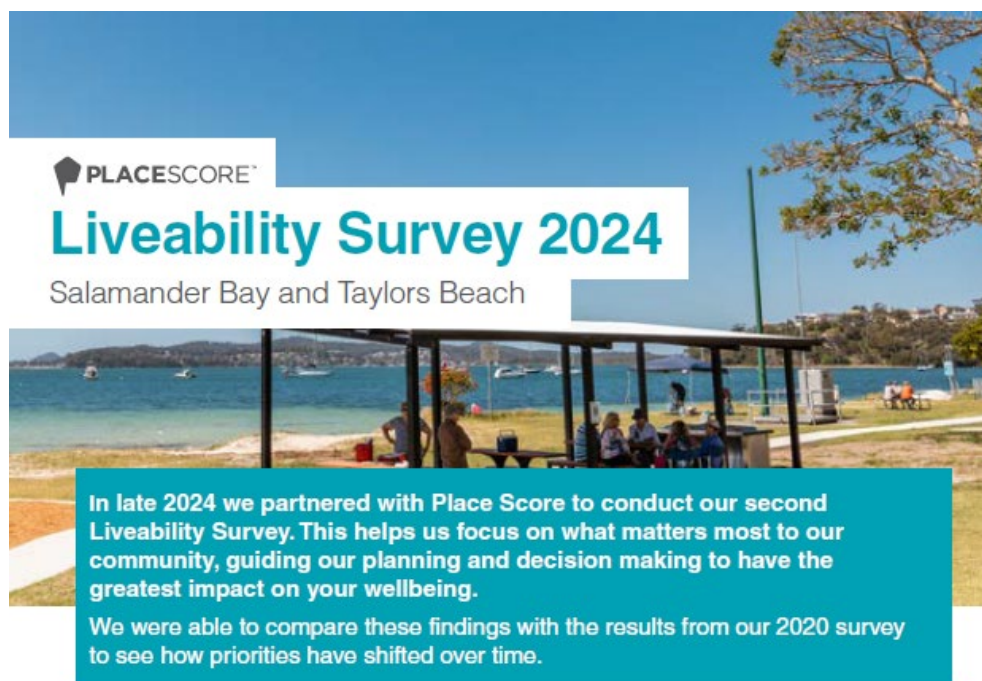
- Focussed on adverse environmental impact

Submission 3: Email received from EcoNetwork 26 May 2025

- Focussed on adverse environmental impact [note same content provided as part of the Join the conversation online tool]

APPENDIX A

Liveability Survey - 2024



About you



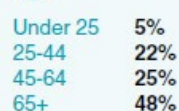
170

responses from
Salamander Bay &
Taylors Beach in **2024**
243 in 2020

Gender



Age



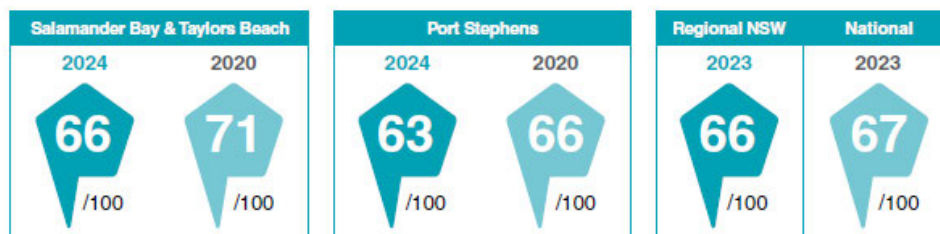
Our top 5 values for Salamander Bay & Taylors Beach 2024	2024	2020
Percentage of people who ranked the attributes as important		
Elements of the natural environment (natural features, views, vegetation, topography, water, wildlife)	76%	76%
Local businesses that provide for daily needs (grocery stores, pharmacy, banks etc.)	65%	61%
General condition of public open space (street trees, footpaths, parks etc.)	65%	70%
Access to neighbourhood amenities (cafes, shops, health and wellness services etc.)	61%	47%
Locally owned and operated businesses	58%	56%

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SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE

Liveability score

In 2024 Salamander Bay and Taylors Beach liveability score decreased to 66 which is consistent with trends across Australia in the post COVID environment.




Liveability Recommendations


Nurture


These are the things you care about most and say are performing well. We must continue to celebrate and protect these.

- Elements of natural environment (natural features, views, vegetation, topography, water, wildlife etc.)
- Local businesses that provide for daily needs (grocery shops, pharmacy, banks etc)
- Locally owned and operated businesses
- Access to neighbourhood amenities (cafes, shops, health and wellness services etc)
- Sense of neighbourhood safety (from crime, traffic, pollution etc.)
- Sense of belonging in the community
- Sense of personal safety (for all ages, genders, day or night)


Manage

These are things you care about that need improvement but aren't urgent. We must address them to prevent future challenges.

- Protection of the natural environment
- Landscaping and natural elements (street trees, planting, water features etc.)


Prioritise

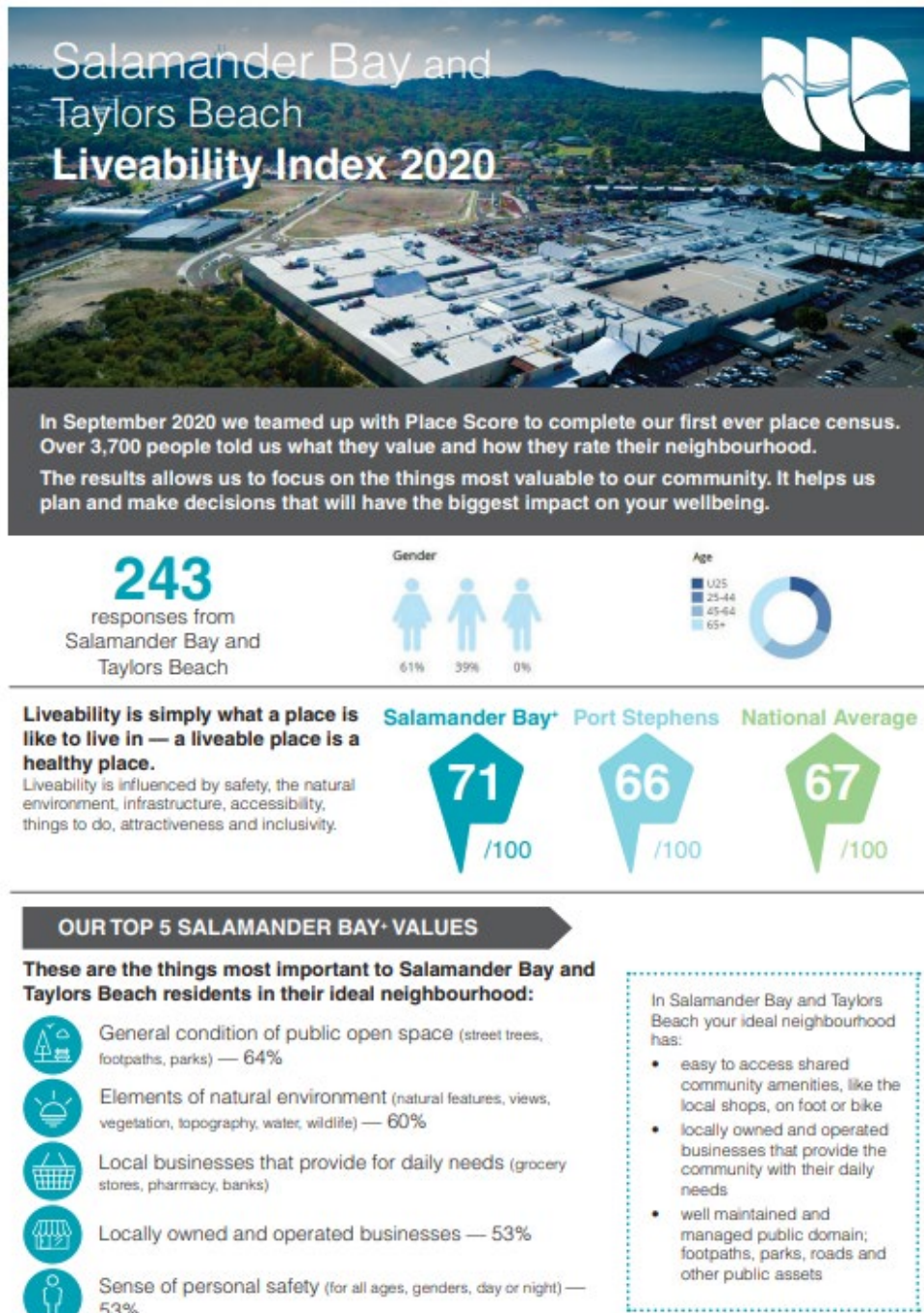
These are the things most important to you and are areas for us to focus on improving. We must prioritise these.

- General condition of public open space (streets, trees, footpaths, parks etc.)
- Evidence of recent public investment (roads, parks, schools etc.)
- Walking/jogging/bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity (shops, parks etc.)
- Quality of public space (footpaths, verges, parks etc.)
- Access and safety of walking, cycling and/or public transport (signage, paths, lighting etc.)

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SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE

Liveability Survey - 2020




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SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE














OUR STRENGTHS

These are the things you care about most and say are performing well. We must continue to celebrate and protect these.

-  Sense of personal safety (for all ages, genders, day or night)
-  Access to neighbourhood amenities (cafes, shops, health and wellness services)
-  Local businesses that provide for daily needs (grocery stores, pharmacy, banks)
-  Elements of natural environment (natural features, views, vegetation, topography, water, wildlife)
-  Locally owned and operated businesses
-  Sense of neighbourhood safety (from crime, traffic, pollution)

OUR LIVEABILITY PRIORITIES

These are the things most important to you and are underperforming. We must work to improve these.

-  General condition of public open space (street trees, footpaths, parks)
-  Quality of public space (footpaths, verges, parks)
-  Walking/jogging/bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity (shops, parks)
-  Protection of the natural environment
-  Access and safety of walking, cycling and/or public transport (signage, paths, lighting)
-  Evidence of recent public investment (roads, parks, schools)
-  Sustainable urban design (water sensitive design, transport-oriented design, sustainable building design, density)
-  Things to do in the evening (bars, dining, cinema, live music)
-  Evidence of Council/government management (signage, street cleaners)
-  Local employment opportunities (within easy commute)
-  Sustainable behaviours in the community (water management, solar panels, recycling)
-  Landscaping and natural elements (street trees, planting, water features etc)
-  Amount of public space (footpaths, verges, parks)



For more information go to
PORTSTEPHENS.NSW.GOV.AU

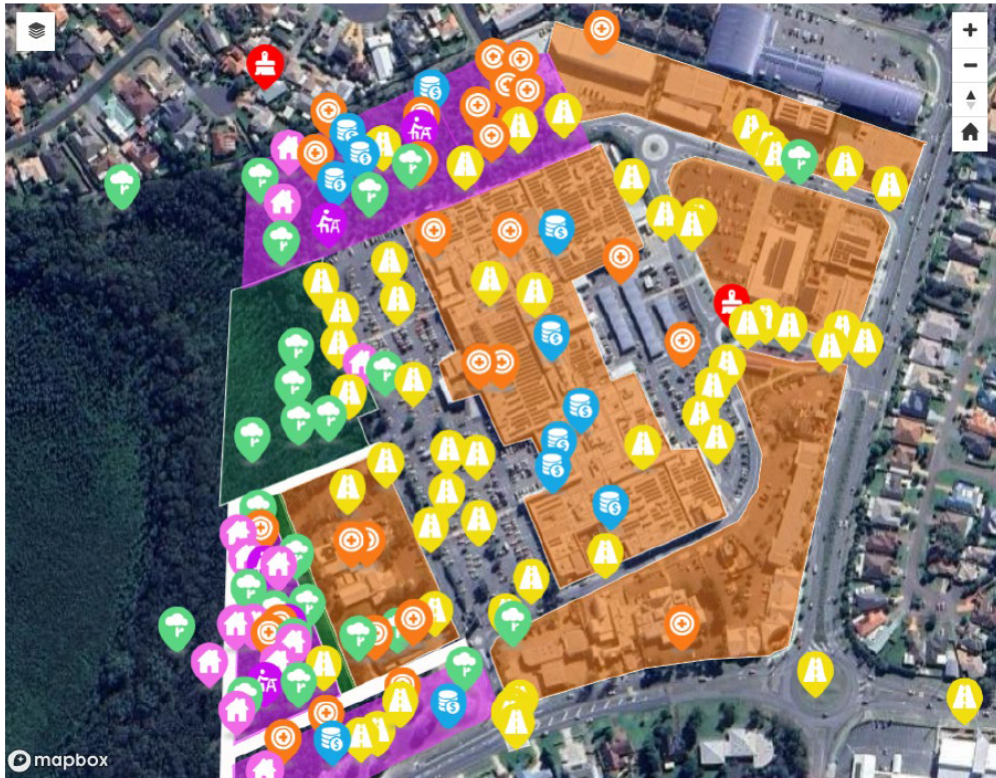


APPENDIX B – Online Engagement

Engagement Activity – Community Mapping

Share your thoughts on the Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan

Social Map Markers – 29 April to 24 May 2025



Social Map Contributions – 151

Note: some spelling and grammar changes have been made to ensure clarity of comment only

#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
1	Library and community spaces will require more space as community needs grow	Community Wellbeing
2	This area is dated and neglected. Build a large medical centre, day surgery etc in this area either in lieu of existing shops or above the existing shops.	Community Wellbeing
3	Second storey on existing shopping complex for medical, day surgery, etc.	Community Wellbeing

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
4	Build a second story on the existing shopping complex dedicated to medical, day surgery, etc	Community Wellbeing
5	Youth Centre	Community Wellbeing
6	Better community activities for people with disability. Simple connections	Community Wellbeing
7	Urgent care hospital (Medicare clinic), like one recently in Maitland	Community Wellbeing
8	medical and day surgery	Community Wellbeing
9	Medical services and day surgery	Community Wellbeing
10	Day Surgery	Community Wellbeing
11	More facilities and services for older people	Community Wellbeing
12	Specialist health options 'a hospital day surgery'	Community Wellbeing
13	Love to see a day surgery	Community Wellbeing
14	Privacy concerns for childcare	Community Wellbeing
15	more medical services	Community Wellbeing
16	Tomaree Library is an amazing community asset. I would like to see it expanded to encompass more services and events.	Community Wellbeing
17	Would like to see a private hospital or Youth Centre	Community Wellbeing
18	Risk of loss of privacy to our Centre	Community Wellbeing
19	The Mambo wetlands is a unique outdoor classroom where the children from Salamander Early Education learn through exploration, play, and connection to nature since 1992. It supports their emotional and educational development in ways indoor settings cannot. As part of koala habitat and home to native wildlife, it also holds environmental value. Clearing it for housing would permanently destroy both a vital learning space and an important ecosystem.	Community Wellbeing, Environment
20	We need an independent green grocer such as Harris Farm to ensure that we can buy fruit, veg etc with minimum, especially plastic, packaging. It's difficult to find unpackaged fruit and veg at Coles-Worths, even Aldi...	Economy

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
21	I want more shops like Anaconda, Big W and Rebel Sports. Bike paths to join all our smaller towns together.	Economy, Infrastructure & Movement
22	Why not invest more in Taylors Beach and the land council has on the other side of Horizons. Add more commercial to Taylors Beach to increase business there away from built up residential, and add housing on the other side of Horizons- greater use of more land to actually make a difference residentially rather than right on top of Wetlands, and next to a child care centre.	Economy, Housing, Environment
23	I think the shopping centre would do really well with a Grill'd	Economy
24	Big W	Economy
25	Harris Farms	Economy
26	Officeworks	Economy
27	Multi-level shops/offices with units above 5 levels. Walking tract with gardens to link up with other spaces.	Economy, Infrastructure & Movement
28	Look at Rouse Hill shopping centre for design	Economy
29	More independent clothing shops	Economy
30	More shops in Salamander shopping and more carpark	Economy, Infrastructure & Movement
31	Look at 'The canopy at Lane Cove'. They built a shopping, food, district with a revenue stream back to council. Can have long-term/short term storage underneath for hire	Economy
32	Restaurants and outdoor dining areas	Economy
33	A few years ago I was involved in a research plan to expand and develop the whole Salamander Shopping Complex. Obviously all the participants' ideas went into the bin. It was a lot of work and some excellent projections were presented. Will this end up the same or will it be what a few politically minded people prefer?	Economy
34	Salamander shopping centre needs a much better mix of retailers. From my experience landlords would rather see shops empty rather than reduce rents to attract tenants to empty shops. Perhaps other adjacent attractions would improve use of the centre. Such as playgrounds, skate park A radical plan would be to put another level comprising a cinema/ performance space like at Rhodes shopping centre in Sydney!	Economy, Public Domain
35	Expand the TAFE for continued education in more areas + creates more jobs.	Economy

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
36	This area needs to be preserved as bushland. It's too small to be useful as commercial and adds green space to both the daycare centre and the library which is key to both facilities. Libraries and children need green areas to flourish and the bush adds more value than a building in this space. There is plenty of room elsewhere in this proposal to build. (Responses x 3)	Environment
37	Beware Koala Habitat	Environment
38	<p>The Mambo wetlands should be kept as they are and not encroached upon. They are an important part of our local ecosystem and that of the bay itself. Not to mention the native wildlife that live there.</p> <p>I believe that the current vacant shops and commercial units need to be filled before making decisions to build more empty spaces.</p> <p>It is also time to consider the expansion of the Tomaree Polyclinic into a proper hospital for the future as you have already indicated that the population will be growing.</p>	Environment, Economy, Community Wellbeing
39	Redevelop existing residential areas and leave the purple area for recreation / wildlife	Environment, Housing
40	Retain this bushland site! We have already lost so much of our natural bush here in Port Stephens! Find somewhere else to develop!	Environment
41	This land is visited regularly by our family for bush walks. The wildlife we see on these walks is vast, varied and abundant. This land is also a massive learning resource for the early education centre adjacent to this land. It needs to be protected and maintained	Environment
42	"The Councillors need to let the bush be. Just like the song, let it be, let it be. They need to just let it be." - Oliver, 4 years old	Environment
43	Endangered wildlife reserve needs to remain. Rezoning as a carpark or commercial/residential land is not the solution. Nelson Bay is visited for its beaches but also for the wildlife that has survived there. (Responses x 2)	Environment
44	Wildlife, koalas, tawny frog, echidna	Environment
45	Save the earth fungi very rare	Environment
46	We love finding animals in the bush (4yr)	Environment
47	We'd feel sad and cry if we didn't have bush to play (4yr)	Environment
48	Green space for gatherings	Environment
49	Council should be sharing transparent data and analytics to show justification for how they have deemed this area of bushland of "high value" comparative to the areas they are proposing development on. Have environmental and conservation experts been consulted or included in this process? Crucial ecosystems and habitats extend far beyond a	Environment

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
	koala count. The research conducted needs to be shared with the community. If it hasn't been done, then please share with us why.	
50	The Mambo Wetlands is integral to the learning that occurs at Salamander Early Education and has been since 1992. Not to mention the abundance of native wildlife that lives in there, removing that environment which endanger species and effect conservation efforts dramatically. Build somewhere else.	Environment, Community Wellbeing
51	Maintaining Mambo Wetland inhabit is vital	Environment
52	The mambo wetlands is home to the Wallum froglets which has been classed as vulnerable. The removal of their habitat can lead to their extinction.	Environment
53	As the winner of Expedia 2025 Aussie town of the year and a Destination NSW location, I find the lack of Public EV chargers in the Salamander/ Nelson Bay area perplexing. Other council areas I have visited support the EV chargers. Grants are available from various sources. Let's move with the times.	Environment, Infrastructure & Movement
54	We want country back and we can have the beach with you	Environment
55	Don't take the bush away (Response x 2)	Environment
56	Please don't take our grass away and look after our trees	Environment
57	<p>This area to be left as treed as its current status to continue to support the native wild life with connection to the wetlands and to remain for the wild life corner required for isolation for creating and bringing up the young ones.</p> <p>In addition the area if changed imposes on a quiet residential area as we believe any commercial/residential space should be based on extending existing facilities into 2 stories including carparking so that the existing residential areas remain residential and not next to all sorts of noise and other pollution for extended periods beyond their current environment. We believe to change the current status to be highly abusive to existing residents which appears not to have been considered in the plan.</p> <p>If additional facilities are required it should added to existing areas that can easily accommodate them and not so our society loses the environment necessary for our current and existing wildlife to be cut short of the necessary and required spaces for life to continue properly and not crammed into ever reducing areas.</p>	Environment, Economy
58	The area you see here is full of Koalas and birds. The Koala Preservation Society planted dozens of gum trees for food. All to be ripped down for another empty shop. A road will run down behind our houses now, just another race track like Bagnall Beach Road of a night time	Environment

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
59	Absolutely inappropriate for bushland to be taken for commercial/residential. Consider other spaces in the region, not bushland surrounding an Early Learning Centre.	Environment, Community Wellbeing
60	<p>There is sufficient room at Salamander Shopping Precinct area to expand for affordable housing, art gallery and theatre as well as medical services WITHOUT using the green space of Mambo.</p> <p>The library could be 4/5 storeys with underground parking and still accommodate the child care centre and a larger tenant base on the ground floor. A PLUS would be a community/emergency hub incorporated within the building.</p> <p>An art gallery/museum and theatre based on first floor with viewing windows over Mambo which would produce and income and then 2/3 floors above could be sold as offices/apartments.</p> <p>The vacant corner adjacent to the childcare centre (facing Shell garage) could be 4/5 storeys of apartments.</p> <p>There needs to be a park with seating areas incorporated in this build to cater for both residents and centre workers to enjoy.</p> <p>Any koala feed trees and koala corridors MUST be protected if you wish the local community to support further development at Salamander. It also needs to be controlled to ensure that affordable housing is purchased by locals and NOT purchased as holiday homes which are left empty most of the year. Affordable rental properties would be a plus should PSC wish to invest.</p> <p>Nobody wants to see a piece by piece attempted build of this area, it needs to be presented as a Master Plan and built in a timely fashion. DAs given in this area need to be tightly controlled and NOT the zombie DAs with and endless timeframe which PSC seem to favour.</p>	Environment, Housing, Economy, Public Domain
61	Absolutely no housing in this area. It is essential to maintain community connection to the wetlands. Residential units in this area will block public access. The wetlands should be made more accessible with boardwalks etc.	Housing, Public Domain, Environment
62	Higher need accommodation housing provision	Housing
63	Mixed use commercial and residential	Housing, Economy
64	Affordable units for young people. No holiday rentals!	Housing
65	Council plans seem to include potential four storey high complexes, built on wetlands and marshlands. Walk out there after a few days of rain and you will see the localised flooding areas and natural water pools that are constantly there. I highly recommend Council in favour of this familiarise themselves with Jordan Springs East in Sydney - built on backfilled marshlands and river ways where within years developers had to buy back single storey residential properties which were sinking and	Housing, Environment, Economy

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
	condemned, requiring demolition and a full compensation scheme. Council seem to struggle enough dealing with the ground settlement issues for roads, let alone potential multi-story development. Consider moving this commercial development into other areas of the region to develop a “sprawling” town beyond the Peninsula. Council member said there is not enough space needed for residential. Investing more in other areas of Port Stephens will in time provide other areas for residents live in with amenities that won't require them to drive to Salamander Bay each time they want to access shops.	
66	High rise to offices and housing look over wetlands	Housing, Economy
67	"I wouldn't mind living here!"	Housing
68	More affordable housing and road to link all around shops	Housing, Infrastructure & Movement
69	More high rise housing to get young people out of houses and in suitable sized housing (1-2 bedroom)	Housing
70	Don't want housing or noise	Housing, Community Wellbeing
71	Love the idea of apartments above cafes. Don't need more house blocks. Go up!!	Housing
72	Affordable housing for workers	Housing
73	Best location for multi-dwelling housing	Housing
74	Council plans include potential four storey high complexes, built on wetlands and marshlands. I highly recommend Council in favour of this familiarise themselves with Jordan Springs East in Sydney - built on backfilled marshlands and river ways where within years developers had to buy back single storey residential properties which were sinking and condemned, requiring a full compensation scheme. Council seem to struggle enough dealing with the ground settlement issues for roads, let alone potential multi-story development. Consider moving this commercial development into other areas of the region to develop a “sprawling” town beyond the Peninsula. Council members have said there is not enough space needed for residential. Investing more in other areas of Port Stephens will in time provide other areas for residents live in with amenities that won't require them to drive to Salamander Bay each time they want to access shops.	Housing, Economy, Environment
75	Current walking and cycling connections are fragmented and could be improved:	Infrastructure & Movement

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
	- Dedicated cycleway entry to shopping centre carpark would enable safe access for cyclists as well as improved accessibility for people with mobility aids (electric scooters, etc)	
76	<p>Current walking and cycling connections are fragmented and unsafe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cycleway could have a concrete separator from the road and safer entry/exit from the current shopping centre carpark; - There is no dedicated pedestrian pathway connecting to community services (library to shopping centre and new town centre). 	Infrastructure & Movement
77	<p>I think a road that goes behind KMart to connect with the rear car park is needed, as an alternate entry/exit for the centre. The roundabout between McDonald's and Aldi is a choke point in peak season because people aren't aware of the car park at the rear, this causes traffic to build up out on to Bagnall Beach Road. Additionally I think the entry on Salamander Way needs to be reopened to traffic travelling in both directions along this road. The closure of this entry has also added to the impact of the choke point at the roundabout. This reopening may require the installation of traffic lights or another round about.</p> <p>In addition to the above, a 2 tier parking structure would also be beneficial to accommodate increased traffic. I think this would only be needed on one side of the centre.</p> <p>I think the addition of more retail spaces needs to be reconsidered. There always seem to be vacant shopfronts in the centre, as well as in the shopping strips outside the centre.</p>	Infrastructure & Movement, Economy
78	Having only one entry to the Town/Shopping Centre Area has created a very inconvenient bottleneck. At busy times traffic turning left or right from Bagnall Beach Rd can't go very far into Terminus Ave before encountering a traffic jam. Better access is required.	Infrastructure & Movement
79	Parking is not well planned, make 2/3 levels and make more healthy wellbeing community space for all age groups. Need shades as well.	Infrastructure & Movement
80	Widen and rebuild Town Centre Circuit road as it's too narrow for wider vehicles and in poor repair due to water damage, regular flooding and great use by trucks, heavy cars etc.	Infrastructure & Movement
	Upgraded to pedestrian "crossing"...	
	Pedestrian refuge island. Many children, families, youth, elders and people with limited mobility use this access to library, community / childcare centre.	
81	Better signage "Shopping centre? Right turn HERE"	Infrastructure & Movement
82	Better line marking required	Infrastructure & Movement

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
83	The car park is certainly too small even out of holiday times. Our cars are getting damaged due to the small parking spaces. Isn't it time the carpark height was increased to make room for more cars to park a safe distance from one another.	Infrastructure & Movement
84	Centre is very car reliant	Infrastructure & Movement
85	Better wider pedestrian paths to access wetlands and nature	Infrastructure & Movement
86	Nobody does the right thing - turn right illegally	Infrastructure & Movement
87	Intersection improvement	Infrastructure & Movement
88	Narrow access needs improvement (near Coles back entry)	Infrastructure & Movement
89	Path behind Kmart where greenery is should be a path as people walk along there and it is dangerous. Someone will get hurt one day	Infrastructure & Movement
90	Should be able to turn right out of medical to go straight to shops, otherwise you have to drive out and come back in	Infrastructure & Movement
91	Turn right out of Salamander carpark to Aldi, you should be able to turn right	Infrastructure & Movement
92	Bus services could be improved	Infrastructure & Movement
93	Traffic congestion is too close to shopping areas. Put all traffic on the perimeter of buildings	Infrastructure & Movement
94	Pedestrian refuge to Aldi from bus stop	Infrastructure & Movement
95	Need additional parking in peak periods	Infrastructure & Movement
96	Disabled parking	Infrastructure & Movement
97	Maybe shouldn't be an entry at all only an exit	Infrastructure & Movement
98	Larger car spaces needed	Infrastructure & Movement
99	Old bus area for community buses	Infrastructure & Movement, Community Wellbeing
100	Public caravan dump point, charge small fee	Infrastructure & Movement
101	Would prefer ring road and conserve another area around library	Infrastructure & Movement,

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
		Environment, Public Domain
102	Road too narrow all around town centre circuit	Infrastructure & Movement
103	Link roads	Infrastructure & Movement
104	Roundabout or right hand turn needed from Salamander Way Road into Community Way.	Infrastructure & Movement
105	Entry is too narrow next to X-Ray place	Infrastructure & Movement
106	Roof top Carpark for Shopping Centre. Holiday session parking space is near impossible.	Infrastructure & Movement
107	Bus stop to Aldi needs pedestrian safety 'Island'	Infrastructure & Movement
108	Carpark space area too narrow need bigger car spaces	Infrastructure & Movement
109	Connect Rd behind Kmart end of shopping centre to help with flow of traffic to and from Bagnall Beach Rd.	Infrastructure & Movement
110	Noisy trucks at loading zone	Infrastructure & Movement
111	Either remove driveway for entrance into Aldi or place a medium stripe so drivers cannot ignore the NO RIGHT HAND TURN sign.	Infrastructure & Movement
112	Need addition more parking requirements during peak	Infrastructure & Movement
113	Right turn Aldi despite sign opposite Kmart driveway	Infrastructure & Movement
114	Road that goes around centre. Links to front of library	Infrastructure & Movement
115	Development controls to ensure high quality development	Infrastructure & Movement
116	Parking for childcare staff	Infrastructure & Movement
117	Connect road, may need to use car park due to environmental value	Infrastructure & Movement
118	Two story carpark. More Parking	Infrastructure & Movement
119	Aldi entrance across double lines into marked 'no entry'	Infrastructure & Movement
120	Unfortunately, there must be more room for parking as even now in mid May there is barely enough. Come holiday time it is always chaotic with many locals unable to find a space. Also,	Infrastructure & Movement

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
	the very big utes frequently cause damage to the smaller cars either side of them as the spaces are too narrow for today's traffic.	
121	Public EV charging	Infrastructure & Movement, Environment
122	Blind spot, dangerous to exit. Unsafe for pedestrians	Infrastructure & Movement
123	Congested access. Dangerous for pedestrians esp, wheelchair uses, better signs	Infrastructure & Movement
124	Concern with businesses access via main road	Infrastructure & Movement
125	Link road right around to carpark to ease traffic	Infrastructure & Movement
126	The ring road needs to be completed behind this area to deal with poor traffic circulation and main road connections. These designs are already done and need to be implemented as per previous master plan.	Infrastructure & Movement
127	Car Parking or continue the road around to Compass Close.	Infrastructure & Movement
128	Return the intersection for right turn into carpark	Infrastructure & Movement
129	Raise building heights so this at grade car parking can be incorporated in the shopping centre building instead of clogging up public space.	Infrastructure & Movement
130	Provide parkland with amenities (seating, tables, chairs, etc) to connect nearby residents to the new town centre and create more recreational opportunities.	Public Domain
131	Create more open space opportunities and preserve the character of the wetlands with a boardwalk connecting to the new town centre, community services at the library and other pedestrian routes.	Public Domain
132	Lights and pedestrian walk	Public Domain, Infrastructure & Movement
133	Coles shouldn't have a Woolworths sign. Should use other access.	Public Domain
134	Outdoor designated smoke area outside so smokers have a place to go and are not walking around near door areas	Public Domain, Community Wellbeing
135	Sign for Tomaree Neighbourhood Centre	Public Domain

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#	Social Map Marker Comment	Category
136	Improve landscaping on roundabout	Public Domain
137	Recreation space, playground	Public Domain
138	Buffer zone needed visual impact and noise	Public Domain, Community Wellbeing
139	Light and noise from gym a problem	Public Domain, Community Wellbeing
140	More public facilities	Public Domain
141	Noise buffer for existing residential development x 2	Public Domain, Community Wellbeing
142	Lights over BBQ areas	Public Domain
143	Green space essential for play and gathering	Public Domain
144	Some level of shade / covering would be great for when it is raining.	Public Domain
145	Please have the shopping centre fix or remove (or even just hide behind temporary walls) the apparently permanently closed playground! The pain of having to explain to a toddler that they can't go in every single time it is spotted is killing me.	Public Domain
146	No more jet skis	Other

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Join the Conversation Responses – 66

Note: some spelling and grammar changes have been made to ensure clarity of comment only

	Join the Conversation Response	Categories	Codes	Up Vote	Down Vote
1	Free underground and/or undercover parking	Movement & Infrastructure	Parking	1	
2	We need a large non-denominational hall/centre! If you do not want a religious funeral, there is nowhere to have the ceremony and nowhere for the wake unless you go to the bowling club or golf club. A multi-purpose hall with a catering contract would be ideal for so many functions.	Community Wellbeing	Commercial, Community		
3	We desperately need undercover parking and parking spaces allocated for caravans, boats, motorhomes etc. we are a tourist town and currently visitors have nowhere to park near the shopping centre.	Movement & Infrastructure	Parking		
4	Connect Central Ave to Purser St to divert traffic onto Sandy Point Rd. Would love to see a change in the food court where we have more fresh food options.	Movement & Infrastructure Economy	Roads, Commercial		
5	It would be nice to see the playground re opened, it's a disgrace that it has been closed off for over 12 months. The food court is also lacking any quality fresh food options and a comfortable spot to sit. The amount of junk pop up stores is disappointing for the centre. Management needs to start attracting some decent shops for our area!	Community Wellbeing, Public Domain, Economy	Outdoors, Community, Youth	2	
6	While I understand the need for more housing, I recommend that it be environmentally friendly with green walls and made from sustainable materials, facing north east and utilising the sun rather than creating a need for people to use more energy. Solar panels with a communal battery for those houses, green spaces and water features to create eco spaces and well living informed by other successful green developers. Communal garden spaces. A really good large undercover playground or playgrounds. Koala sensitive development. Undercover parking for elderly and parents with babies/children (the current parking is really hot and dangerously exposes babies to sun in summer). Cafes and pocket bars and restaurants with a Melbourne like vibe. A	Community Wellbeing, Housing, Environment, Public Domain, Movement & Infrastructure	Housing, Outdoors, Environment, Community, Youth, Parking	3	

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	large indoor jungle gym like at Tuggerah for children and families.			
7	Trees and gardens and much more Pedestrian friendly	Environment, Movement & Infrastructure , Public Domain	Outdoors, Environmental, Pathways & Crossing	2
8	love to see the following addressed: Vehicle access around centre (as originally designed when built) Designated parking for trailers, motorhomes, oversized vehicles in peak periods More disabled parking, preferably undercover Shaded parking Pedestrian crossing from car park to library Full SAFE pedestrian egress around centre (eg does not exist from Woolies pickup to Woolies entry) Safe pedestrian entry to centre from Salamander Way including a footpath along Salamander Way McDonald's entry and drive thru to relocate to Bagnall Beach Rd Passive Outdoor seating/park adjacent to centre	Movement & Infrastructure , Public Domain	Roads, Pathways & Crossings, Parking	
9	Would love to see something for children and teens (e.g. a skatepark, pump track, playground, pool/snooker/arcade hand out space)	Community Wellbeing	Community, Youth	1
10	instead of taking away our bushland, build up, a second level on the shopping centre would work better and save our vital bushland Expanding the shopping centre is very much needed but our bushland is vital for our community	Environment, Economy	Commercial, Environmental	1
11	Keep this area commercial, not residential, and prioritise the expansion of retail and dining options. I think both residents and tourists alike would benefit from the inclusion of a greengrocer or speciality fresh food option, additional mainstream clothing brand stores and more dining venues that stay open beyond 5pm that are not fast food. This would be the perfect location.	Housing, Economy	Housing, Commercial	1
12	(Reply to comment above) I agree, residential can be elsewhere. Or adopt a model where residential is onto of the shopping centre. Retain public areas for parks and recreation	Housing, Economy	Housing, Commercial, Outdoors	
13	Salamander Way needs a decent footpath that runs the length from Port Stephens Drive to the shopping centre. The amount of people that walk, cycle and ride mobility devices along there has increased massively and the drivers along this stretch often behave in an	Movement & Infrastructure	Roads, Pathways & Crossings	2

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	unsafe manner and use the inside cycle lane to overtake other vehicles. Many children use this route getting to and from school and a lot of elderly unable to drive use it to access the shopping centre. If you are expanding the shopping centre then making it safe to get there is a MUST!			
14	The beauty of our peninsula that nature prevails over concrete. Kids should have a bond with nature. They will have enough of concrete jungle when they go to University. People moving to the area like Port Stephen because they want to leave in the quite, green and beautiful place with the birds singing, with the nature view from the windows.	Environment	Outdoors, Environment	1
15	(Reply to comment above) Absolutely, I moved to PS because life was simpler and beautiful. It makes me sad to see parking meters come in and green space disappear.	Environment	Outdoors, Environment	
16	We don't need more native habitat loss for a quick buck - this is not what people move to Port Stephens for, nor what residents want. Urban sprawl is slowly but surely erasing our identity and community spirit. There is a very large space cleared, built on and currently vacant at Taylors Beach, most of the complex still sits empty... it's a 5 minute drive from Sally shops and requires no additional tax payer spending.... stop the madness. Instead: - more undercover parking in the existing	Environment, Economy	Outdoors, Commercial, Environment, Community, Parking	2
17	(Reply to comment above) 100%	Environment, Economy	Outdoors, Commercial, Environment, Community, Parking	
18	Don't sell off our green spaces to developers. The shopping centre can be expanded without altering the footprint. Add another level to the existing structure, with parking above. Green spaces should be retained for public enjoyment. Dedicated parking for large vehicles is needed. More trolley bays are required in the western carpark. A proper pedestrian crossing between the Centre and the Library would increase safety for users. Decent footpaths surrounding the whole precinct will also increase safety. Please review parking near the exit of the Ampol service station, as lower vehicles often pull	Environment, Economy, Movement & Infrastructure, Community Wellbeing	Outdoors, Commercial, Environment, Pathways & Crossings, Community, Childcare	1

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out in front of cars due to being unable to see oncoming traffic.

19	The Mambo Wetlands has been an important part of the learning environment for children at Salamander Early Education for many many years. This natural space has sparked many projects, inspired future eco warriors and taught all of us about the benefits of being in nature for wellbeing. It is vitally important that we protect these spaces for all of us.	Environment, Community Wellbeing, Public Domain	Outdoors, Environment, Community, Childcare	1
20	I think that we should invest in more high care nursing homes in the area as there are lots of boomers racing toward a high care facility. Re a Private Hospital in the area, my thoughts are that it should be in an area that services the Tomaree Peninsula, Tilligerry Peninsula, Medowie and Raymond Terrace. There are several around Lake Macquarie, why not here? If I had to attend an emergency department I would head to Lake Macquarie Private, if time allows. If an ambulance is required Tomaree hospital would send you to either the Mater or John Hunter, not my first preference....Lake Macquarie Private is an amazing hospital and has a wonderful Emergency Department. Why couldn't you look around Salt Ash to Williamstown. As a baby boomer, these are my main priorities. [REDACTED]	Community Wellbeing	Health, Elderly Facilities	
21	[REDACTED] The area shown as commercial/residential on the West side imposes additional noise and pollution to an existing quiet residential area for extended periods beyond the current environment. We would consider this to be highly abusive to those existing residents which it appears not to have been considered in the plan. The better solution, if the additional usage suggested is required in this location, is to utilise the existing areas by increasing their height for both the commercial and parking and allocate a location, if necessary for a residential component or perhaps review other locations which maybe more suitable and effective. The scheme appears to be driven by economics rather than considering the existing occupants and local residents. Have the current owners of the existing space been included in the suggested plan? If so why hasn't their input been expressed in the plan. The other consideration is the loss of critical space for existing native wild life	Housing, Environment, Economy, Public Domain, Community Wellbeing	Outdoors, Commercial, Environment, Community, Parking	1

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that use this area for living in a special place to breed and live in this corner of the wetlands. A loss of more green space, which we believe is not necessary and possibly against the current world requirements of saving the planet, is an additional consideration. The comments made by others to improve access to existing accesses such as the library, additional playgrounds etc, surely needs to be front and centre of any modifications. No options in the plan suggests consideration of these modern and required issues appears to have been considered. Based on the above and all the comments we have heard, it appears to us that the plan should be withdrawn, the Council should encourage a full dialogue with all parties so that the community, existing users of the space and residents requirements are implemented, as after all they are the rate payers for the council and are therefore theoretically the eventual owners, before a sensible plan is reissued in consideration of the above comments, as well as all the other land options available around the area.

22	So my first thought is originally community Close was supposed to be extended to Central Ave to form one road that was the plan. So that extension is gone and now that land will become housing with no existing road and also can't see how many blocks or Units and how many and how HIGH are there going to be???. Then blocks fronting Salamander Way or once again Units and how high not to mention the blocks/units behind Library. I think I know the answer and its plan to see on this webpage with your Links to NSW Government Low and Medium Housing Policy. Please inform us if I'm wrong because I would like to be but I don't think I am. Regards	Housing, Movement & Infrastructure	Housing, Roads		
23	Would like to see a day Centre for our increasing age population for small procedures. And a youth hub for kids to go to [JUPITOR] while family is shopping. Parking is hard there now maybe a multi-story car park now that we have increased the heights	Community Wellbeing, Movement & Infrastructure	Community, Elderly facilities, Youth, Parking		
24	As the Artistic Director of the Port Stephens Theatre Company, I recommend that the council consider building a permanent performance space for family entertainment on the weekends and during the school	Community Wellbeing, Economy	Commercial, Community, Youth	1	1

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holidays. This would be a great addition and attraction to the Salamander Bay Square shopping precinct.

25	On Monday at the drop in centre we were advised the mixed commercial/residential building is 4 storeys high. The drop.in centre is there all week at the shops.	Housing, Economy	Housing, Commercial	
26	The wetlands are an integral component to our ecosystem. Lots of wild life also call this place home. It's a green space, especially for the childcare next door who seem like they utilise this space a lot. How about plan some better roads and curbed guttering in some of the areas of the bay you guys tend to neglect.	Community Wellbeing, Environment, Movement & Infrastructure	Roads, Environment, Childcare	1
27	It seems that it will go ahead regardless of people's input. Please consider incorporating the thoughts and wishes of our community into the development and not just plonk down something ugly. I would love to see village/community/commercial like structures blended thoughtfully. Something we could be proud of and something that gives consideration to our current surrounds that we love.	Community Wellbeing, Housing, Environment, Public Domain, Economy	Housing, Outdoors, Commercial, Community	1
28	It is refreshing to see Council looking at the use of its land around Salamander Centre. The current shopping centre and related developments have been motivated by ill-equipped Council staff looking only to sell off land that was zoned to get funds to fund council follies. The appropriate development would be for a combined retail, medical and high rise affordable development built around boulevards and pedestrian precincts. It works throughout the world with retail and commercial on bottom 2 floors and 1-2 bedroom apartments above to say 4-5 storeys with underground parking. It has been done at Rooty Hill so well and Green Park and in a proposal at Nelson Bay. Retail and clerical staff can't afford to live in the area and they are vital to attract to the area with apartments they can afford. It isn't for tourist accommodation! If the area is to be serviced we must be able to house young people to work in retail, hospitality and medical. Currently they can't afford to live here. This isn't redesigning the wheel as it works throughout Europe and parts of Asia. We need affordable retail for shops, showrooms and restaurants as the Charter Hall model built around Woolworths and Coles as key subsidised tenants doesn't	Community Wellbeing, Housing, Environment, Public Domain, Economy	Housing, Outdoors, Commercial, Pathways & Crossings, Community, Health, Childcare	2

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service the community. Time to think outside the square. If the Childcare and Library have to be relocated so it may be.

29	(Reply to comment above) Well said	Community Wellbeing, Housing, Environment, Public Domain, Economy	Housing, Outdoors, Commercial, Pathways & Crossings, Community, Health, Childcare		
30	Central Ave needs to join up to Community Close behind the shopping Centre, Kmart end, this will reduce traffic leaving the rear car park and traveling back through Town Centre Cct towards Maccas.	Movement & Infrastructure	Roads	2	
31	Please do something about the NO RIGHT TURN into Aldi from Town Centre Circuit. Either mark it as No Entry or allow people to turn right. I have witnessed multiple times incidents involving pedestrians and vehicles as the "majority" of cars ignore the sign and zoom in.	Movement & Infrastructure	Roads, Pathways & Crossings, Signage	2	
32	Build a decent high rise tower with at least 50 storeys, making the lower five retail and commercial and the upper floors restaurants and dining with residential in between. Have caveats preventing their use as temporary / short term rentals. Ease the shortage of accommodation for workers and reduce pressure on clearing more natural bushland for housing and commercial development.	Housing, Environment, Economy	Housing, Commercial, Environment	1	1
33	If you want to keep the koalas surviving around Wanda Wetlands, you really need to keep the vital habitat around the edges of the wetlands. There is fabulous habitat at the back of the library and preschool. We need more housing, so it makes sense to build upwards and keep our native bushland too. Do it well, and it would be awesome to enjoy watching koalas and other wildlife into the future behind the library and preschool.	Community Wellbeing, Housing, Environment	Housing, Environment, Community, Childcare	3	
34	The thing that has surprises me is that for a tourist town, where we have a large explosion of tourists in the holiday season that we do not have a decent hospital within the bay. Heaven help someone who has a serious accident- transport over 1 hour to the Mater Hospital or John Hunter Hospital. We also have an ageing population and a growing community that would benefit from having a decent hospital. Build some foundations / infrastructure which would make living /	Community Wellbeing, Housing	Health, Elderly		

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	moving / holidaying in the bay even more attractive.			
35	Recently travelled to Port Douglas on a road trip, and honestly our roads are \$?!?? Please do something about our roads all this discussion about the town centre and no discussion about road upgrades and repairs	Movement & Infrastructure	Roads	
36	I think we need apartments for the low-income earners, that are not available for tourists. Make a bridge to lemon tree passage will allow workers to get to salamander square easier and provide a 2nd way out if something ever happens to Nelson Bay road.	Movement & Infrastructure , Housing	Housing, Roads	1
37	(Reply to comment above) Good suggestions here.	Movement & Infrastructure , Housing	Housing, Roads	
38	Please ensure the Library is protected and that there are no plans for its removal. Also ensure that the existing bushland and vital Wildlife corridors here are not totally removed and decimated.	Community Wellbeing, Environment	Environment, Community	2
39	(Reply to comment above) I agree fully with what you have to say [REDACTED]. The library is in a peaceful position with the bushland near it, surrounding its carpark. It is so convenient where it is and is the best library Internally I have seen. The bushland corridors for the Mambo Wetlands area for koalas must remain. We need to protect the bush we have within the towns. You don't know what you have till it's gone. All in the name of dollars, development and progress. The importance of the bush to Salamander Early Education is paramount as well. To expose young children to the bush and all critters within is such a wonderful thing as it educates them in nature which has a life time effect. I believe they found an endangered frog species in this bush just in from the Centre.	Environment, Community Wellbeing	Environment, Community, Childcare, Parking	2
40	There needs to be a pedestrian foot path on the Kmart side of Town Centre CCT to the Central Ave round about. I often see people walking along the road at the edge of the guard rail and cars having to slow when they unexpectedly come across them. Also, get rid of all the silly No Right Turn signs. What is the difference between turning right into Aldi at Kmart or opposite PRD? Everyone does it, just look at how worn the double white lines	Movement & Infrastructure	Roads, Signage, Pathways & Crossings	1

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are near Kmart. Why is turning right from the PRD car park allowed but not from the Bay Medical car park? Once again, everyone does it. And why can't we enter the Ampol petrol station from Central Ave?

41	(Reply to comment above) Good suggestions here [REDACTED]. Have tried to recommend all these to Council. Should now be reviewed and approved by the Local Traffic Committee.	Movement & Infrastructure	Roads, Signage, Pathways & Crossings	1
42	I would like to see a Pier jutting out into Salamander Bay which locals and visitors alike could use to fish and swim off. It could have coffee carts, icecream vendors, markets, and family entertainment stalls. Also an area for local artisans to show their ware. Roundabouts, jazz bands, miniature train rides and a children's play area.	Community Wellbeing, Public Domain, Economy	Outdoors, Commercial, Community, Youth	1
43	A good idea, time to start using this land, and definitely like the concept of business and housing together.	Housing, Environment, Economy	Housing, Commercial, Environment	1
44	I suggest the areas shown purple should be developed as medium density residential interspersed with green areas.	Housing, Environment	Housing, Outdoors, Environment	1
45	The large carpark on the southern side can do with shelter (similar to the shelter on the northern carpark). It is always better to manage to park your car under shelter not only during the hot weather but also if it's wet. I also would like to propose a monthly car boot sale in the car park during the morning between 7am and 1pm.	Community Wellbeing, Movement & Infrastructure	Roads, Community, Parking	1
46	Our roads are disgraceful and we need to replace managers in the engineering department.	Movement & Infrastructure	Roads	
47	This submission is for input into the future land uses around the Salamander Central Shopping Centre I wish to advise that there are insufficient parking spaces already at the current centre. When they were being counted and assessed with the approval of Stage 3 the loading docks were counted as several parking spaces and since then the centre has reduced the size of these spaces and also allowed grocery pick-up stations, thus reducing even more parking spaces. The ring road around the current centre is in a disgraceful state and is in need of emergency hot-mix reconstruction. The early concept plans were for future buildings and the retention basin adjacent to the Tomaree	Movement & Infrastructure , Environment, Community Wellbeing, Public Domain	Roads, Community, Parking	3

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

	Library should be kept in its entirety as this basin collects all the litter and water runoff from the carparks and road links.			
48	I think all the shopping trolleys should have \$2 refundable deposit on them that would tidy up the car park and stop damage to cars hop	Economy	Outdoors, Other	
49	Dear Council Members, I have been a resident of Port Stephens (Corlette) now for 8 years, and for the past 2 years have been the owner of an electric vehicle and do most of my charging (slow) at home. Often on occasions it is not possible for me to charge my vehicle at home to 80% (owing to overcast weather etc., a sudden need to travel distance far beyond battery level charge etc.) which causes me to search locally for "fast" charging stations, with only one in the local area located at Soldiers Point. Alternately Heatherbrae (about 48 km away) or Karuah (about 58 km away), or Newcastle (60 km away), which of course is ridiculous if battery level is low, meaning distance travel to and then from those charging stations is doubled. In addition to the foregoing, I have on two occasions been approached at Salamander Bay Shopping Centre by EV drivers, (not local) and once in Nelson Bay Shopping Centre, they being aware that my vehicle is electric, seeking the location of a local fast charging station, only to be told there were none locally other than Soldiers Point (only 24kw). These people were all visitors to the area from elsewhere on holidays, and because they were unable to access a "fast" charger, perhaps not likely ever to return to the area again for holidays, which makes one consider just how many other holiday EV drivers have the same experience and opinion. Yes, there are a limited number of "slow" chargers locally, however these chargers are nearly all located at accommodation facilities for their paying guests with only one or two available for public use, which can each take up to 8 hours to charge to only 80%. Hardly satisfactory when in peak holiday season there may be dozens of vehicles requiring charging, particularly when the very limited number of public available of "slow" chargers are in use for such long periods of time. Also, it needs to be borne in mind that there are many hundreds of accommodation facilities that have absolutely no EV charging facilities at all. Council needs to consider the plight of the	Movement & Infrastructure , Environment, Public Domain	Outdoors, Environment	2

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

many EV driver visitors to Port Stephens, whom have not been able to access local charging (either fast or slow) during their stays in the area, (and perhaps not likely to return with their \$\$\$\$), coupled with those residents whom have EV vehicles, and not unlike myself, have a need to be able to "fast" charge on several occasions each year, beyond their home "slow" charging facility. I do urge Council to take this issue up with the several "fast" charging facility companies, local business facilities, local accommodation facilities etc., not to mention the State Government, with the view of providing incentive/s to each should they agree and arrange for the installation of "fast" charging stations for the general public.

50	I believe we need to retain the existing bushland areas that fringe the car park and Shopping Centre! The wildlife that use these sites for habitat will be impacted by any form of development! Extending the height of the existing centre could provide a better solution towards addressing our shortage of accommodation and car parking spaces.	Housing, Environment, Movement & Infrastructure, Economy	Housing, Commercial, Environment, Parking	1
51	It's great that council is planning for the future. My concern is that this plan is a little premature and doesn't capture all the future considerations. My observations are that car parking is already at max capacity during peak times and further development of the area without extra parking will not help the situation. The current Charter Hall shopping centre and Nelson Bay have many vacant shops. These areas should go multi-level before council sells off land for commercial reasons. If it is not commercially feasible to develop then I don't believe releasing more land to develop is the answer. Purple areas are key community areas. I would expect the need for more community areas will increase as population increases. I don't think this plan caters for this increased community demand in 2041 and it is not feasible to buy back the land. Additionally, I'd like to see sheltered play areas in the area. In comparison to other councils, PS Council is behind the ball with parks and play areas. Multistory (4) residential units adjacent to community daycare creates privacy issues for the children. In summary, redevelop the current area with more parking and shops (think Kotara). Maintain council land for future growth. Our library and community day care	Community Wellbeing, Environment, Movement & Infrastructure Public Domain, Economy, Housing	Housing, Outdoors, Commercial, Environment, Community, Childcare, Parking	1

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

	require further investment to meet growing needs of the community in 2041 (think Forster library). Thank you for allow me to share my thoughts.			
52	Also, I just want to say that this plan wasn't well advertised. I would have expected details of the proposal available in the library community area and potentially in the shopping centre. I saw a random flyer attached to an empty shop front which didn't show the map or details.			
53	Love the idea of a large indoor jungle gin.	Community Wellbeing	Community, Youth	
54	Umina have a fantastic skate park and playground near the NRMA caravan park. It would be fantastic if PS invested in something similar	Community Wellbeing	Outdoors, Community, Youth	
55	I'd rather see existing residential land be rezoned than see off council land.	Housing	Housing	
56	These small areas of bush are essential for Koala & animal habitat. We have enough shops in the Salamander Bay shopping precinct... there are shop spaces empty in the Centre. This area is important for plant diversity as well. Landcare groups have worked and collected seeds from this area of bushland.	Environment, Economy	Commercial, Environment	1
57	Existing shopping centre should be redeveloped and full utilised before expanding out into surrounding habitat, which is highly valued for both wildlife and amenity	Environment, Economy	Commercial, Environment	
58	If Council had adhered a decade ago to State government request for a Masterplan then we wouldn't be in such a pickle now. Ad hoc planning hasn't and won't work. There are too many things wrong with the Centre to list here (has been done well in 6 pages from [REDACTED]) I support a high rise residential component being included on existing Council land next to Pre School. It doesn't impinge on anyone's views. It should be low cost and targeted to affordability. No holiday lets. Include shops or medical and potential for a couple of layers of carparking. This is one area where I support high rise! Be aware of 2 things from the past – the area next to the Library does provide for run off from carpark and also need to check with local Worimi people as that was an issue years ago. The slope on the northern side with	Community Wellbeing, Housing, Movement & Infrastructure, Economy	Housing, Commercial, Community, Health, Parking	1

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

houses backing onto it could become unstabilised if disturbed. The "Big W" DA proposal of years ago identified this and should be taken into account in any proposal for a ring road (which is needed) The vegetation there now has only been there for 10 years.

59	I'm concerned that a shopping centre should be called a "town centre", the objective of this plan. My daughter has just done a HSC Design and Technology studies on this very subject, and leading studies say that best practices for town centres "serve as the vibrant core of these new communities, weaving together daily conveniences, public spaces, and places for connection." Where amongst the retailers are the vibrant community spaces to sit, connect and play? Or is this merely an extension of retail space to collect taxes and rent and call it a town centre?	Community Wellbeing, Public Domain, Economy	Outdoors, Commercial, Community, Signage	1
60	Yes, I'm also an EV owner and I've tried, in vain, to contact the shopping centre owners and their solar suppliers, suggesting that they could leverage around 900 kW of solar installed on the roof, as well as a large battery, to charge EVs. The owners of the solar are retailers and, whatever they don't sell to shopping centre users, they would have to sell at very low wholesale prices. They could price the EV charging at 40 to 50c per kWh and make a much bigger profit. The shops would also benefit. 50 kW DC chargers would be good or even 22 kW AC chargers (only 11 kW for most EVs). They're not interested in communication with the local community, it seems.	Environment, Economy	Environment, Other	
61	Because it creates traffic chaos. The reason why people turn illegally is because there's no sign telling them that the entrance is around the corner.	Movement & Infrastructure	Roads, Signage	
62	We need a bridge to LTP first. If this weather has done anything it shows how much this is needed. Developing the bushland around the shopping centre is ridiculous. Build the shopping up lower rent and get better shops in to support the community.	Movement & Infrastructure, Environment, Economy	Commercial, Roads, Environment	
63	Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. The Salamander Bay Town Centre is next to the Mambo Wanda Wetlands. These wetlands are a truly magnificent 188-hectare Port Stephens Council reserve. This	Environment, Community Wellbeing	Environment, Community	1

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

area is being proposed as a RAMSAR site. The Ramsar Convention is an international agreement for the protection and conservation of wetlands under UNESCO. Construction of large buildings on the very edge of the site will compromise any possibility of achieving RAMSAR recognition. There should be no more encroachment into the green space at any point, no hardline edges to the site, and no construction to the edge of the site. These green areas should be preserved as buffer zones for the mambo wetlands and importantly for the existing shopping centre. Ultimately providing some protection to the shopping centre against future flooding events. Future developments should be compatible with nature. This may include interpretative and educational centres to inform visitors, locals and schools about the function and importance of wetlands. Establishing open seed stock nurseries for replanting mangrove and littoral forest areas could also be an optional use for the proposed development areas.

- 64 On behalf of TRRA I submit our support for:
 30/4 [REDACTED] 1/5 [REDACTED] 2/5 [REDACTED] 4/5 [REDACTED]
 and [REDACTED] 5/5 [REDACTED] (not para 5)
 7/5 [REDACTED] 8/5 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] 11/5 [REDACTED] 14/5 [REDACTED]
 16/5 [REDACTED] x2 17/5 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] 19/5 [REDACTED] 20/5 [REDACTED] 21/5 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] 24/5 [REDACTED]

Manually added to votes

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 65 Please see my submission attached ([REDACTED])
[See below] | Community Wellbeing, Movement & Infrastructure
Housing, Environment, Economy | Housing, Commercial, Roads, Signage, Environment, Pathways & Crossings, Parking | 2 |
| 66 I have attached my submission ([REDACTED])
[See below] | Community Wellbeing, Environment, Economy, Movement & Infrastructure | Environment, Commercial, | |

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Join the Conversation Comment #65

Salamander Bay Town Centre Have your say...

May 2025

Firstly, thanks for the opportunity to share experiences, concerns & suggestions, rather than just making decisions and "doing things to us" without genuine consultation first.

I understand the need for increased housing supply, especially affordable housing, near existing services and transport hubs. The "way" increased medium-density development is planned, built and established needs to be done with great care, especially for the precious wetland area the shopping centre in surrounded by, with rare flora featuring **endangered fauna** like Koalas.

Other interests need to be considered as well including impacts on **existing residents / shop /service users** and considering the massive influx of **tourists** visiting our area. FYI while visitor numbers explode in warmer months there is an increasing number of midweek day-trippers and weekenders visiting year-round. My ideas and suggestions mostly concern the poor condition of the **Town Centre Circuit** roadway especially the safety of pedestrians and drivers. FYI I've lived in the area, on and off, for fifteen years so draw on a great deal of experience. Here's a summary.

- **INSTALL** Pedestrian Crossing
To/from the *Bus Station and ALDI* as it's a dangerous area.
- **UPGRADE** pedestrian link to proper crossing
Between *Library, Community / Childcare Centre* and shopping centre carpark.
- **Make Aldi Carpark ONE WAY exit**
Close ENTRY to ALDI carpark (near Kmart). Make it EXIT only.
- **QUALITY of Road!!!**
Town Centre Circuit is not fit for purpose...
- **PLACEMAKING WAY FINDING** to shopping centre
Better signage needed on Salamander Way.
- **ROUNDAABOUT** Line-markings are worn.
Bagnall Bch Rd and Salamander Way (near Churches)
- **PLACE NAMING; to reduce confusion**
Locals know the difference between Salamander Bay shopping "centre" and shopping "village" at Wanda Beach but can be confusing for visitors.
- **UPGRADE IMPORTANT ACCESS ROAD**
Port Stephens Drive is not fit for purpose
- **ENCOURAGE LOCALS**
To use Wanda Beach shops
- **Complete the CIRCUIT in "Town Centre Circuit"**
To alleviate the need to drive out of the precinct due to one-way entries etc.
- **Shopping Centre individual car-parking SPACES**
Need widening
- **CONCLUSION**

|1

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Join the Conversation Comment #65 continued

IN DETAIL...

- **INSTALL** Pedestrian Crossing

To/from the *Bus Station and ALDI* as it's a dangerous area.

Especially when visitors who are driving in a hurry and don't look out for elders/ youth /people with prams/ disabled residents etc the same way most locals do.

- **UPGRADE** pedestrian "link" to proper crossing

Between *Library, Community / Childcare Centre* and shopping centre carpark.

Also ensure bushes are trimmed/ replaced with low shrubbery; so, there's visibility of both pedestrians (for drivers) and oncoming traffic (for pedestrians) to see.

NOTE This precinct attracts a LOT of elders, plus young people, parents with kids in strollers, plus people with mobility issues etc. During high (tourism) seasons it can be hard and dangerous to cross the road there. Currently the link has mobility hazards. A proper refuge island should also be considered.

- **Make Aldi Carpark ONE WAY** exit

Close ENTRY to ALDI carpark (near Kmart). Make it EXIT only.

It is an unsafe intersection (due to the number / vicinity of trucks plus cars leaving the main shopping centre carpark).

Unfortunately, most drivers simply ignore the NO RIGHT TURN sign. Again, it is especially dangerous in holiday times when people, who are not familiar with the area, can drive erratically. This should become "exit only". The other access on Central Ave (close to the Medical Centre & TAFE) could remain both an entry and an exit (or entry only) as there are not as many trucks, cars, buses and pedestrians using the area.

- **QUALITY of Road!!!**

Town Centre Circuit is not fit for purpose...

WIDTH

It's not wide enough to cater for the trucks, Motorhomes, 4WDs (many tradies live in the area) plus increasingly wide / oversized (dare I say fat or even obese) cars,

ie turning into/out of the car park entry / exit (near Salvos) is too narrow, plus the roadway itself too narrow, so cars often bank up trying to get in and out.

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**ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

Join the Conversation Comment #65 continued

PAVEMENT SURFACE

As the shopping centre is built next to a wetland, it is on permanently wet ground and the road simply forms deep potholes after most rains, and the surface literally crumbles. It is dangerous for drivers and causes damage to cars.

Local flooding is frequent and will increase with climate change, due to increased moisture in the air. The drainage is poor, and it is simply not built to withstand either the volume or increasing weight of traffic.

- PLACEMAKING

"Salamander Bay" signage (from Landcom days at big roundabout Nelson Bay Rd & Salamander Way) near Tomaree Ovals, fell over ages ago & not fixed / replaced.

Also, there is also no placemaking signage on Port Stephens Drive to let people know they've arrived in "Salamander Bay".

This access is used by people from Tilligerry Peninsular, some from the Anna Bay area and increasingly visitors use PS Drive as GPS offers them the "quickest route" to the shopping centre etc.

Where are the bilingual welcome signs in Worimi Guttung language and English to "Welcome to Salamander Bay".

- WAY FINDING to shopping centre

Better signage needed on Salamander Way.

Visitors coming from Nelson Bay Road (and Tomaree ovals etc), need to be warned earlier (before the schools) that THE ONLY shopping centre access is RIGHT TURN at Roundabout.

Too many people miss it, then end up making hazardous U-turns across double lines, down near Sandpiper Reserve. This only tends to happen in holiday time, but that's when the roads are busiest, so most dangerous.

- ROUNDABOUT Line-markings are worn.

Bagnall Beach Rd and Salamander Way (near Churches)

It's hard to see. Line markings need to be lengthened/ increased to guide traffic and make it easier for drivers waiting (to enter the roundabout) to see where other vehicles are heading.

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ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Join the Conversation Comment #65 continued

- PLACE NAMING; to reduce confusion

Locals know the difference between Salamander Bay shopping "centre" and shopping "village" at Wanda Beach, but it can be confusing for visitors.

I suggest formally applying to change the name from Salamander Bay Village Shops to "Wanda Beach" shops like the pharmacy names itself.

Confusion can be caused to patients of *Bay Medical Group* as it has two centres: one on Central Ave near the shopping centre and the other at Wanda Beach shops.

The business ends up calling the latter their "Soldiers Point" clinic even though it's not technically at Soldiers Point. This can cause patients to attend the wrong clinic and lose their (often long awaited appt).

Locally the general area is known as "Sally Bay" so that could be an option.

If "Wanda Beach shops" is not accepted by locals perhaps "Original" would denote the neighbourhood shopping strip (as opposed to the newer, bigger shopping centre).

While some people use the term "old" Salamander Bay it is not ideal as there are so many elders living nearby, the second highest percentage in NSW.

Also, the term "village" can be confusing as there are now so many "Retirement and Lifestyle Villages" in the area, so some don't think of villages as places to shop but places to live.

Even the term "Little" Salamander Bay shops may confuse some people from out of town. While the shopping-centre might seem large to locals, to some city or overseas visitors it might seem small...

- UPGRADE IMPORTANT ACCESS ROAD

With increasing use of **Port Stephens Drive** by residents, workers and visitors, plus more trucks, lots of buses (with the Depot), caravans and heavy trailer boats many pulled by giant 4WDs going to the shopping centre and general area of West Tomaree Peninsular, the road is not fit for purpose.

Built within and on top of wetlands, in the Tilligerry Creek floodplain not constructed as a major thoroughfare. It's surface opens with major potholes and simply crumbles after rain. It is much more dangerous than roads closer to the shopping centre as it's an 80kph area.

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**ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

Join the Conversation Comment #65 continued

NSW Govt needs to be lobbied to take over improvement, care and maintenance of the important road, especially with increasingly frequent events of "water over road" and "flooding" closing others, leading to major tourist area via Nelson Bay Rd & GanGan Rd.

It is essential the road is upgraded, especially for emergency access, in flooding, fire and other emergency events.

The speed should be reduced, to reflect the constant safety hazards, until the Port Stephens Drive has been rebuilt.

- ENCOURAGE LOCALS

To use Wanda Beach shops

To reduce competition for limited parking spots in busy tourism times at the shopping "centre" locals could be encouraged to visit Wanda Beach shops for small, regular items from the IGA associated "Friendly Grocer" store.

ANGLED SURFACE

However, the road doesn't appear to have proper drainage, so the angle of the road surface is rounded. This makes it hard for older, less able-bodied drivers & /or families to get out of their cars without the door falling back and hitting their leg.

WIDEN ROAD

It's almost impossible to get out of the drivers' side without nearly being hit by a bus, truck, wide (obese) car, trailer boat or fat-caravan. Soldiers Point Rd has wide footpaths on both sides, the mostly residential (west) side could have some of the width reduced to widen the road to make it safer for both pedestrians and drivers.

CALM TRAFFIC

Despite a road hump at the southern entry, roundabouts at both ends and reduced speed signage, many people nearing their holiday or fishing destination often ignore these rules / methods. More active traffic calming is required, especially if the road is widened, including specific hard architecture and landscaping.

- Complete CIRCUIT in "Town Centre Circuit" name

To alleviate need to leave the precinct, due to one-way entries, only to re-enter at a different spot etc.

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ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Join the Conversation Comment #65 continued

- **Shopping Centre car-parking spaces**
Need widening

It seems that recently shopping centre management reconfigured and painted them, squeezing in more car parks by narrowing individual car park spaces. However as mentioned earlier more people drive increasingly wider cars, especially SUV and 4WDs.

There's a known larger percentage of older people in the Salamander Bay demographic (see ABS data). While it might seem like a stretch, I know someone who parked her little car recently but couldn't get out the passenger side. She climbed to the passenger side, politely asked the driver in the ute next to her if he could move his car across a bit. A verbal altercation ensued, and she ended up in hospital with a suspected heart attack.

- **CONCLUSION**

I've covered matters that are beyond the scope of this Salamander Bay Shopping Centre planning exercise, just think it's important to realise that other issues, in the general area, can impact the shopping centre, residents, workers and visitors alike.

Kind regards



ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Join the Conversation Comment #66

COMMENTS ON SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE PLACE PLAN

We need a long-term vision and plan based on sustainable management of the natural assets that support the coastal community within the LGA. INCREDIBLE BY NATURE should be the guiding principle and not just green washing aimed at attracting tourists and more residents and urban development.

The unfortunate thing is that this marketing approach without a viable sustainable plan to accommodate more people is self-destructive. As the area becomes more developed often with inappropriate developments the very thing that attracts people to the area, pristine natural environment, is lost to short term thinking and planning.

What we need are long term plans that consider the environment and its role in supporting the community. We need to retain as much of the remaining green space as possible – it cannot be for sale for short term gains to the highest bidder or to address complex long term problems with simple short term solutions. This only results in the community losing the intrinsic values and interconnectivity provided by green spaces and faith in the Council to be able to look out for the community in favour of developers. It is recognised globally that well established “wealthy” areas always have a strong green theme, parks, mature trees etc. and is one of the key attractions to an area. If we want a healthy wealthy community we need to accommodate green space, and mature trees into the planning process. Not encourage barren suburban ghettos with concrete high rises.

This is a one road in one road out community and therefore vulnerable to extreme weather events – we were lucky the recent rain event concentrated to the north of us. Considering these recent events, it is crucial to plan for the climate crisis, accounting for more intense and frequent storms, associated flooding and coastal erosion. With a growing aging population, the consequences of being cut off could be devastating.

The potential for the Tomaree Peninsula becoming isolated by flooding for long periods of time is high. Incorporating ecosystem services and a more proactive environmental approach to managing the local assets would help to mitigate some of the worst impacts associated with the climate crisis.

1. Do we need to develop the Salamander Bay Town Centre at all?

Since when was this industrial retail waste land considered to be the Town Centre. There is no town centre – a series of overdeveloped housing estates spread over the area. Nelson Bay, Shoal Bay water front and the Wanda Beach shops are as close as we get to a town centres.

There is a definite need for some comprehensive planning around the Salamander Bay Shopping (Town) Centre. But what is being proposed is short sighted with little to commend it. Centralising and industrialising the retail experience in one concentrated area does nothing for community cohesion, they do not add to the community, if anything they detract from diverse shopping options that could be available and isolate people from their community and natural support networks.

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Join the Conversation Comment #66 continued

Apart from Coles and Woolworths, the centre (Charterhouse) would appear to be already operating at capacity, demonstrated by the high turnover of leases and the number of empty shops. Before trying to develop new retail venues even with accommodation, perhaps it would be better to improve the existing structures, including the parking, and road network to and around the centre. This area is only fully utilised during a few holiday weeks of the year and even then it is hardly unmanageable when compared to shopping centres elsewhere.

What is needed is a long-term plan for the area, which this is not. It should consider climate change, long-term growth, and community needs before pursuing new development. This will not begin to solve the local housing crisis, as suggested. There are other ways to address that issue, but that is for another discussion. The only beneficiaries of this proposal will be the developers.

2. Is the place plan a quick fix?

It cannot be stressed strongly enough that there is no point in releasing and selling Council owned property to encourage development around an already degraded industrial retail centre. Selling off the remaining greenspace is not compatible with any long term contingency planning for this area and the surrounds. This area is essentially wetland. We know about the adage of not building on sand, the same applies for wetlands. Developing this site adjacent to the Mambo wetlands will leave the whole site vulnerable to future flooding and will impact on the integrity of the mambo wetlands.

Mambo wetlands will reach saturation point during some future weather event. This development will encroach into the green space that is a buffer zone between the existing centre and the Mambo Wetlands. Compromising this buffer zone will lead to potential flooding of the centre and adjacent structures. The idea of selling off this greenspace for development with no apparent or demonstrable supporting long term planning to support the proposed plan smacks of a quick fix.

3. Will it help develop community cohesion and support sustainable neighbourhoods?

Centralised shopping precincts have been shown globally to compromise community cohesion and sustainable neighbourhood developments. While they are convenient for shoppers, traders (transport access) and developers, they come at a cost, with little overall benefits to the community.

4. Is the necessary infrastructure in place to support this and other developments?

The short answer would have to be no. The poor state of the roads would indicate limited infrastructure planning and management, which is presumably reflected in other less obvious infrastructure required to support a community such as sewage, water, power, amenities etc. This place plan will cause havoc to traffic and will compromise access to the shops during the construction phase not to mention further damage to the roads that were never designed to carry the current weights and volume of traffic, which will only increase with this development.

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Join the Conversation Comment #66 continued

5. Do we need more people moving to the area without a plan to absorb them into the community?

There are already insufficient doctors to serve the existing population, with long waiting times for appointments. This is not conducive to hosting an ever-aging population/community. There are long ambulance turnaround times, and the hospital is inadequate. And that is while there are no overarching climate emergencies. One major flood cutting off the Nelson Bay Road would be catastrophic for this area. It is only a matter of time.

6. Can we afford to compromise the valuable ecosystem services, and ecology of the Mambo Wetlands?

Although the Mambo Wetlands are small, they play a crucial role in managing water flow and run off in the area. They are the lowest point in the area and are the link between the higher surrounding lands and the sea/estuary. This entire shopping precinct has been built on what would have been wetlands. This is worrying, back fill can only last so long. We are told not to build on sand – the same applies to wetlands. The role of wetlands in accumulating and settling run off and vast quantities of water from the surrounding areas will eventually be compromised leading to catastrophic results if not managed appropriately! A combination of a king (or high) tide, heavy rain, strong northerly winds, will eventually lead to a major flooding event in this area.

7. Do we really want a RAMSAR site and associated ecotourism opportunities?

This area is being proposed as a RAMSAR site. Construction of large buildings on the very edge of the site will compromise any possibility of achieving RAMSAR recognition.

RAMSAR besides, we should be giving this site the recognition that it deserves locally and managing it accordingly, applying best practices by following the RAMSAR guidelines as a matter of course, as sustainable management practices. If the desire to have the Mambo Wanda wetlands (small though they are) recognised under the RAMSAR agreement, then appropriate management action must be applied now. This would include no more encroachment into the green spaces on the edge of the wetlands at any point, no hardline edges to the site by construction to the edge of the site. These green areas should be preserved as buffer zones for the mambo wetlands and importantly for the existing shopping centre. Ultimately providing some protection to the shopping centre against future flooding events.

While the green sites proposed for development are somewhat degraded wetland/littoral forest, they nonetheless provide habitat for a wide variety of species and contribute to wildlife corridor networks for koalas and other animals. Importantly, degraded land can always be restored with a little effort, but once it is concreted it is gone forever. It can be conjectured that most people that have apparently moved here for the "pristine" environment would rather see a restored and accessible littoral forest and wetland at this site than a massive concrete eyesore.

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Join the Conversation Comment #66 continued

Any development should be compatible with nature. This may include an interpretative and educational centre to inform visitors, locals and schools about the function and importance of wetlands. Establishing open seed stock nurseries for replanting mangrove and littoral forest areas could also be an optional use for the proposed development areas.

An area of ecological importance: The areas that are being proposed for development surround what has been described as an area of ecological importance. It is not appropriate to have a small patch classified as ecologically important and then build all around it, cutting it off on 3 sides from the ecological support network. This type of development inevitably leads to hard lines that are ecologically incompatible.

These areas are too small to allow for a gradual buffer zone, grading across the development site and will therefore, if the proposed developments are to go ahead will result in [hard line](#) delineation. A more open, appropriate and sustainable approach on how to manage these few remaining green areas must be developed rather than just taking the easiest route.

8. Are we sure that this area can support this sort of development?

The existing shopping centre is low rise and of a relatively light construction. What is being proposed will require considerable piling and compounding to support new high-rise structure. There is a risk that this will release stored carbon and acid sulphate, currently trapped in the soils. The latter could pose a serious risk to the adjacent wetlands and ultimately the estuary. While any developer will be required to put in place protections for this, there is always the risk of failure of such protections, especially during severe weather events.

9. Is there a risk of contaminating the local ground water (aquifer)?

There is a shallow freshwater lens that runs across this entire area. Given the low elevation of this development area, this freshwater lens is likely to be close to the surface. Pile driving and drilling could rupture the coffee rock that seals the aquifer. If this were to happen, there would eventually be an ingress of acid sulphate or saline waters contaminating the aquifer. This would impact all those people that access the aquifer with spearpoints to water their gardens and, could lead to complicated ramifications for Council.

Conclusion

The proposed Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan is not an appropriate development for this area. The Council should withdraw and develop a long-term vision for the development of this area incorporating plans to mitigate known impacts from climate change. Given the vulnerability of the community from climate driven emergencies, the council should reconsider its position as an area for growth, given the access to the area and the availability of suitable land for development.

APPENDIX C

Workshop Feedback May 2025

Movement, traffic and access

Strengths	Weaknesses
We've got roads and existing infrastructure	Lots of accidents on Town Centre Circuit near 'blind' corner near oasis centre ¹ Especially near Coles entrance as a pedestrian ²
Existing walkway along back of housing is good/great (North)	Community bus lack of parking
Existing bus interchange works well – services all areas	Road surface along Town Centre Circuit
	People turning right into ALDI illegally is dangerous
	Kids having accidents near McDonalds esp.
	Electronic scooter too fast, conflict with pedestrians
	No cycleways, so need to improve connection
	Pedestrian crossing from centre to ALDI is dangerous
	No connectivity between development to development – wall to wall shops, no thoroughfare from roads for pedestrians, walking through tavern carpark
Opportunities	Threats
New community bus parking area	Bus bays being used incorrectly
New intersection treatment at intersection near 'Shell' ^{1 and 2}	

**ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

Shuttle bus to service centre, and encourage use of existing bus stops and services
Call up a bus service 'on demand'
Link coastal walk to bus services and car park
Rumble strips near pedestrian crossings
Improve signs
Learn from mistakes to improve pedestrian connections when developing
Improve connection to the Rigby centre – renovation at Super Strike?

¹ Enforce bus zones – signs and rangers

² Lights

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Economy and housing

Strengths	Weaknesses
Centralised ability to access all retail and services in one area	Charter Hall unwilling to expand
Flat/accessible for walking (green)	High lease costs
Access to daily needs	Vacancy of shops in mall
Bushland nearby	Impact on bushland
Allows Nelson Bay to function better for tourism	Impact on neighbouring residents
Lack of vacant shops surrounding centre	Lack of space for workers to get out at lunch
Great location for multi-housing/mixed use	Business mix doesn't encourage youth participation/customers
Business attracts more business	Mix of food shops is limited
Great views could be created for apartments	Oasis/Henry + McDonalds needs revamp – hard to get owners – poor access
Access to medical	Lack of specialists (medical)
	Lack of diversity
	Lack of undercover carpark
	Quality of stores
Opportunities	Threats
Parking better than Nelson Bay	Cost of high rise development
Multi-level carparking	High vacancy rates (in mall)
Build multistorey on top of Charter Hall	Business will leave if it's not developed
Housing in town centre – access to services & retail in walking distance	Greenfield development > impact on bushland
Police Station – near Fire and Ambulance Hub – Emergency Hub	Staff inability to afford housing

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Tourist/visitor info/educational centre to understand wetlands and wildlife	World economy
Additional mixed use area on Salamander Way	Online shopping
Private hospital	Apartments aren't designed for families – not enough storage
Youth	Removing green space
Late night shopping	Inability to control privately owned developments to increase density
Medical precinct	
New commercial will be competition	
Opening up/improving Oasis/Henry Centre	
Density should be in existing spaces – e.g. over car parks	
Make residential cat and dog free	

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Public domain and wellbeing

Strengths	Weaknesses
Library – all spaces (meeting areas, outdoor, kitchen)	Access to buses
Natural Areas. Variety of landscapes.	Lacks character
Service centre	Lack of greenery + height/scale
	Poor access to Mambo
	<u>Shade</u>
	Disuse of areas at night
	Water capture
	View corridors
	Legibility + Signage
	Health services
	Safety issues – attacks at night <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of lighting. Particularly in front of Council buildings.
	No cycleways
	Nowhere for workers to sit for lunch
	Walkability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can't walk to different spaces. Fences blocking access. Includes issues getting into the centre
	There is no information or encouragement to get to Mambo
Opportunities	Threats
Solar generation into a community battery	Getting here – Safe crossings + access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sight lines at pedestrian crossing at ALDI
Better access for cyclists w/ end of trip facilities	Pets into public open space – from housing

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ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Make it greener – of some height	Development diminishing greenery
Viewing options for Mambo. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewing platforms • Create links + access to the Mambo • It's the character 	Fines start beyond library
Rooftop gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community garden • Native • Densify Library space + Council Buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Green space "village green" ○ Assist with homelessness 	Lighting of public buildings
Shading	Anti-social behaviour
Walkability/Connectivity	Common theming – signage, planting, seating
Increase public access to back of library	Green space to gather at lunch for workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little parks for kids place to play • Accessible • Inviting + outside • Seating + tables • Natural plants
Anchor activity in wetlands	More people living here will create activity – increase safety
Strong theming with the area around <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public art • Art walks – to create an experience 	DA Conditions for new developments to include rooftop/greening
Signage – digital (interpretative)	Challenges with current homelessness issues

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Environment

Strengths	Weaknesses
Beautification around the area	Concern around feasibility of environmental amenity (what can be sacrificed?)
Opportunities	Threats
Rooftop gardens with native low shrubs	Concerns around developer's land banking if mixed use
Attracting birdwaters	Concerns around maintenance of green spaces
Meeting place with community batteries + emergency space	Balance – enviro + development
Community garden on the top of building	Walking through bushland areas
Boardwalk to + through Mambo	Preference to go up (^) rather than spread housing / commercial more
Rooftop solar where possible	
Preserve existing bushland/environment	
Green space (park land) around buildings + shade	
Plant trees good for native environment/wildlife	
Coexisting wildlife with development	
Environmental programs for younger generations in enviro space	
Information area (exhibition space) + viewing platform on library to promote wetlands	
Densify community space to retain as much environmental corridor as possible	
Greening corridor along Salamander Way + Community Lane	

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ENGAGEMENT REPORT.**

Changing zoning above commercial on Salamander Way to mixed use (Could preserve some more enviro space)

Playgrounds on rooftop

APZ to be turned into walking tracks

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ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Environment

- Preserve existing bushland / environment
- Walking through bushland areas
- Green space around buildings + shade (parkland)
- Plant trees good for native environment / wildlife
- * Preference to go up (?) rather than spread housing / commercial more.
- rooftop solar where possible.
- making place with community batteries + emergency space.
- Co existing wildlife with development
- Enviromental programs for younger generation in enviro space.
- Information area + viewing platform on library to promote (exhibition space)
- Desire community space to retain as much environmental corridors with hands.
- * Greening corridor along behind salamander way + community lane as possible
- Conservs around maintenance of green spaces
- * Change Zoning above commercial on salamander way to mixed use.
- ↓
could preserve some more enviro space.
- Rooftop gardens with native low shrubs
- Community garden on top of building
- Playgrounds on rooftop

Environment

Attracting birdwatchers
Board walk to + through Mammals.
APZ are to be turned into walking tracks
Concentrate around development (mixed use areas)
Biodification around the area
Balance \rightarrow enviro + development
* Concentrate around feasibility of environmental amenity
 \downarrow
What can be sacrificed?

1. What are the modes of delivery? *Information, information*
 2. Existing activities what are? *of mobility, transport, urban*
 3. Existing built infrastructure, what is it? *transport and urban*

New community built, building ideas
 1. New infrastructure *infrastructure* *new street*
 2. New, new, new *new*
 3. Share time to share space, the changing use of density
 4. No stop and start
 5. Call for a bus service *bus service*
 6. Public space to the public *the public*
 7. Flexible shops *flexible shops*
 8. Improve public *improve public*
 9. Learn from mistakes *learn from mistakes*
 10. Improve *improve*
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Economy/Housing

S.

- Centralised ability to access all retail services in one location.
- Outperforming better than Nelson Bay.
- Flats/accrued for walking (green).
- Access to daily needs.
- Bushland nearby.
- Allow Nelson Bay to function for tourism.
- Lack of vacant shops surrounding centre.
- Good location for multi-housing increased use.
- Businesses attract more businesses.
- Good views could be created for apartment.
- Access to medical.

T.

- Cost of high-rise development.
- High vacancy rates (area).
- Business will come if not developed.
- Regain field development - impact on bushland.
- Shift inability to afford housing.
- Reduced economy.
- Decline shopping.
- Apartments avoid development for families - higher storage.
- Lowering greenspace.
- Needing to attract privately owned development to increase density.

W.

- Charter Hall unwilling to expand.
- High basic costs.
- Vacancy of shops in mall.
- Impact on bushland.
- Impact on neighbouring residents.
- Lack of space for workers to get on at lunch.
- Businesses are dominant encourage greater participation / customer.
- Mix of food shops limited.
- Deli / Hengs / McDonalds needs re-align - want to get across - poor access.
- Lack of specialists (medical).
- Lack of diversity.
- Lack of underused capacity.
- Regulators of stores.

O.

- Multi-level car parking.
- Increase heights of buildings.
- Build multi-story on top of Charter Hall.
- Housing in town centre - access to services & retail in walking distance.
- Police station - near fire & ambulance hub - emergency hub.
- Tourist / visitor info / recreational centre to understand sustainable lifestyle.
- Additional mixed use area on Salamander Quay.
- Provide hospital.
- Repairs.
- Late night shopping.
- Medical precinct.
- New commercial will be competition.
- Opening up / improving existing Heng Centre.
- Relatively should be increasing space - eg over car park.
- More residential cat - dog free.

[illegible]

APPENDIX D –Letters and Emails x 3

Email received 1 May 2025

I would like to see a bit of an urban hub.

Multi-level buildings with commercial shops and cafes/restaurants below.

Ground level for shops / restaurants.

Level 2-3 for commercial office space or community services hub

Level 4+ residential apartments for permanent rentals/ ownership (not for holiday letting).



ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE



8 Lonsdale St

3 years ago · [See more dates](#) >

The other idea in the larger space is for more leisure activities (especially for winter/bad weather). Multilevel entertainment hub.

A cinema complex, time zone style arcade, indoor swimming pool and sports centre. Roller rink/ ice rink.

Sent from my iPhone

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE

From Salamander Bay Childcare Centre handed to staff 5-7 May 2025

██████ - age 4
like to pick lilly pillies + getting leaves from the ground'
Her message 'STOP, taking our bush away'



██████ - age 4
likes 'to find fairy doors' in the bush
Her message - 'stop, taking our bush away'

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

- I feel sad cause I saw tadpoles in there, owls and fungi
 - The tractors might not see the camouflage owl. We could make our own signs - no tractors no tractors or building here.
 - "That's Worimi Land" - 5yr olds. "I'd be sad if I couldn't climb our tree."
 - They will squish the plants and the animals and we'll be sad.
 - The koalas won't have anywhere to climb.
 - The frogs will get stuck and have no way to get out (4y)
 - "Read the sign and don't build here, not allowed"
 - Tractors aren't allowed in bush, that's building on their habitat and were so sad about it.
 - This brush-tail couldn't find his mum or Dad.
 - If we don't look after the wetlands, they won't be able to swim
 - I won't vote for them cause they hurt nature
 - (3yr) - Stop doing that, read the sign, it makes me sad.
 - The fungi will get squished and maybe never live on the earth again
 - In Patagonia the tractors took the bush away and it made the Pumas go to the farms and too many guanaco.
 - They needed to take care of the bush for the eco system. Just like Worimi Land. The Wallum Froglet is small and doesn't like tractors or people or noise and trash. He will get scared because the tractor took his ecosystem.
 - They might die (fungi)
- The fungi does an important job



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ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

Email received 26 May 2025



econetwork
port stephens

Nelson Bay NSW 2315
www.econetworkps.org
All correspondence to
secretary@econetworkps.org

Date 24 / May / 2025

Port Stephens Council
Have Your Say
E: haveyoursay@portstephens.nsw.gov.au
<https://haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/salamander-bay-town-centre-place-plan>

Submission regarding: Help Shape the Future of Salamander Bay Centre

About EcoNetwork Port Stephens

EcoNetwork Port Stephens is a not-for-profit, politically unaligned, 100% volunteer-run conservation organisation with a membership base of over 30 community groups and businesses as well as individual members and supporters. Our purpose is to support our members to advocate on environmental issues that impact Port Stephens communities. EcoNetwork Port Stephens has been undertaking advocacy, action and education for the environment since 1993.

Submission

We need a long-term vision and plan based on sustainable management of the natural assets that support the coastal community within the LGA. INCREDIBLE BY NATURE should be the guiding principle for Port Stephens, and not just green washing aimed at attracting tourists, more residents and urban development.

The unfortunate aspect of this marketing approach, without a viable sustainable plan to accommodate more people, is self-destructive. As the area becomes more developed often inappropriately, the very thing that attracts people to the area, pristine natural environment, is lost to short term thinking and planning.

We need long term plans that consider the environment and its role in supporting the community. We need to retain as much of the remaining green space as possible – it cannot be for sale for short term gains to the highest bidder or to address complex long term problems with simple short term solutions. This only results in the community losing the intrinsic values and interconnectivity provided by green spaces and faith in the Council to be able to look out for the community in favour of developers.

Well established “wealthy” areas are globally recognized as always having a strong green theme, parks, mature trees etc. and is one of the key attractions to an area. If Port Stephens wants a

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3. Will it help develop community cohesion and support sustainable neighbourhoods?
Centralised shopping precincts have been shown globally to compromise community cohesion and sustainable neighbourhood developments. While they are convenient for shoppers, traders (transport access) and developers, they come at a cost, with little overall benefits to the community.
4. Do we need more people moving to the area without a plan to absorb them into the community?
There are already insufficient doctors to serve the existing population, with long waiting times for appointments. This is not conducive to hosting an ever-aging population/community. There are long ambulance turnaround times, and the hospital is inadequate. And that is while there are no overarching climate emergencies. One major flood cutting off the Nelson Bay Road would be catastrophic for this area. It is only a matter of time.
5. Can we afford to compromise the valuable ecosystem services, and ecology of the Mambo Wetlands?
Although the Mambo Wetlands are small, they play a crucial role in managing water flow and run off in the area. They are the lowest point in the area and are the link between the higher surrounding lands and the sea/estuary. This entire shopping precinct has been built on what would have been wetlands. This is worrying, back fill can only last so long.

We are told not to build on sand – the same applies to wetlands. The role of wetlands in accumulating and settling run off and vast quantities of water from the surrounding areas will eventually be compromised leading to catastrophic results if not managed appropriately! A combination of a king (or high) tide, heavy rain, strong northerly winds, will eventually lead to a major flooding event in this area.
6. Do we want a RAMSAR site and associated ecotourism opportunities?
Mambo Wetlands is being proposed as a RAMSAR site. Construction of large buildings on the very edge of the site will compromise any possibility of achieving RAMSAR recognition.

Best practice wetland management

Regardless of RAMSAR recognition, management of Mambo Wanda Wetlands should be best practice by following the RAMSAR guidelines, ensuring sustainable management practices.

Appropriate management action must be applied now, which is even more imperative if the desire is RAMSAR recognition. This would include no more encroachment into the green spaces on the edge of the wetlands at any point, no hardline edges to the site by construction to the edge of the site. These green areas should be preserved as buffer zones for the Mambo Wetlands, but also as important buffers for the existing shopping centre, ultimately providing some protection to the shopping centre against future flooding events.

Buffers are important. While the green sites proposed for development are somewhat degraded wetland/littoral forest, they nonetheless provide habitat for a wide variety of species and contribute to wildlife corridor networks for koalas and other animals. Importantly, degraded land can always be restored with a little effort, but once it is concreted it is gone forever.

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We can reasonably conjecture that most people who have moved here, value the “pristine” natural environment and would rather see a restored and accessible littoral forest and wetland at this site than a massive concrete development.

Any development should be compatible with and showcase nature. This may include an interpretative and educational centre to inform visitors, locals and schools about the function and importance of the wetlands, such as a viewing area above the library. Establishing open seed stock nurseries for replanting mangrove and littoral forest areas could also be considered also.

An area of ecological importance needs its ecological support network. While the area of ecological importance is being retained, under the proposal it will be surrounded by development, cutting it off on 3 sides from its ecological support network. This is not appropriate for such a small but ecologically important patch. The proposed type of development inevitably leads to hard lines that are ecologically incompatible.

A more open, appropriate, and sustainable approach to managing these few remaining green areas must be established, rather than ignoring the development impacts.

7. Is the necessary infrastructure in place to support this and other developments?
The short answer would have to be no. The poor state of the roads would indicate limited infrastructure planning and management, which is presumably reflected in other less obvious infrastructure required to support a community such as sewage, water, power, amenities etc. This place plan will cause havoc to traffic and will compromise access to the shops during the construction phase not to mention further damage to the roads that were never designed to carry the current weights and volume of traffic, which will only increase with this development.
8. Is the place plan compatible with the existing site constraints?
It cannot be stressed strongly enough that there is no point in releasing and selling Council owned property to encourage development around an already degraded industrial retail centre. Selling off the remaining greenspace is not compatible with any integrated long term contingency planning for this area and the surrounds. This area is essentially wetland. Developing this site adjacent to the Mambo Wetlands will leave the whole site more vulnerable to future flooding and will impact the integrity of the Mambo Wetlands.

Mambo Wetlands will reach saturation point during some future weather events. This development will encroach into the green space that is a buffer zone between the existing centre and the Mambo Wetlands. Compromising this buffer zone will contribute to potential flooding of the centre and adjacent structures. The idea of selling off this greenspace for development with no apparent or demonstrable supporting long term planning to support the proposal is a quick fix without due diligence to its constraints.
9. Are we sure that this area can support this proposed development?
The existing shopping centre is low rise and of a relatively light construction. What is being proposed will require considerable piling and compounding to support new high-rise structure. There is a risk that this will release stored carbon and acid sulphate, currently trapped in the soils. The latter could pose a serious risk to the adjacent wetlands and ultimately the estuary. While any developer will be required to put in place protections for this, there is always the risk of failure of such protections, especially during severe weather events.

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ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

econetwork
port stephens

10. Is there a risk of contaminating the local ground water (aquifer)?

There is a shallow freshwater lens that runs across this entire area. Given the low elevation of this development area, this freshwater lens is likely to be close to the surface. Pile driving and drilling could rupture the coffee rock that seals the aquifer. If this were to happen, there would eventually be an ingress of acid sulphate or saline waters contaminating the aquifer. This would impact all those people that access the aquifer with spearpoints to water their gardens and, could lead to complicated ramifications for Council.

11. Densifying existing spaces is more sustainable than using green spaces.

We contend that the proposed style of high rise development is not environmentally suitable, however, IF high rise were to proceed, this should preferentially occur by negotiating and incentivising existing landholders to densify, for instance, using existing carpark space and providing multi storeys rather than using green spaces.

Conclusion

The proposed Salamander Bay Town Centre Place Plan is not an appropriate development for this area. The Council should withdraw and develop a long-term vision for the development of this area incorporating plans to mitigate known impacts from climate change. Given the vulnerability of the community from climate driven emergencies, the council should reconsider its position of Tomaree Peninsula as an area for growth, given the access to the area and the unavailability of suitable land for development.

For your consideration



President, EcoNetwork Port Stephens

Please reply to:
secretary@econetworkps.org
phone 0448 227 422

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ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE

Appendix E: Collateral

1.1 Social Media

Port Stephens Council
30 Apr, 15:15

Tell us what you want for the future of Salamander Bay Town Centre!

We're developing a Place Plan for Salamander Bay Town Centre - a plan to guide how we use land, improve traffic and roads, enhance the environment, attract investment, and boost community wellbeing.

Have your say in a way that suits you:


- 📍 Drop by our pop-up space each morning next week at Salamander Shopping Centre
- 🗨️ Join the community workshop at Tomaree Library on 8 May
- 👤 Visit us at the Tomaree Community Connect Day on 16 May
- 💻 Share your ideas online via our interactive mapping tool

Let's plan a better place together!

Feedback closes Sunday, 18 May.

Find out more <https://brnw.ch/21wSj6Z>

in the planning for the future of Salamander Bay town centre!



21 48 17

Port Stephens Council
6 May, 16:30

Do you have thoughts on Salamander Bay Town Centre? Let's hear them! Now's your chance to help shape its future!


Join our community workshop this Thursday!

📅 Thursday 8 May
🕒 5-7pm
📍 Tomaree Library - Waratah Room

We'll be talking traffic and pedestrian flow, local business growth, and better access to community services - and we want your voice in the room!

Can't make it? No problem - have your say online <https://brnw.ch/21wSqYd>

in the planning for the future of Salamander Bay town centre!



7 11 1

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.

SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE



[View Full Transcript](#)

basketball.

port stephens council is asking for public input on the future of salamander bay.

Council owns the last piece of vacant commercial land in the town centre and is seeking feedback on how it can be used.

It's also identified the area as a key location for additional housing.

locals can have their say at drop in sessions being held at salamander bay shopping centre this week, and the weather well and truly on the improve at the moment.

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 SALAMANDER BAY TOWN CENTRE
ENGAGEMENT REPORT.



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au | 02 4988 0255 | [PORTSTEPHENS.NSW.GOV.AU](https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au)    

ITEM NO. 3

**FILE NO: 25/168097
EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03158**

REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

REPORT OF: STEVEN PEART – ACTING GENERAL MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE

RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Approves provision of financial assistance under Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 from Mayoral and Wards Funds to the following:-
 - a) Salt Ash Hall Committee – Mayoral funds - \$51 donation towards hall hire fees for community meeting.
 - b) Fingal Beach Surf Life Saving Club – Mayoral funds - \$4,000 donation towards replacement of damaged equipment.
 - c) Hinton Public School P&C – Rapid Response – Cr Giacomo Arnott – West Ward Funds - \$250 donation towards outdoor equipment.
 - d) Voice of Wallalong of Woodville (VOWW) – Rapid Response - Cr Giacomo Arnott – West Ward Funds - \$250 donation towards administration expenses.
 - e) Raymond Terrace Magpies Rugby League Club - Rapid Response - Cr Giacomo Arnott – West Ward Funds - \$500 donation towards field safety repairs.
 - f) Raymond Terrace Junior Rugby League Football Club (Raymond Terrace Roosters) - Rapid Response - Cr Giacomo Arnott – West Ward Funds - \$500 donation towards junior player development.
 - g) Tomaree Neighbourhood Centre – East Ward Funds - \$500 donation towards 'Mad Hatter Tea Party' fundraising event.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to determine and, where required, authorise payment of financial assistance to recipients judged by the Mayor and or Councillors as deserving of public funding. The Grants and Donations Policy gives the Mayor and Councillors a wide discretion either to grant or to refuse any requests.

Council's Grants and Donations Policy provides the community, the Mayor and Councillors with a number of options when seeking financial assistance from Council. Those options being:

1. Mayoral Funds
2. Rapid Response
3. Community Financial Assistance Grants – (bi-annually)
4. Community Capacity Building

Council is unable to grant approval of financial assistance to individuals unless it is performed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993. This would mean that the financial assistance would need to be included in the Operational Plan or Council would need to advertise for 28 days of its intent to grant approval. Council can make donations to community groups.

The requests for financial assistance are shown below:

MAYORAL FUNDS

Salt Ash Hall Committee	A Council 355c Committee.	\$51	Donation towards hall hire fees.
Fingal Beach Surf Life Saving Club	A volunteer based organisation dedicated to ensuring beach safety.	\$4,000	Donation towards replacement of damaged equipment.

WARD FUNDS

Hinton Public School P&C	The P&C is made up of parents and carers, teachers and community members that contribute to decision-making, developing policies and management plans as well as fundraising.	\$250	Donation towards outdoor equipment.
Voice of Wallalong of Woodville (VOWW)	VOWW is a not-for-profit community organisation formed to preserve the character of the north-west corner of Port Stephens LGA.	\$250	Donation towards administration expenses.

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 JULY 2025

Raymond Terrace Magpies Rugby League Club	A community based club fielding competitive men's and women's teams in the Newcastle Hunter Rugby League.	\$500	Donation towards field safety repairs.
Raymond Terrace Junior Rugby League Football Club (Raymond Terrace Roosters)	A community focused club dedicated to developing young rugby league players.	\$500	Donation towards junior player development.
Tomaree Neighbourhood Centre	A community hub dedicated to supporting vulnerable and at-risk individuals through emergency relief and programs.	\$500	Donation towards 'Mad Hatter Tea Party' fundraising event.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction	Delivery Program 2025-2029
Resources and finance	Develop and implement strategic direction and governance of Council

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

To qualify for assistance under Section 356(1) of the Local Government Act 1993, the purpose must assist the Council in the exercise of its functions. Functions under the

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 JULY 2025

Act include the provision of community, culture, health, sport and recreation services and facilities.

The Policy interpretation required is whether the Council believes that:

- a) applicants are carrying out a function, which it, the Council, would otherwise undertake.
- b) the funding will directly benefit the community of Port Stephens.
- c) applicants do not act for private gain.

Risk	<u>Risk Ranking</u>	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that Council may set a precedent when allocating funds to the community and an expectation those funds will always be available.	Low	Adopt the recommendations.	Yes

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Includes Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

Nil.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council's Communication and Engagement Strategy uses the IAP2 Framework to identify the level of engagement undertaken. An explanation for each level is shown below.

INFORM	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
CONSULT	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
INVOLVE	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
COLLABORATE	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
EMPOWER	To place final decision-making and/or developed budgets in the hands of the public.
	No external communications and engagement are required for this report.

The following communication and engagement applies to this report.

External communications and engagement

INFORM	Community members are advised of the outcome of their application.
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Internal communications and engagement

Consultation has been undertaken by the General Manager's Office.

Consultation has been undertaken to ensure budget requirements are met and approved.

OPTIONS

- 1) Accept the recommendation.
- 2) Vary the dollar amount before granting each or any request.
- 3) Decline to fund all the requests.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

ITEM NO. 4

FILE NO: 25/168116
EDRMS NO: PSC024-03232

INFORMATION PAPERS

REPORT OF: STEVEN PEART – ACTING GENERAL MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE

RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:

Receives and notes the Information Papers listed below being presented to Council on 22 July 2025.

No:	Report Title	Page:
1	Six Monthly Grants Report to 30 June 2025	201
2	Cash and Investment Portfolio - June 2025	206
3	Elected Members Professional Development and Expenses Reports - 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025	216
4	Delegations Report	219
5	Council Resolutions	221

INFORMATION PAPERS

ITEM NO. 1

FILE NO: 24/314200
EDRMS NO: PSC2017-00180

SIX MONTHLY GRANTS REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2025

REPORT OF: GLEN PETERKIN - FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTION MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND SUPPORT

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide the status of the Six Monthly Grants Report to 30 June 2025.

There have been 21 successful grant applications for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 totalling \$6,426,223 and 10 unsuccessful grant applications which indicates a success rate of 68%.

ATTACHMENTS

1) Six Monthly Grants Report to 30 June 2025. [↓](#)

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.



Six-Monthly Grants Statement
For the period 1 January 2025 – 30 June 2025

Successful Grant Applications				
Grant	Section / Department	Project Title	Project Summary	Value
2025 NAIDOC Grants Program	Communications and Customer Experience - Vibrant Places	NAIDOC Launch 2025, for everyone to celebrate 'The Next Generation of Strength Vision & Legacy in Raymond	Port Stephens NAIDOC celebrations unite the community with Worimi through a flag-raising, street march, and Riverside Park activities.	\$2,000
2025-27 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Grant	Assets - Community Assets	Birubi Point Aboriginal Place Seating/Viewing Area	Reinstate the seating/viewing area which has been inundated with sand. Assist in restoring the desired look and function of the amenity; guides large masses of foot traffic to stay on dedicated footpaths walking areas rather over protected landscapes.	\$40,000
Coastal and Estuary Grants Program 2024-25 - Implementation Streams	Assets - Community Assets	Corlette Foreshore Sand Carting	Sand carting to move accumulated sand to provide improved amenity value and prevent burial of stormwater outlets at Corlette Beach.	\$75,667
Coastal and Estuary Grants Program 2024-25 - Implementation Streams	Assets - Community Assets	Shoal Bay Foreshore Sand Carting	Carting of sand from the western section of the beach and nourishment of the eroding sections of Shoal Bay Beach with around 10,000 m3 of sand to provide improved beach access and amenity.	\$178,001

ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 SIX MONTHLY GRANTS REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2025.

Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme (CPTIGS) 2024/25	Assets - Civil Projects	Bus Shelters	Construction of 7 new bus shelters and upgrade of 6 existing bus shelters across the LGA.	\$67,000
Crown Reserves Improvement Fund 2024/25	Strategy and Environment - Natural Systems	One Mile Dune Stabilization	Control of active Bitou Bush sites and maintain dune stabilisation works at One Mile Beach. Bitou bush is a prolific seeder and new plants will germinate in their thousands this year in locations where bushes were removed last year.	\$35,327
Crown Reserves Improvement Fund 2024/25	Strategy and Environment - Natural Systems	Shoal Bay Car Park Coral Tree Removal	Following an Arboricultural Impact Assessment undertaken on behalf of Council, 22 Coral Trees within the proposed treatment area were recommended for removal. This will both facilitate car park improvements and improve safety for visitors.	\$13,850
Crown Reserves Improvement Fund 2024/25	Strategy and Environment - Natural Systems	Boat Harbour Headland Restoration	To maintain and restore this highly visible, once pristine, coastal headland reserve back to all its natural glory using an array of bush regeneration and invasive species removal techniques.	\$55,549
Crown Reserves Improvement Fund 2024/25	Assets - Community Assets	New inclusive public amenities at One Mile Beach	This project will construct a new inclusive amenities building. This will benefit residents, visitors and local businesses alike by ensuring all users of one of the busiest Crown Reserves have a positive, welcoming experience.	\$272,727
Crown Reserves Improvement Fund 2024/25	Strategy and Environment - Natural Systems	Priority Weed Species Program	This program aims to help Crown Land to meet their Biosecurity Duty under the Biosecurity Act 2015 by creating and managing plans to mitigate the spread of high priority invasive species across-tenure within the PSC LGA.	\$107,559
Get NSW Active 2025-26	Assets - Civil Projects	Halifax to Harwood Shared Path	This project involves the construction of a shared-use pathway from Halifax Holiday Park to Harwood Avenue in Shoal Bay, improving connectivity, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and accessibility.	\$1,250,000
Growing Regions Program – Round 2	Assets - Community Assets	Don Waring Oval Upgrade	Implementation of the Tomaree Sports Complex Masterplan to upgrade Don Waring Oval. Scope includes expansion	\$2,946,743

ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 SIX MONTHLY GRANTS REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2025.

			of playing fields, fencing, floodlighting, car park and pathways.	
Joint Procurement Funded Support – Stream 1	Community Services Section - Waste Management	Regional Procurement for Waste Services	City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council wish to explore the option of entering an alliance (i.e. Joint Venture) with the view of jointly delivering waste and recycling services to their communities.	\$89,650
Koala Corridor Mapping	Strategy and Environment - Natural Systems	Koala Corridor Mapping	Koala corridor mapping in the Port Stephens Local Government Area	\$12,000
Local Government Apprentices, Trainees and Cadets - Round 1	Organisation Support - Human Resources		Employment of 3 cadets in the following areas: Engineer (Civil); Graphic Designer; Engineer (Environmental).	TBA**
Local Government Apprentices, Trainees and Cadets - Round 2	Organisation Support - Human Resources		Employment of an Apprentice Gardner	TBA**
NAIDOC 2025 Local Grants	Communications and Customer Experience - Vibrant Places	NAIDOC 2025	Traditional flag raising, followed by street march to Riverside Park Raymond Terrace for fun, sharing, enduring relationship building and cultural experiences.	\$3,000
Play Our Way Program	Assets - Community Assets	Lakeside Sports Complex Floodlighting Upgrade	This project will be to upgrade all existing floodlights at Lakeside Sports Complex to LED and install additional on field 4, 5 and the mod field to increase capacity.	\$957,660
Regional Event Fund - Flagship Event stream	Communications and Customer Experience - Vibrant Places	Shoal Bay Food and Wine Festival	An event showcasing the abundance of quality food Port Stephens has to offer. Closure of Shoal Bay Rd between Government Rd and Tomaree Rd giving complete access to attendees to experience alfresco dining over the Shoal Bay Sunset.	\$20,000
Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund (Round 3)	Strategy and Environment - Strategic Planning	Infrastructure Needs Analysis	The project is to undertake an infrastructure needs analysis that focusses on the growth areas identified in the Housing Supply Plan to support the delivery of new housing.	\$249,490
Youth Opportunities Program 2024/25	Communications and Customer Experience - Vibrant Places	The Place Is Yours	Young people will gain skills in project management, place activation, cooking, positive relationships and wellbeing. Informal networks with services and mentors taking part in the regular programs will be gained. Connections	\$50,000

ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 SIX MONTHLY GRANTS REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2025.

			with diverse young people will be maintained utilising sport, arts and cultural engagement at young people's favourite places.	
				Total
				\$6,426,223

There were 10 unsuccessful grant applications during the period 1 January 2025 – 30 June 2025.

There have been 30 successful grant applications for the financial year 2024 – 2025 to date.

** TBA - Local Government Apprentices, Trainees and Cadets funding is difficult to quantify at this point in time due to the following:

- The funding covers the minimum wage + 15% on costs for new apprentices/cadets/trainees.
- The minimum wage rates increase each financial year.
- The individuals employed under round 1 have a contract of 2 years (spanning over 3 different financial years) with rates for 2027 yet to be determined.
- Employment has not yet been finalised for round 2, therefore the applicable pay rate is not yet known.

ITEM NO. 2

**FILE NO: 24/314362
EDRMS NO: PSC2017-00180**

CASH AND INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO - JUNE 2025

REPORT OF: GLEN PETERKIN - FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTION MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND SUPPORT

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to present Council's schedule of cash and investments held at 30 June 2025.

Council's total portfolio of investments was \$78.2 million with an additional \$1.3 million held in Council's operational account as at 30 June 2025.

The investment portfolio is currently yielding 5.33% p.a. on a rolling 1 year performance, which is 0.94% above the benchmark.

The investment portfolio meets the benchmarks for product type, rating exposure and maturity limits but is outside the benchmark in relation to institution exposure. As at 30 June 2025 Council held 1% more cash with State Bank of India (BBB rated) than the benchmark allows. Cashflow requirements have reduced the overall portfolio size however at the time of investing with State Bank of India all benchmark requirements were met. No further investments with State Bank of India will be placed until the single institution limit has improved.

Council has sufficient cash to cover all reserves.

ATTACHMENTS

1) Cash and Investment Portfolio - June 2025. [↓](#)

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.



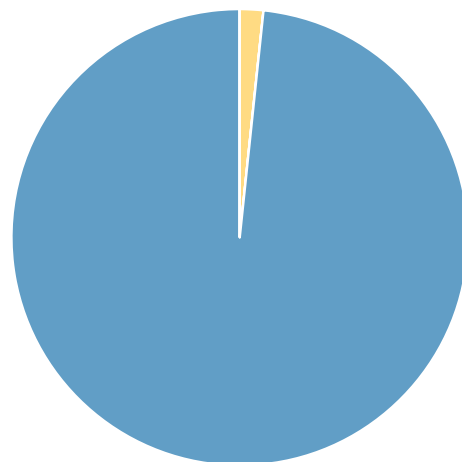
PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

Cash Investment Portfolio

Asset Allocation as at 30 June 2025



Cash Investment Portfolio Holdings



■ At Call ■ Cash ■ At Notice ■ TD ■ Managed Fund

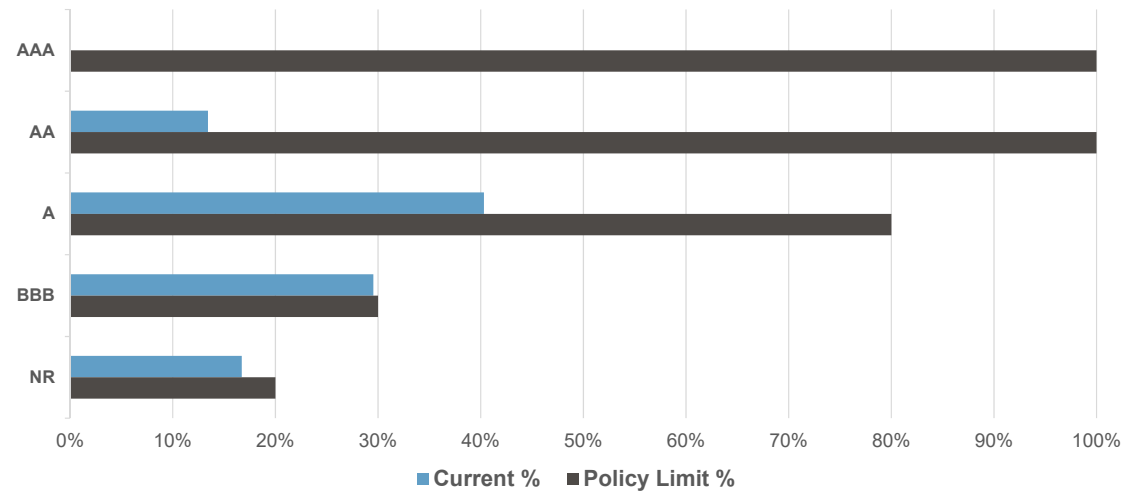
Product Type	Market Value (\$)	Within Policy
At Call	-	
Cash	1,322,081	✓
At Notice	-	
TD	78,165,986	✓
Managed Fund	-	
	79,488,067	

✓ = Yes

✗ = No

Rating Exposure

Total Credit Exposure

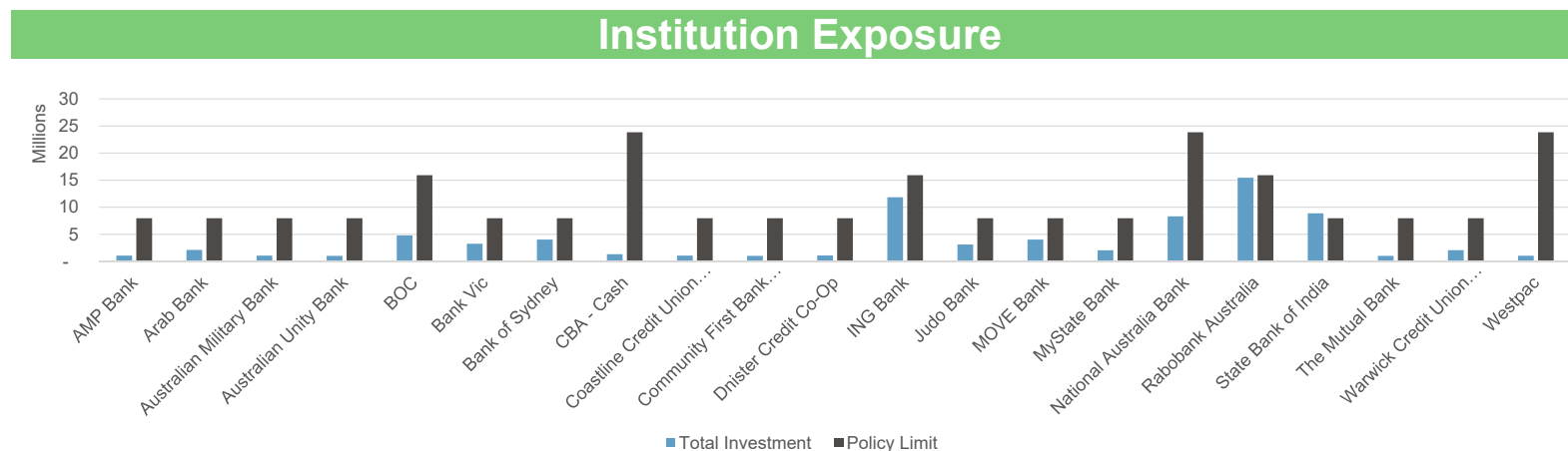


Credit Rating Group	Market Value (\$)	Current %	Policy Limit %	Within Policy
AAA	-	0%	100%	✓
AA	10,671,427	13%	100%	✓
A	32,043,898	40%	80%	✓
BBB	23,479,913	30%	30%	✓
NR	13,292,830	17%	20%	✓
	79,488,067	100%		

✓ = Yes

✗ = No

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1 CASH AND INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO - JUNE 2025.

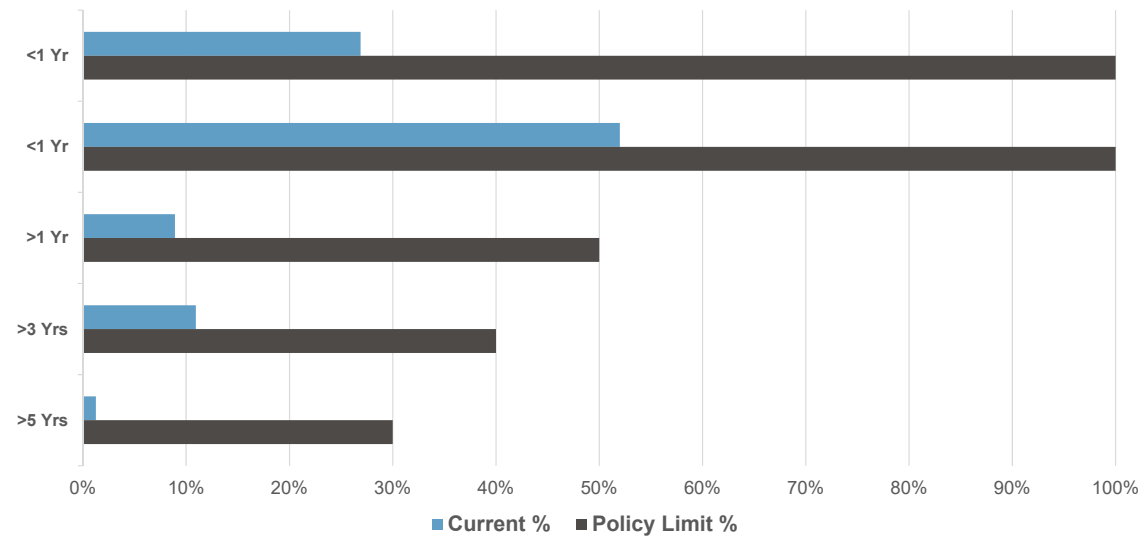


Institution	Rating	Total Investment	Exposure	Policy Limit	Remaining to Limit	Within Policy
AMP Bank	BBB	1,047,178	1%	10%	6,901,629	✓
Arab Bank	NR	2,111,728	3%	10%	5,837,079	✓
Australian Military Bank	BBB	1,046,925	1%	10%	6,901,882	✓
Australian Unity Bank	BBB	1,001,414	1%	10%	6,947,393	✓
BOC	A	4,779,956	6%	20%	11,117,658	✓
Bank Vic	BBB	3,256,725	4%	10%	4,692,081	✓
Bank of Sydney	NR	4,023,485	5%	10%	3,925,322	✓
CBA - Cash	AA	1,322,081	2%	30%	22,524,339	✓
Coastline Credit Union Limited	BBB	1,067,379	1%	10%	6,881,427	✓
Community First Bank Ltd	BBB	1,016,813	1%	10%	6,931,994	✓
Dnister Credit Co-Op	NR	1,087,736	1%	10%	6,861,071	✓
ING Bank	A	11,822,860	15%	20%	4,074,754	✓
Judo Bank	BBB	3,114,325	4%	10%	4,834,481	✓
MOVE Bank	NR	4,012,040	5%	10%	3,936,767	✓
MyState Bank	BBB	2,046,034	3%	10%	5,902,773	✓
National Australia Bank	AA	8,319,716	10%	30%	15,526,705	✓
Rabobank Australia	A	15,441,083	19%	20%	456,531	✓
State Bank of India	BBB	8,864,051	11%	10%	915,244	*
The Mutual Bank	BBB	1,019,068	1%	10%	6,929,738	✓
Warwick Credit Union Ltd	NR	2,057,841	3%	10%	5,890,966	✓
Westpac	AA	1,029,630	1%	30%	22,816,790	✓
Total		79,488,067				

✓ = Yes

* = No

Term to Maturity Limits



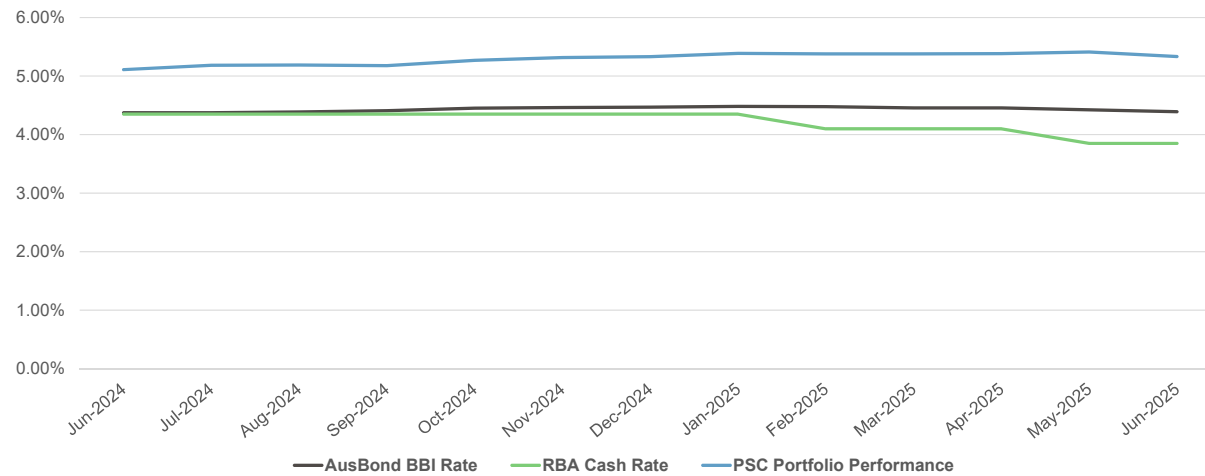
Detailed Maturity Profile	Market Value (\$)	Current %	Policy Limit %	Within Policy
Less than or equal 90 Days	21,373,468	27%	100%	✓
Between 90 Days and 365 Days	41,331,178	52%	100%	✓
Between 366 Days and 3 Years	7,085,973	9%	50%	✓
Between 3 Years and 5 Years	8,697,448	11%	40%	✓
Greater than 5 Years	1,000,000	1%	30%	✓
	79,488,067	100%		

✓ = Yes

x = No

Portfolio Performance

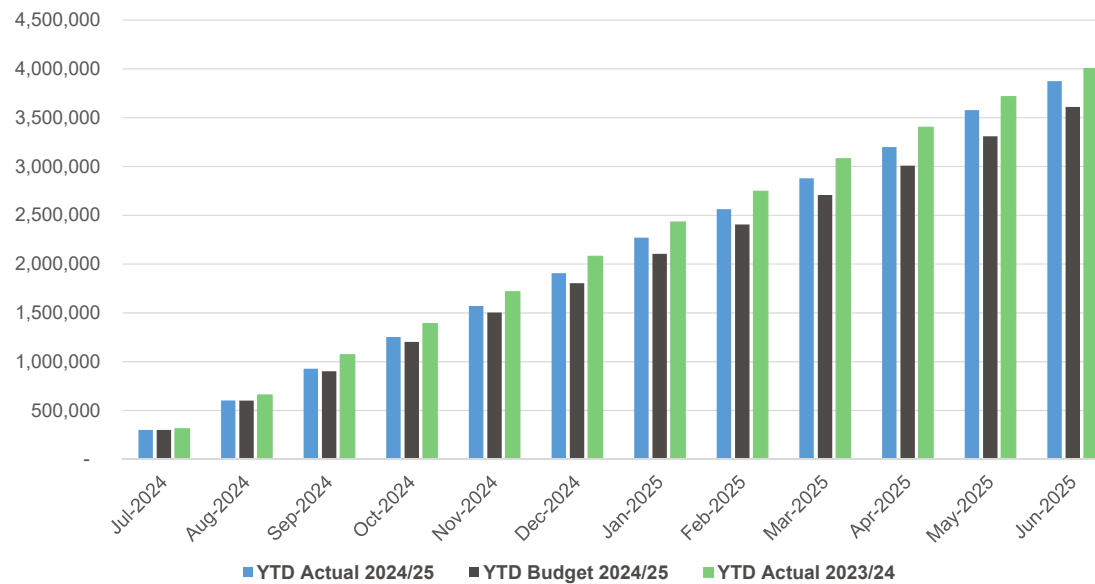
One Year Rolling Performance



Performance	1 month actual	3 months actual	6 months actual	FYTD actual	1 year % p.a. (Rolling)
Bloomberg AusBond BBI (Benchmark)	0.32%	1.02%	2.10%	4.39%	4.39%
PSC Investment Portfolio	0.40%	1.36%	2.67%	5.33%	5.33%
Outperformance/(underperformance)	0.08%	0.34%	0.57%	0.94%	0.94%

Income Earned vs Budget

Monthly Investment Income - Actual to Budget



ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1
2025.

CASH AND INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO - JUNE

Investment Register

Institution	Market Value	Days Held	Interest Rate	Date Invested	Maturity Date	Rating
CBA - Cash	1,322,081	1		30/06/2025	1/07/2025	AA
Judo Bank	1,113,375	733	5.70%	5/07/2023	7/07/2025	BBB
MyState Bank	1,016,488	497	5.10%	4/03/2024	14/07/2025	BBB
AMP Bank	1,047,178	725	5.25%	3/08/2023	28/07/2025	BBB
Australian Military Bank	1,046,925	726	5.27%	9/08/2023	4/08/2025	BBB
National Australia Bank	1,044,433	354	5.10%	16/08/2024	5/08/2025	AA
National Australia Bank	1,044,588	363	5.07%	13/08/2024	11/08/2025	AA
ING Bank	1,047,337	734	5.30%	8/08/2023	11/08/2025	A
BOC	1,093,703	717	5.12%	1/09/2023	18/08/2025	A
BOC	1,093,703	724	5.12%	1/09/2023	25/08/2025	A
National Australia Bank	2,082,788	367	4.97%	30/08/2024	1/09/2025	AA
State Bank of India	1,042,756	369	5.10%	28/08/2024	1/09/2025	BBB
Dnister Credit Co-Op	1,087,736	647	5.55%	1/12/2023	8/09/2025	NR
National Australia Bank	1,039,440	364	4.93%	11/09/2024	10/09/2025	AA
Rabobank Australia	3,123,288	377	5.00%	3/09/2024	15/09/2025	A
Arab Bank	1,088,210	661	5.58%	1/12/2023	22/09/2025	NR
National Australia Bank	1,039,440	377	4.93%	11/09/2024	23/09/2025	AA
National Australia Bank	1,039,440	384	4.93%	11/09/2024	30/09/2025	AA
Community First Bank Ltd	1,016,813	586	5.03%	29/02/2024	7/10/2025	BBB
Bank of Sydney	1,010,652	186	4.80%	10/04/2025	13/10/2025	NR
ING Bank	1,035,417	369	5.03%	16/10/2024	20/10/2025	A
Bank Vic	1,085,364	696	5.40%	1/12/2023	27/10/2025	BBB
Bank Vic	1,085,681	703	5.42%	1/12/2023	3/11/2025	BBB
Bank of Sydney	2,012,485	182	4.65%	12/05/2025	10/11/2025	NR
Bank Vic	1,085,681	717	5.42%	1/12/2023	17/11/2025	BBB
National Australia Bank	1,029,587	362	5.07%	29/11/2024	26/11/2025	AA
Westpac	1,029,630	538	5.15%	1/06/2024	1/12/2025	AA
MOVE Bank	1,002,119	178	4.55%	13/06/2025	8/12/2025	NR
MyState Bank	1,029,546	370	5.16%	3/12/2024	8/12/2025	BBB
MOVE Bank	1,002,119	185	4.55%	13/06/2025	15/12/2025	NR
Coastline Credit Union Limited	1,067,379	655	5.05%	29/02/2024	15/12/2025	BBB
Warwick Credit Union Ltd	1,028,493	375	5.20%	12/12/2024	22/12/2025	NR
Warwick Credit Union Ltd	1,029,348	381	5.20%	6/12/2024	22/12/2025	NR
MOVE Bank	1,003,963	221	4.52%	29/05/2025	5/01/2026	NR
Arab Bank	1,023,518	733	5.02%	10/01/2024	12/01/2026	NR
MOVE Bank	1,003,839	234	4.52%	30/05/2025	19/01/2026	NR
State Bank of India	1,045,010	530	5.15%	15/08/2024	27/01/2026	BBB
Rabobank Australia	1,003,616	601	5.28%	5/06/2024	27/01/2026	A
BOC	1,020,322	369	4.88%	29/01/2025	2/02/2026	A
Rabobank Australia	1,002,530	607	5.13%	12/06/2024	9/02/2026	A
BOC	509,640	377	4.82%	4/02/2025	16/02/2026	A
ING Bank	1,053,653	602	5.38%	1/07/2024	23/02/2026	A
State Bank of India	1,041,918	545	5.00%	28/08/2024	24/02/2026	BBB
State Bank of India	514,448	444	5.30%	13/12/2024	2/03/2026	BBB
ING Bank	1,053,653	616	5.38%	1/07/2024	9/03/2026	A
Rabobank Australia	1,553,513	521	4.97%	11/10/2024	16/03/2026	A
State Bank of India	1,053,795	623	5.50%	8/07/2024	23/03/2026	BBB
Rabobank Australia	775,156	514	5.08%	1/11/2024	30/03/2026	A
State Bank of India	1,053,795	637	5.50%	8/07/2024	6/04/2026	BBB
Rabobank Australia	775,156	528	5.08%	1/11/2024	13/04/2026	A
State Bank of India	1,053,795	651	5.50%	8/07/2024	20/04/2026	BBB
BOC	1,062,588	735	5.35%	29/04/2024	4/05/2026	A
Rabobank Australia	1,047,832	661	5.15%	26/07/2024	18/05/2026	A
State Bank of India	1,029,912	536	5.30%	6/12/2024	26/05/2026	BBB
State Bank of India	1,028,623	535	5.25%	13/12/2024	1/06/2026	BBB
ING Bank	1,015,576	472	4.66%	28/02/2025	15/06/2026	A
ING Bank	1,015,576	486	4.66%	28/02/2025	29/06/2026	A
Bank of Sydney	1,000,348	374	4.23%	27/06/2025	6/07/2026	NR
ING Bank	1,013,953	488	4.63%	12/03/2025	13/07/2026	A
Australian Unity Bank	1,001,414	404	4.30%	18/06/2025	27/07/2026	BBB
Judo Bank	1,000,471	410	4.30%	26/06/2025	10/08/2026	BBB
Rabobank Australia	1,015,191	536	4.78%	6/03/2025	24/08/2026	A
ING Bank	1,035,527	733	4.55%	18/09/2024	21/09/2026	A
The Mutual Bank	1,019,068	733	4.80%	5/02/2025	8/02/2027	BBB
Rabobank Australia	1,034,398	1664	5.32%	6/11/2024	28/05/2029	A
Rabobank Australia	515,985	1663	5.28%	21/11/2024	11/06/2029	A
Rabobank Australia	1,033,036	1687	5.22%	11/11/2024	25/06/2029	A
Judo Bank	1,000,479	1474	4.37%	26/06/2025	9/07/2029	BBB
Rabobank Australia	508,837	1680	5.12%	24/02/2025	1/10/2029	A
Rabobank Australia	1,033,252	1825	5.30%	13/11/2024	12/11/2029	A
ING Bank	515,894	1831	5.25%	21/11/2024	26/11/2029	A
ING Bank	508,578	1806	4.97%	24/02/2025	4/02/2030	A
ING Bank	509,614	1825	4.84%	5/02/2025	4/02/2030	A
Rabobank Australia	1,019,293	1831	5.14%	13/02/2025	18/02/2030	A
ING Bank	1,018,082	1840	5.00%	18/02/2025	4/03/2030	A
ING Bank	1,000,000	1834	4.22%	30/06/2025	8/07/2030	A
Total	79,488,067					

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1
2025.

CASH AND INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO - JUNE

Restricted Cash

Reserve	As at June 2025 \$'000
External	
Grants and Contributions	5,717
Developer contributions (inc Haulage)	25,025
Domestic Waste Management	8,046
Crown Reserve	2,829
Crown - Surf Life Saving Clubs	5
Internal	
Deposits, retentions and bonds	1,572
Admin Building	377
Asset Rehab/Reseals	4,244
Commercial Property	4,141
Community Buildings	149
Community Loans	200
Council Parking	1,320
Drainage	2,276
Election Reserve	-
Emergency & Natural Disaster	4,308
Employee Leave Entitlements (ELE)	1,000
Enhanced Services Focus Area	812
Federal Assistance Grant in Advance	4,322
Fleet	895
Grants Receivable	1,209
IT	2,001
Mayoral and Ward Funds	30
Medowie Social	-
Other Waste	573
Repealed	1,553
Resilience fund	3,000
Sustainable energy and water reserve	52
Transport and Environmental Levy	941
Unexpended loan funds	-
Total	76,597
Cash and Investment Report	79,488
Variance Cash Reserves to Bank Account - Unadjusted Position	2,891
Variance Due to:	
Outstanding Creditors	(146)
Outstanding Debtors	540
Outstanding GST refund	489
Total Variance	883
Unrestricted Cash/(Shortfall) - Adjusted Position	3,775

Reserves listed above are indicative only due to end of financial year adjustments not being completed at the time this report was extracted.

ITEM NO. 3

**FILE NO: 25/111422
EDRMS NO: PSC2017-00739**

**ELECTED MEMBERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXPENSES
REPORTS - 1 JANUARY 2025 TO 30 JUNE 2025**

REPORT OF: TONY WICKHAM - GOVERNANCE SECTION MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE

BACKGROUND

Professional Development

The purpose of this report is to provide an account of the expenses incurred by the Elected Members in accordance with clause 5.14 of the Councillor Induction and Professional Development Policy for the period January to June 2025.

Expenses

The purpose of this report is to provide an account of the expenses incurred by the Elected Members in accordance with Clause 3.127 of the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Mayor and Councillors Policy for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 **(ATTACHMENT 1)**.

Expenses incurred on continuing professional development and conferences are shown at **(ATTACHMENT 2)**.

The costs in the report are those incurred by the Elected Members that have been reconciled during this period and does not include expenses incurred that have not been submitted for reimbursement. The report also shows the total costs incurred to Council by Elected Members (including the monthly allowance) for each costing category listed.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Elected Members' Expense Report - 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025. [↓](#)
- 2) Elected Members' Continuing Professional and Conference Expenses - 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 [↓](#)

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

ITEM 3 - ATTACHMENT 1 ELECTED MEMBERS' EXPENSE REPORT - 1 JANUARY 2025 TO 30 JUNE 2025

Elected Members' Expense Report 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025

		Mayor Leah Anderson	Cr Rosalyn Armstrong	Cr Giacomo Arnot	Cr Chris Doohan	Cr Nathan Errington	Cr Peter Francis	Cr Paul Le Mottee	Cr Ben Niland	Cr Mark Watson	Cr Jason Wells	TOTALS
Total Number of Council Meetings Attended (8 held)		8	8	8	3	7	7	7	7	8	8	
Total Number of Months Reimbursed during the period		4	0	5	0	3	0	3	0	2	1	
Description of Expense	Limits as per policy											
Councillor Mobile Rental	75% up to \$200 per month			\$371.00								\$371.00
Councillor Mobile Calls		\$117.00				\$195.00		\$113.00		\$62.00	\$120.00	\$607.00
Councillor Landline Phone Rental												\$0.00
Councillor Landline Phone Calls												\$0.00
Councillor Fax Rental												\$0.00
Councillor Fax Calls												\$0.00
Councillor Internet	75% up to \$60 per month	\$281.00		\$814.00						\$67.00		\$1,162.00
Councillor Intrastate Travel Expenses	\$7000 per year	\$1,761.00				\$1,210.00		\$274.00	\$413.00	\$307.00		\$3,965.00
Councillor Interstate Travel (out of NSW)	\$2000 per year											\$0.00
Councillor Interstate Accommodation (out of NSW)												\$0.00
Councillors Intrastate Accommodation		\$2,541.00	\$1,149.00			\$1,090.00		\$2,486.00	\$985.00			\$8,251.00
Councillor Conferences	\$3000 per year	\$3,016.00				\$2,232.00	\$405.00	\$1,009.00	\$890.00			\$7,552.00
Councillor Training												\$0.00
Councillor Partner Expenses	Mayor \$1000 per year Cr's \$500 per year (excluding LGNSW Annual Con.)											\$0.00
Councillor ICT Devices (incl. Mobile phones)	\$5000 per term							\$3,161.00		\$798.00		\$3,959.00
Councillor Stationery	\$500 per year											
Councillor Awards/Ceremonies/Dinners		\$517.00		\$232.00	\$77.00				\$77.00		\$155.00	\$1,058.00
Councillor Child Care Costs	\$6000 per year											
Councillor Communications Bundle	75% up to \$100 per month landline 75% up to \$100 per month mobile											
Councillor Professional Development	\$15,000 per term	\$5,715.00	\$1,138.00	\$25.00	\$1,328.00	\$11,234.00	\$1,075.00	\$10,733.00	\$511.00	\$11,296.00	\$1,798.00	\$44,853.00
Councillor Uniforms												
TOTALS		\$13,948.00	\$2,287.00	\$1,442.00	\$1,405.00	\$15,961.00	\$1,480.00	\$17,776.00	\$2,876.00	\$12,530.00	\$2,073.00	\$71,778.00
Councillor Superannuation		\$4,497.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,296.00	\$16,161.00
Councillor Allowances	Mayor \$66,800 pa Cr's - \$27,050 pa	\$39,104.00	\$11,271.00	\$11,271.00	\$11,271.00	\$11,271.00	\$11,271.00	\$11,271.00	\$11,271.00	\$11,271.00	\$11,271.00	\$140,543.00
TOTALS		\$57,549.00	\$14,854.00	\$14,009.00	\$13,972.00	\$28,528.00	\$14,047.00	\$30,343.00	\$15,443.00	\$25,097.00	\$14,640.00	\$228,482.00

ITEM 3 - ATTACHMENT 2 ELECTED MEMBERS' CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL AND CONFERENCE EXPENSES - 1 JANUARY 2025 TO 30 JUNE 2025

Elected Members' Professional Development and Conference Expenses Report 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025



	Mayor Anderson	Cr Armstrong	Cr Arnott	Cr Doohan	Cr Errington	Cr Francis	Cr Le Mottee	Cr Niland	Cr Watson	Cr Wells
AICD Course ¹					\$9,300		\$9,300		\$9,300	
AICD Membership ¹	\$659				\$859		\$859		\$859	\$659
AICD Event, Newcastle ¹	\$75									\$64
AIM – Applying Strategic Thinking Course ²	\$1,633									
ALGA National General Assembly ³	\$990				\$1,232	\$405	\$1,009	\$890		
ALGWA Conference ⁴	\$1,000									
Councillors' Strategic Workshops	\$1,331	\$1,138	\$1,075	\$1,328	\$1,075	\$1,075	\$574	\$511	\$1,137	\$1,075
IPWEA Local Roads Congress ⁵	\$500									
IPWEA Asset Management Course ⁵	\$1300									
LGNSW – Visitor & Economy Conference ⁶	\$1,026				\$1,000					
Women in Leadership event	\$217									
Total	\$8,731	\$1,138	\$25⁷	\$1,328	\$13,466	\$1,480	\$11,742	\$1,401	\$11,296	\$1,798

¹ – Australian Institute of Company Directors

² – Australian Institute of Management

³ – Australian Local Government Association

⁴ – Australian Local Government Women's Association

⁵ – Institute of Public Works and Engineering Australasia

⁶ – Local Government NSW

⁷ – A refund of \$1,050 was received from the Australian Institute of Company Directors

ITEM NO. 4

**FILE NO: 25/168547
EDRMS NO: PSC2009-00965**

DELEGATIONS REPORT

REPORT OF: TONY WICKHAM - GOVERNANCE SECTION MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of each occasion the Mayor and/or General Manager have exercised their delegations, other than under section 226 and 335 of the Local Government Act 1993, which are conferred on each role.

The report at **(ATTACHMENT 1)** provides details of the delegation exercised, such as the delegated authority, the date and the reason for exercising the delegation.

ATTACHMENTS

1) Delegations Report. [↓](#)

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

ITEM 4 - ATTACHMENT 1 DELEGATIONS REPORT.**MAYOR AND GENERAL MANAGER DELEGATION REPORT**

Date exercised	Delegations exercised	Purpose	Role exercising delegation	Reported to Council
30-Jun-25	Clause 178 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021	T113-2025 - Physical Record Management Services	Acting General Manager	22 July 2025
4-Jul-25	Code of Meeting Practice	Approval of Public Access application on Item 1 - DA16-2024-609-1 - 140 Soldiers Point Road, Salamander Bay	Mayor	22 July 2025
7-Jul-25	Code of Meeting Practice	Approval of Public Access application on Item 1 - DA16-2024-609-1 - 140 Soldiers Point Road, Salamander Bay	Mayor	22 July 2025

ITEM NO. 5

**FILE NO: 25/168093
EDRMS NO: PSC2017-00106**

COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

REPORT OF: STEVEN PEART – ACTING GENERAL MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to inform the Mayor and Councillors of the status of all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the Council in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Community Futures resolutions. [↓](#)
- 2) Corporate Strategy and Support resolutions. [↓](#)
- 3) Facilities and Infrastructure [↓](#)
- 4) General Manager's Office resolutions. [↓](#)

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.



Action Sheets Report	Division:	Community Futures	Date From:	25/02/2025
	Committee:		Date To:	08/07/2025
	Officer:		Printed:	Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 25/02/2025	Lamont, Brock	Tree Vandalism Policy	19/09/2025	26/02/2025	
1 021		Pearl, Steven				25/43931
09 Jul 2025 Draft reviewed policy completed following EAG consultation. A report back to Council is anticipated 9 September 2025.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 25/02/2025	Gardner, Janelle	Revised Communication and Engagement Strategy	26/08/2025	26/02/2025	
1 025		Pearl, Steven				25/43931
09 Jul 2025 Public Exhibition period has been completed. 5 submissions were received. These have been discussed at the CEAG meeting and changes are being made to the Strategy. This is scheduled to be reported to Council at the 26 August 2025 meeting.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Lamont, Brock	Draft Development Control Plan 2025	23/09/2025		
4 119		Pearl, Steven				25/148178
09 Jul 2025 The DCP has been placed on public exhibition from 16 June to 14 July 2025 and a report back to Council is tentatively scheduled for 23 September 2025.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Lamont, Brock	Draft Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan 2020 - Comprehensive Amendment	9/09/2025		
5 120		Pearl, Steven				25/148178
09 Jul 2025 The draft Port Stephens Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan was placed on exhibition on 13 June 2025. Exhibition closes 13 July 2025 and a report back to Council is tentatively scheduled for 9 September 2025.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Lamont, Brock	MATTER ARISING - Min No. 121 - Item 5 - Draft Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan 2020 - Comprehensive amendment.	28/11/2025		
121		Pearl, Steven				



Division:	Community Futures	Date From:	25/02/2025
Committee:		Date To:	08/07/2025
Officer:		Printed:	Wednesday, 9 July 2025
Action Sheets Report			

09 Jul 2025

Prepare a report proposing an amendment to the Plan to allow a 50% discount on infrastructure contributions for manufactured home developments that include at least 5% affordable housing. A two-way is to be held prior to finalising the Council report. Prepare a report exploring options for a new rating category for manufactured home estates, with rates scaled to the number of dwellings, to ensure fair revenue for service provision. A two-way is to be held on 18 November 2025 prior to finalising the Council report.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 24/06/2025	Gardner, Janelle	Policy Review: Sponsorship Policy	10/08/2025	25/06/2025	
3		Pearl, Steven				25/159107
140						

09 Jul 2025

The Sponsorship Policy is currently on public exhibition for a period of 28 days., Should no submissions be received, the Sponsorship policy will be adopted and the Beachside Holiday Parks Major Event Sponsorship and Promotions Policy will be revoked, without a further report to Council.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 8/07/2025	Lamont, Brock	Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly	16/07/2025	9/07/2025	
2		Pearl, Steven				25/178128

09 Jul 2025

It was resolved that Council writes to the Australian Local Government Association thanking them for another successful National General Assembly event and requesting that the format of the event be reviewed., A letter is being drafted to be sent by Wednesday 16 July 2025.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
	Ordinary Council 08/07/2025	Gardner, Janelle	URGENCY MOTION - Convene an urgent Community Engagement and Advisory Group meeting to review our roads communication plan with the aim of gaining greater community understanding of Council's approach to roads.	23/07/2025		
		Pearl, Steven				

10 Jul 2025

Council is working with Community Engagement and Advisory Group to schedule an urgent meeting to review the roads communication plan and work to gain a greater community understanding of Council's approach to roads.



Action Sheets Report	Division:	Community Futures	Date From:	25/02/2025
	Committee:		Date To:	08/07/2025
	Officer:		Printed: Wednesday, 9 July 2025	

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
	Ordinary Council 08/07/2025	Gardner, Janelle	URGENCY MOTION: Write to Member for Paterson re Federal Assistance Grants. Initiate a public petition to the NSW Parliament calling on the NSW Government to provide immediate financial support for Medowie Road and Lemon Tree Passage Road.	23/07/2025		
		Pearl, Steven				
10 Jul 2025 The General Manager to write to Meryl Swanson MP regarding Federal Assistance Grants. Council will initiate a public petition calling for NSW Parliament to provide financial support for Medowie Road and Lemon Tree Passage Road.						

ITEM 5 - ATTACHMENT 2 CORPORATE STRATEGY AND SUPPORT RESOLUTIONS.



Division:	Corporate Strategy and Support	Date From:	11/04/2023
Committee:		Date To:	08/07/2025
Officer:			
Action Sheets Report		Printed:	Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 11/04/2023	Pattison, Zoe	22 Homestead Street, Salamander Bay	30/12/2025	12/04/2023	
5		Pattison, Zoe				23/92450
088						
09 Jul 2025						
Council is investigating options for the rezoning of 22 Homestead Street, Salamander Bay, and the development of a Vegetation Management Plan, to provide the best opportunity to enable a successful long-term rehabilitation of the site.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 22/08/2023	Pattison, Zoe	Raymond Terrace Gateway Site Masterplan	31/12/2025		
1		Pattison, Zoe				23/214729
193						
09 Jul 2025						
Following a two way conversation with Councillors in November 2023, the options presented will be included in the context of the broader Raymond Terrace town centre improvements.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 24/06/2025	Pattison, Zoe	Policy Review: Acquisition and Divestment of Land Policy	30/07/2025	25/06/2025	
5		Pattison, Zoe				25/159107
09 Jul 2025						
The revised policy is on public exhibition from 25 June 2025 to 22 July 2025.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 24/06/2025	Pattison, Zoe	Policy Review: Property Investment and Development Policy	30/07/2025	25/06/2025	
6		Pattison, Zoe				25/159107
09 Jul 2025						
The revised policy is on public exhibition from 25 June 2025 to 22 July 2025.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 24/06/2025	Pattison, Zoe	112 Adelaide Street and 18A Sturgeon Street, Raymond Terrace	31/12/2025	25/06/2025	
1		Pattison, Zoe				25/159107
09 Jul 2025						
It was resolved that Council progresses with Option 2 outlined in the confidential business paper.						

ITEM 5 - ATTACHMENT 3 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Action Sheets Report	Division:	Facilities and Infrastructure	Date From:	27/08/2013
	Committee:		Date To:	
	Officer:		Printed:	Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Ordinary Council 27/08/2013 243		Maretich, John Kable, Gregory	Campvale Drain	31/12/2025		
09 Jul 2025 Awaiting final execution of easement documentation for 2 properties. All other properties (with exception of these 2) have been finalised.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 11/04/2023 2 085	Ordinary Council	Maretich, John Kable, Gregory	Naming Recreation Precinct at Medowie after Geoff Dingle	31/12/2025	12/04/2023	23/92450
09 Jul 2025 Once the reserve has been subdivided as per the Medowie Place Plan, an application will be submitted to the Geographical Naming Board to name the recreation precinct after Geoff Dingle.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 28/11/2023 1	Ordinary Council	Maretich, John Kable, Gregory	Sale of closed roads in Raymond Terrace	31/12/2025	29/11/2023	23/324875
09 Jul 2025 1 road sold and in settlement stage. 1 road moved to closed road reserve. An Expression of Interest (EOI) for the remaining road is near completion.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 28/05/2024 1	Ordinary Council	Maretich, John Kable, Gregory	Bus Stop Infrastructure Plan	31/10/2025	29/05/2024	24/131056
09 Jul 2025 With the recent successful application of the 2024-2025 Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme (CPTIGS), Council Engineers will continue development of the Bus Shelter Infrastructure Plan. Future CPTIGS funding is expected to aid in the plan's completion within the next financial year.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report 23/07/2024 6	Ordinary Council	Maretich, John Kable, Gregory	Raymond Terrace Boat Ramp	31/12/2025	24/07/2024	24/189773
09 Jul 2025 A two way conversation and a report will be provided to Council once funding opportunities are available that will help determine the scope of works.						



Action Sheets Report	Division:	Facilities and Infrastructure	Date From:	27/08/2013
	Committee:		Date To:	
	Officer:		Printed:	Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 12/11/2024	Donaldson, Cameron	Renewal of Lease - 49 William Street, Raymond Terrace	31/07/2025	13/11/2024	
1		Kable, Gregory				24/307858
128						
09 Jul 2025						
Lease negotiations are ongoing.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/12/2024	Maretich, John	Bus Shelters in Port Stephens	31/10/2025	11/12/2024	
1		Kable, Gregory				24/333356
09 Jul 2025						
Bus Shelter Policy has been endorsed and staff will review further actions for EOI.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Kable, Gregory	Port Stephens Roads Acceleration Program Expanded Funding Strategy	31/12/2026	11/06/2025	
4		Kable, Gregory				25/148178
115						
09 Jul 2025						
A strategy for funding of the Roads Acceleration Program will be pursued over the next 18 months.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Donaldson, Cameron	Policy Review - Financial Assistance for the Disposal of Waste in Port Stephens Policy	31/08/2025		
9		Kable, Gregory				25/148178
09 Jul 2025						
The policy has been placed on public exhibition for 28 days.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Maretich, John	Trial of Tomaree Shuttle Bus	31/10/2025		
1		Kable, Gregory				25/148178
130						
09 Jul 2025						
Staff will prepare a report and review shuttle bus service trial as per Council resolution.						

ITEM 5 - ATTACHMENT 3 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Action Sheets Report	Division:	Facilities and Infrastructure	Date From:	27/08/2013
	Committee:		Date To:	
	Officer:		Printed:	Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Maretich, John	Tomaree Sports Complex Masterplan	31/10/2025	11/06/2025	
2		Kable, Gregory				25/148178
132						
09 Jul 2025						
Staff shall review and consider means to expedite request.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Maretich, John	MATTER ARISING - Min No. 131 - NOM 1 - Trial of Tomaree Shuttle Bus	31/10/2025		
131		Kable, Gregory				
09 Jul 2025						
Staff to prepare a report as per Council resolution.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 24/06/2025	Maretich, John	Policy Review - Provision and Management of Cemeteries	31/10/2025	25/06/2025	
7		Kable, Gregory				25/159107
09 Jul 2025						
This policy has been placed on public exhibition for 28 days with a report to be prepared for Council at the completion of the public exhibition period.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 24/06/2025	Maretich, John	Medowie Drainage	31/03/2026	25/06/2025	
1		Kable, Gregory				25/159107
09 Jul 2025						
Council staff have commenced discussion with Hunter Water Corporation to address the items within this NOM.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 24/06/2025	Maretich, John	Drainage on Sports Fields	31/12/2025	25/06/2025	
2		Kable, Gregory				25/159107
09 Jul 2025						
Council staff will report back to Council on all sporting fields within the LGA that require drainage upgrades and investigate a funding strategy to commence drainage upgrades on identified sporting fields.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 24/06/2025	Donaldson, Cameron	Proposed Sale or Lease of 36a Ferodale Road, Medowie	31/10/2025	25/06/2025	
2		Kable, Gregory				25/159107
09 Jul 2025						
Following the two way conversation to be held on 15 July 2025, a report will be prepared with a decision to be made at a future Council meeting.						

ITEM 5 - ATTACHMENT 3 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Action Sheets Report	Division:	Facilities and Infrastructure	Date From:	27/08/2013
	Committee:		Date To:	
	Officer:		Printed: Wednesday, 9 July 2025	

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 8/07/2025	Maretich, John	Footy Finals	31/07/2025	9/07/2025	
1		Kable, Gregory				25/178128
09 Jul 2025						
Staff will prepare letters for the West Ward Sports Council and Destination Port Stephens.						



Action Sheets Report	Division:	General Manager's Office	Date From:	10/06/2025
	Committee:		Date To:	08/07/2025
	Officer:		Printed: Wednesday, 9 July 2025	

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Wickham, Tony	Revised Code of Meeting Practice	25/07/2025		
10		Crosdale, Timothy				25/148178
126						
09 Jul 2025						
On public exhibition until 25 July 2025.						

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Subject	Est. Compl.	Emailed	Completed
Report	Ordinary Council 10/06/2025	Wickham, Tony	Code of Conduct	11/07/2025		
11		Crosdale, Timothy				25/148178
127						
09 Jul 2025						
On public exhibition until 11 July 2025.						

NOTICES OF MOTION

NOTICE OF MOTION

ITEM NO. 1

FILE NO: 25/176959

EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03148

REQUEST TO REVOKE REMAINING DECLARED OFFSHORE WIND ZONE AND RESTORE TO COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

COUNCILLOR: MARK WATSON

THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Notes Council's position from the Council meetings held on 10 and 24 October 2023 and 22 October 2024.
- 2) Notes that in recent media statements, the Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy, has ruled out any further projects being added to the declared Hunter offshore wind zone, reinforcing that only one licence is to be issued.
- 3) Notes there is increasing local demand for withdrawing the remaining area beyond the single licence area.
- 4) Continues to oppose the offshore wind project and, where possible, limit any licenced area.
- 5) Requests the General Manager write to the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, requesting that:
 - a) The remaining portion of the declared Hunter offshore wind zone (outside of the area covered by the first licence) be revoked;
 - b) The area be returned to community and environment, recognising it's ecological, cultural, and economic significance.
- 6) Requests the General Manager write to:
 - a) The Hon. Kate Washington MP, State Member for Port Stephens; and
 - b) Ms Meryl Swanson MP, Federal Member for Paterson, seeking their support and advocacy for Port Stephens on this matter, and requesting they convey the community's position to the Minister.
- 7) Requests a response from the Hon. Chris Bowen MP's office and that it be reported back to Council at the earliest opportunity and displayed on Port Stephens Council website.

**BACKGROUND REPORT OF: BROCK LAMONT – ACTING DIRECTOR
COMMUNITY FUTURES****BACKGROUND**

Port Stephens Council has an endorsed position on the Declared Offshore Wind Zone from the meetings held on 10 and 24 October 2023 and 22 October 2024 **(ATTACHMENT 1)**.

As reported on 22 October 2024, Council has actively contributed to consultation activities and advocated community concerns to the Federal Government during consultation activities for offshore wind projects. To date, an Environmental Impact Statement associated with an offshore wind proposal has not been received.

Should the Notice of Motion be supported, it would not alter the endorsed position of Council.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Ordinary Council Minutes - 22 October 2024 – Minute No. 206. [↓](#)

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024

ITEM NO. 10

FILE NO: 24/80232
EDRMS NO: PSC2021-04195**WIND FARM OFF PORT STEPHENS**REPORT OF: BROCK LAMONT - STRATEGY & ENVIRONMENT SECTION
MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: COMMUNITY FUTURES**RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:**

- 1) Consider the matter in accordance with the previous resolution and reaffirm Council's position on the matter.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 22 OCTOBER 2024
MOTION**

206	Councillor Giacomo Arnott Mayor Leah Anderson It was resolved that Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Notes the decision of Council from 10 and 24 October 2023.2) Agrees to continue the position from the 10 October 2023 motion as Council's ongoing position, which is to oppose the offshore wind project.
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Cr Wells introduced the inclusion of '24 October 2023' into the motion. The mover and seconder accepted the amendment.

Those for the Motion: Crs Leah Anderson, Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Peter Francis and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Crs Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland and Mark Watson.

The motion was carried on the casting vote of the Mayor.

Cr Doohan gave notice of the following foreshadowed motion:

That Council:

- 1) Notes that the community of Port Stephens vehemently opposes any further progress of exploratory works investigating the possibility of a Wind Turbine Zone off the coast of our beautiful Port Stephens.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024

- 2) Notes that during the recent Local Government Elections in Port Stephens, 100% of successful candidates aligned themselves to take a unanimous approach in resisting any support for the proposed Wind Turbine Zone off the coast of Port Stephens.
- 3) The General Manager re-engages with our local State and Federal Members to reiterate Councils collective stance refuting any further investigative efforts on the aforementioned Wind Turbine Zone, with the intention of eliminating the project in its entirety.
- 4) Reports back to the elected body of any progress and/or outcomes at the earliest opportunity.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to respond to a resolution of the previous Council.

Council resolved at its meeting held on 10 October 2023 (Minute No. 230) **(ATTACHMENT 1)**, that the General Manager provide a report to Council seeking the Council's opinion on whether to continue opposing the offshore wind farm, or whether to support it, at the following stages:

- a. When the Environmental Impact Statement has been made available
- b. At the first meeting at the start of the new term of Council in 2024 to reaffirm Council's position.

Council resolved a further Notice of Motion at the 24 October 2023 Council meeting in relation to the Offshore Wind Power Zone **(ATTACHMENT 2)**.

Following these resolutions, Council has actively contributed to consultation activities and advocated community concerns during the following Federal Government consultation activities for offshore wind projects:

- Council met with the Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) during the public consultation period for the declaration of offshore wind area to raise the community concerns and ensure that Council had all available information to make a valuable submission.
- Council provided a submission to DCCEEW regarding the declaration of the offshore wind area, encouraging further consultation to be undertaken with the community and highlighting potential impacts on visual amenity, cultural heritage, marine and coastal environments and local industry and business.
- Council provided a submission to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) regarding the draft Energy Policy Guidelines, noting community concerns and requesting guidance regarding how the State Government will regulate offshore wind and related transmission infrastructure, requesting that this be included in the guidelines.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024

- Council wrote to and a delegation met with the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy, to highlight community concerns.
- Council wrote to and a delegation met with Meryl Swanson MP, Federal Member for Paterson, to highlight community concerns.
- Council wrote to the Hon. Kate Washington MP, State Member for Port Stephens, to highlight community concerns.
- Council included an action (DI001) within the Port Stephens Coastal Management Program (CMP) to work collaboratively and share information with key stakeholders about any major projects proposed in the open coastal waters, to ensure compliance with the vision and objectives of the Coastal Management Program and the objects of the Coastal Management Act.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction	Delivery Program 2022-2026
Governance	Provide and implement strategic direction and governance of Council.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	No		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

LEGAL, POLICY AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that the outstanding resolution of Council is not dealt with as the resolution was made.	Low	Deal with the item to reach resolution.	Yes

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024

There is a risk that Council does not have an endorsed position relating to offshore wind projects.	Medium	Deal with the item to reach resolution.	Yes
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SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Includes Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

The report is in response to a previous resolution of Council seeking to reaffirm Council's position on the matter. The sustainability implications of the matter will vary depending upon the position resolved by Council.

CONSULTATION

Further consultation on the matter is not required as the report seeks only to deal with an outstanding resolution of the former Council.

OPTIONS

- 1) Accept the recommendation.
- 2) Amend the recommendation.
- 3) Reject the recommendation.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Ordinary Council Minutes 10 October 2023 - Minute No. 230.
- 2) Notice of Motion - 24 October 2023 - Offshore Wind Power Zone.

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024

ITEM 10 - ATTACHMENT 1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES 10 OCTOBER 2023 - MINUTE NO. 230.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 OCTOBER 2023

Those for the Motion: Mayor Ryan Palmer, Crs Leah Anderson, Giacomo Arnott, Matthew Bailey, Peter Francis, Steve Tucker and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

URGENT MOTION 1

Cr Giacomo Arnott moved to introduce a matter of urgent business under clause 9.3 of the Code of Meeting Practice.

The motion was granted by Mayor Palmer.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 10 OCTOBER 2023
MOTION**

230	Councillor Giacomo Arnott Councillor Leah Anderson
	<p>It was resolved that Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Notes the ongoing consultative process the Federal Government is undertaking with the community and other stakeholders into whether an offshore wind farm industry should be established off the coast of Port Stephens and Newcastle.2) Notes that the Federal Government Minister for Energy Chris Bowen states that an offshore wind farm in this location has the potential to create 3,000 construction jobs and 1,500 ongoing jobs, as well as 5gigawatts of electricity for the East Coast Energy grid.3) Notes that there are 1,454 published responses to the proposal on the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water consultation hub web page.4) Notes that the Federal Government Minister for Energy Chris Bowen, the Federal Member for Paterson Meryl Swanson, and several MPs from the opposition and alternative parties have met with residents of Port Stephens to discuss this project.5) Notes that the Federal Government will still engage in 3 consultation phases before any works actually start, and that it is unlikely that any works would begin for several years from now due to the enormous amount of reports and consultation that is required to be undertaken.6) Notes the concerns raised by the community about the project, including its potential impact on the fishing industry in Port Stephens, potential impact on the environment including marine life, potential noise pollution, potential impact on the tourism industry, and what such an industry would look like when viewed from Port Stephens.7) Notes that Local Government, in particular Port Stephens Council, has had nothing to do with the proposal so far, and has no role to

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024

ITEM 10 - ATTACHMENT 1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES 10 OCTOBER 2023 - MINUTE NO. 230.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 OCTOBER 2023

	play in the consideration, approval or consultation of any offshore wind farm now or into the future.
8)	Agrees that until environmental impact statements and other scientific evidence is made available to the community in a full, open and transparent manner, it is opposed to the construction of any wind farm off the coast of Port Stephens.
9)	Requests the General Manager write a letter to the Federal Minister for Energy Chris Bowen and Federal Member for Paterson Meryl Swanson, noting Council's position, and requesting their attendance at a Council briefing to allow Councillors to better understand the proposal and to pass on the concerns of the community.
10)	Requests the General Manager provide a report to Council at each stage of the consultative process, outlining any recent progress on the matter.
11)	Requests the General Manager provide a report to Council seeking the Council's opinion on whether to continue opposing the offshore wind farm, or whether to support it, at the following stages:
a.	When the Environmental Impact Statement has been made available, and
b.	At the first meeting at the start of the new term of Council in 2024 to reaffirm Council's position.

Councillor Matthew Bailey left the meeting at 5:44pm.

Those for the Motion: Mayor Ryan Palmer, Crs Leah Anderson, Giacomo Amott, Peter Francis, Steve Tucker and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

Councillor Matthew Bailey returned to the meeting at 5:46pm.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024**ITEM 10 - ATTACHMENT 2 NOTICE OF MOTION - 24 OCTOBER 2023 -
OFFSHORE WIND POWER ZONE.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 24 OCTOBER 2023****NOTICE OF MOTION****ITEM NO. 1****FILE NO: 23/261922****EDRMS NO: PSC2021-04195****PORT STEPHENS OFFSHORE WIND POWER ZONE****COUNCILLOR: CHRIS DOOHAN****THAT COUNCIL:**

- 1) Acknowledges the Circa 2,000 people that rallied against a Port Stephens Offshore Wind Power Zone on Saturday 7 October 2023.
- 2) Opposes the issuing of any exploration licences for the proposed offshore wind power zones.
- 3) Supports local efforts by community groups seeking to stop the offshore wind power zones.
- 4) Writes to the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy seeking a moratorium on any currently unapproved offshore wind power zones.
- 5) Writes to Ms Meryl Swanson MP, Member for Paterson and the Hon. Kate Washington MP, Member for Port Stephens to secure their support for the opposition to the offshore wind power zone and ask for a response confirming or rejecting support by 3 November 2023 and, if rejecting, state reasons why.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 24 OCTOBER 2023
MOTION**

249	Councillor Chris Doohan Councillor Glen Dunkley It was resolved that Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Acknowledges the Circa 2,000 people that rallied against a Port Stephens Offshore Wind Power Zone on Saturday 7 October 2023.2) Opposes the issuing of any exploration licences for the proposed offshore wind power zones.3) Supports local efforts by community groups seeking to stop the offshore wind power zones.4) Writes to the Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy seeking a moratorium on any currently unapproved offshore wind power zones.5) Writes to Ms Meryl Swanson MP, Member for Paterson and the Hon. Kate Washington MP, Member for Port Stephens to secure their support for the opposition to the offshore wind power zone and ask for a response confirming or rejecting support by 3 November 2023 and, if rejecting, state reasons why.
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MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2024**ITEM 10 - ATTACHMENT 2 NOTICE OF MOTION - 24 OCTOBER 2023 -
OFFSHORE WIND POWER ZONE.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 24 OCTOBER 2023**

- | | |
|--|--|
| | 6) Organise a delegation from Council, including the Mayor and other councillors such to their availability, to visit Parliament House to meet with the Hon. Chris Bowen MP and relevant departmental officers about the Offshore Wind Power proposal. |
|--|--|

The inclusion of point 6 in the motion was accepted by the mover and seconder.

Those for the Motion: Mayor Ryan Palmer, Crs Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Glen Dunkley, Peter Kafer and Steve Tucker.

Those against the Motion: Crs Peter Francis and Jason Wells.

The motion was carried.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 24 OCTOBER 2023
AMENDMENT**

	Councillor Giacomo Arnott Councillor Peter Francis
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That Council:

- | | |
|--|--|
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Re-affirms its support for the 10 October 2023 resolution of Council relating to the offshore wind zone matter, which opposes the wind farm proposal, with a review of that position when the environmental studies are received.2) Organise a delegation from Council, including the Mayor and other councillors subject to their availability, to visit Parliament House to meet with the Hon. Chris Bowen MP and relevant departmental officers about the Offshore Wind Power proposal. |
|--|--|

Cr Peter Kafer foreshadowed amendment.

"Organise a delegation from Council, including the Mayor and other councillors to confirm their availability, to visit Parliament House to meet with the Hon. Chris Bowen MP and relevant departmental officers about the Offshore Wind Power proposal."

The inclusion of point 2 in the amendment was accepted by the mover and seconder.

Those for the amendment: Crs Giacomo Arnott, Peter Francis, Peter Kafer and Jason Wells.

Those against the amendment: Mayor Ryan Palmer, Crs Chris Doohan, Glen Dunkley and Steve Tucker.

The amendment was lost on the casting vote of the Mayor.

NOTICE OF MOTION

ITEM NO. 2

FILE NO: 25/178522

EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03148

**REVIEW AND STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR DOG RECREATION AREAS IN
PORT STEPHENS**

COUNCILLOR: JASON WELLS

THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Undertakes a review of existing dog parks and off-leash areas across the Port Stephens LGA to:
 - a) Assess current condition, usage, and accessibility.
 - b) Identify and prioritise opportunities for improvements or up
 - c) Determine suitable locations for the development of new dog parks, especially in areas of high demand or population growth.
- 2) Engages with the community, including local dog owners and stakeholder groups, to gather input on desired features, locations, and safety concerns relating to dog recreation areas.
- 3) Specifically identify Dog Recreation Areas within Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP), to ensure that there is a visible path for long-term planning, funding, and maintenance.
- 4) Receives a report detailing the findings of the review, community feedback, and recommendations for future planning, improvements, and potential funding sources.

**BACKGROUND REPORT OF: ANDREW BEHRENS – ACTING ASSETS SECTION
MANAGER**

BACKGROUND

Port Stephens Council currently provides 17 designated dog parks of differing experiences including beaches, fenced reserves and unimproved open space. A review of dog parks in Port Stephens was undertaken in 2014 with subsequent localised investigations undertaken for Soldiers Point (2018), Raymond Terrace (2020) and Boat Harbour, Fisherman's Bay and Anna Bay (2021).

Over 40% of Australian households own at least 1 dog, making them the most popular type of pets. National surveys have found that an increasing number of people consider their dogs to be part of the family as well as a reason to socialise

and exercise. The proven physical and mental health benefits of owning a dog will continue to put upward pressure on dog ownership and the need for public spaces to accommodate dogs.

Noting that a comprehensive review has not been undertaken for Port Stephens in over 10 years, an updated review of existing dog parks and off-leash areas is recommended to ensure the needs of dog owners living in, and visiting, Port Stephens are addressed sustainably. The review will include engagement with the community and identify any opportunities to improve the long term-planning, funding and maintenance of dog recreation areas.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

NOTICE OF MOTION**ITEM NO. 3****FILE NO: 25/178915****EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03148****25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SYDNEY OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY IN PORT STEPHENS****COUNCILLOR: NATHAN ERRINGTON**

THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Notes that 27 August 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of the Sydney Olympic Torch Relay passing through Port Stephens.
 - 2) Requests the General Manager to review options for Port Stephens Council and our community to recognise this important event.
 - 3) Investigates whether Council still holds the Sydney Olympic Flag and, if so, arranges for it to be flown on the day in recognition of the anniversary.
-

BACKGROUND REPORT OF: JANELLE GARDNER – COMMUNICATIONS SECTION MANAGER**BACKGROUND**

The Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay passed through Port Stephens on 27 August 2000 creating a moment of pride and celebration for the community.

The torch was carried through Raymond Terrace by Fingal Bay Olympian, Hugh Lambie, as part of the nationwide lead up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

To mark the 25th anniversary of this special occasion, Council staff are currently exploring opportunities to commemorate this event including flag raising.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 JULY 2025

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Other	No		

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

RESCISSION MOTIONS

NOTICE OF RESCISSION

ITEM NO. 1

FILE NO: 25/178940

EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03150

EMISSION REDUCTION ACTION PLAN - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

COUNCILLORS: GIACOMO ARNOTT, PETER FRANCIS & ROSALYN
ARMSTRONG

THAT COUNCIL:

Rescind its decision of 8 July 2025 on Item No. 2 Emission Reduction Action Plan – Annual Progress Report, Minute No. 162.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Ordinary Council Minutes - 8 July 2025 - Minute No. 162. [↓](#)

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025**ITEM NO. 2****FILE NO: 25/76338
EDRMS NO: 79-2022-3-1****EMISSION REDUCTION ACTION PLAN - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

REPORT OF: BROCK LAMONT - STRATEGY & ENVIRONMENT SECTION
MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: COMMUNITY FUTURES

RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Amend Port Stephens Council's climate action target from 'Carbon Neutral by 2025' to Net Zero by 2050, with an interim target of 50% emissions reduction by 2030, in alignment with the State and Federal Government targets.
- 2) Commits to the continued rollout of Council's Emissions Reduction Action Plan (**ATTACHMENT 1**).
- 3) Requests the General Manager provide 6 monthly reporting to Council on the progress of Council's Emissions Reduction Action Plan.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 8 JULY 2025
MOTION**

	Mayor Leah Anderson Councillor Giacomo Arnott That Item 2 be deferred to allow for a Two way conversation to occur.
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Cr Mark Watson foreshadowed a motion should the motion above be lost.

Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott and Peter Francis.

Those against the Motion: Crs Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland and Mark Watson.

The motion was lost.

**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES - 8 JULY 2025 -
MINUTE NO. 162.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025****ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 8 JULY 2025
FORESHADOWED MOTION**

162	Councillor Mark Watson Councillor Ben Niland It was resolved that Council: 1) Note the Report. 2) Suspend any further expenditure on external consultants to track emissions. 3) Suspend Carbon Neutral or Net Zero targets for a period of at least 5 years and internally revise the Emission Reduction Action Plan roll out to not contain these targets. 4) Reallocate any scheduled financial resources for carbon neutral/ net zero to be reallocated on a 50/50 ratio into local environment activities and roads.
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Those for the Motion: Crs Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland and Mark Watson.

Those against the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott and Peter Francis.

The motion was carried.

Note: the motion above was put after Council resolved to extend the meeting.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 8 JULY 2025
MOTION**

163	Councillor Chris Doohan Councillor Peter Francis It was resolved that Council extend the meeting to 9:30pm.
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Cr Giacomo Arnott foreshadowed a motion that this item be placed last on the agenda and conclude the meeting.

Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland and Mark Watson

Those against the Motion: Cr Giacomo Arnott.

The motion was carried.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025**BACKGROUND**

This report provides an update on the progress of the Emissions Reduction Action Plan (ERAP) and reviews Council's climate action target of Carbon Neutrality by 2025. The report recommends a revised target of Net Zero by 2050, with an interim target of 50% emissions reduction by 2030. Transitioning Council's commitment to net zero reflects industry best practice and aligns with the Australian Government's commitments under the Paris Agreement.

In October 2021, Port Stephens Council demonstrated leadership in sustainability through its endorsement of a 'Carbon Neutral by 2025' target (**ATTACHMENT 2**). The goal focused on reducing and offsetting Council's operational emissions. To realise this goal, an Emissions Reduction Action Plan (ERAP) was developed (**ATTACHMENT 1**) and the ERAP continues to be implemented across the organisation as resourcing permits.

TRANSITION TO NET ZERO

Since 2021, global climate thinking has evolved, with a focus on sustained emissions reductions. As such, many governments and Councils are adopting net zero by 2050 targets, with strong interim targets for 2030 to ensure timely progress.

Net zero aims to reduce all operational emissions to zero, whilst carbon neutrality focuses on offsetting remaining emissions on an annual basis. The cost of offsetting residual emissions is significant (estimated at \$500,000 to be paid annually for Council). This methodology is now generally considered to have been superseded by net zero, which encourages genuine operational emissions reductions over time.

The recommended target of Net Zero by 2050 with an interim target of 50% by 2030 aligns with the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and National and State Goals. The IPCC has stated that to limit warming, global emissions must fall by around 50% by 2030 and reach Net Zero by 2050. Australia and NSW have committed to this goal. Aligning local goals ensures consistency and may unlock grant funding opportunities.

ERAP PROGRESS REPORT

Council continues to progress the actions and initiatives detailed within the ERAP with a detailed update on Council's progress on actions taken to reduce Council's carbon emissions is provided in (**ATTACHMENT 3**). The actions within the ERAP range from one-off capital investment in nature (such as the upgrade of heat pumps at Council's pools), to ongoing operational systems changes such as adjustments to Council's procurement processes and emissions data collection systems. Port Stephens Council's carbon footprint has been reduced by 40% between the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 financial years. The ERAP recommends recalculating Council's carbon footprint at the completion of the short term actions (end of 2026). This will assist in evaluating the ERAP's effectiveness to date and identifying new areas of opportunity to further reduce emissions.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025**DATA REPORTING**

Council is working to improve processes around emissions data capture and reporting. Council's carbon footprint includes data from a wide range of emission sources including petrol, diesel, gas, waste, electricity and others. Data availability and quality present significant issues. In particular, indirect (Scope 3) emissions - those resulting from contracted services, procurement, and other external sources - are difficult to quantify due to limited reporting from suppliers and the absence of standardised methodologies across the sector.

Additionally, the ongoing evolution of emissions reporting frameworks creates challenges for maintaining consistency over time. Changes in definitions, calculation methods, and reporting requirements can impact the comparability of emissions data year-on-year and complicate long-term performance tracking.

To address these challenges, Council is currently exploring opportunities relating to data collection, data analysis and the implementation of emissions tracking software solutions.

SIX MONTHLY REPORTING

The elected Council has previously endorsed a quarterly progress reporting frequency to Council via the business paper (**ATTACHMENT 4**). Councillors have noted that the information provided through these quarterly reports is not providing sufficient detail or overview of Council's progress.

To address this, an adjustment to the endorsed quarterly progress reporting schedule is proposed. Six monthly reporting would provide a greater opportunity to show more meaningful progress, considering that the ERAP actions are carried out over a longer-term timeframe. Additionally, this approach would align with the six monthly and annual Integrated Planning & Reporting cycles.

This would be supported by regular updates on projects and initiatives made on Council's website and accessible to the wider community. Councillors will also be notified of significant projects or initiatives implemented across the organisation via the PS Newsletter.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction	Delivery Program 2025-2029
Environmental sustainability	Develop and deliver a program for Council leading the way to a sustainable and climate positive future.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Based on Council's current carbon footprint, an estimated cost of \$500,000 would be required annually to achieve carbon neutrality. There is no funding source currently identified for this expected cost.

Through a transition to net zero, offsetting of emissions would not be required by Council until 2050. This would allow sufficient time for Council to implement the actions and initiatives identified within the ERAP. Over this period, Council's carbon footprint will be reduced and any residual annual costs would be minimised if not removed.

The implementation of ERAP actions is currently funded through the use of Council's Sustainability Reserve, available grants and adjustments made to annual budgets including waste, fleet and capital works.

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	No		
Reserve Funds	Yes		Sustainability Reserve
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	Yes		
Other	No		

LEGAL, POLICY AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

There is currently no legal requirement for Council to achieve carbon neutrality or net zero status. The Federal Government has committed Australia to a goal of net zero by 2050 through the Paris Agreement. The NSW State Government has also committed to the goal of net zero by 2050.

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that Council will not be able to financially support both the purchase of carbon offsets and the rollout of sustainability projects under a carbon neutrality commitment.	Medium	Accept the recommendations.	Yes

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

There is a reputational risk that Council will not achieve its commitment to carbon neutrality of Council's operational emissions by 2025 should a funding source not be identified or a net zero target is not set.	Medium	Accept the recommendations.	Yes
There is a reputational risk to Council if it was to transition from carbon neutrality to net zero.	Low	Council has undertaken consultation with and received support from Council's Environmental Advisory Group.	Yes

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Includes Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

Council's commitment to achieving carbon neutrality for Council operations by 2025 is an ambitious target that requires ongoing funding to pay for carbon offsets with no clear benefit to the organisation. Transitioning to net zero targets provides a sustainable and incremental approach to reduce Council's operational emissions over-time.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council's Communication and Engagement Strategy uses the IAP2 Framework to identify the level of engagement undertaken. An explanation for each level is shown below.

INFORM	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
CONSULT	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
INVOLVE	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
COLLABORATE	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
EMPOWER	To place final decision-making and/or developed budgets in the hands of the public.
	No external communications and engagement are required for this report.

**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES - 8 JULY 2025 -
MINUTE NO. 162.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025**

The following communication and engagement applies to this report.

External communications and engagement

Council has continued to provide project updates to the community through its social media and website content, and quarterly Council Information Papers. Council has also actively engaged with the Environmental Advisory Group.

INFORM	Sustainability projects and initiatives are promoted through social media, Council's website and quarterly Council Information Papers.
INVOLVE	Council's Environmental Advisory Group has provided advice and support with regards to the proposed transition to a net zero target.

Internal communications and engagement

Consultation with key stakeholders has been undertaken by the Strategy and Environment Section with:

- Financial Services Section
- Holiday Parks Section
- Organisation Support Section
- Assets Section
- Capital Works Section
- Community Services Section
- Public Domain and Services Section
- Communications and Customer Experience Section

OPTIONS

- 1) Accept the recommendations.
- 2) Amend the recommendations.
- 3) Reject the recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Final Emission Reduction Action Plan.
- 2) Minute No. 275, 12 October 2021.
- 3) 2025 ERAP Progress Report.
- 4) Minute No. 092, 11 April 2023.

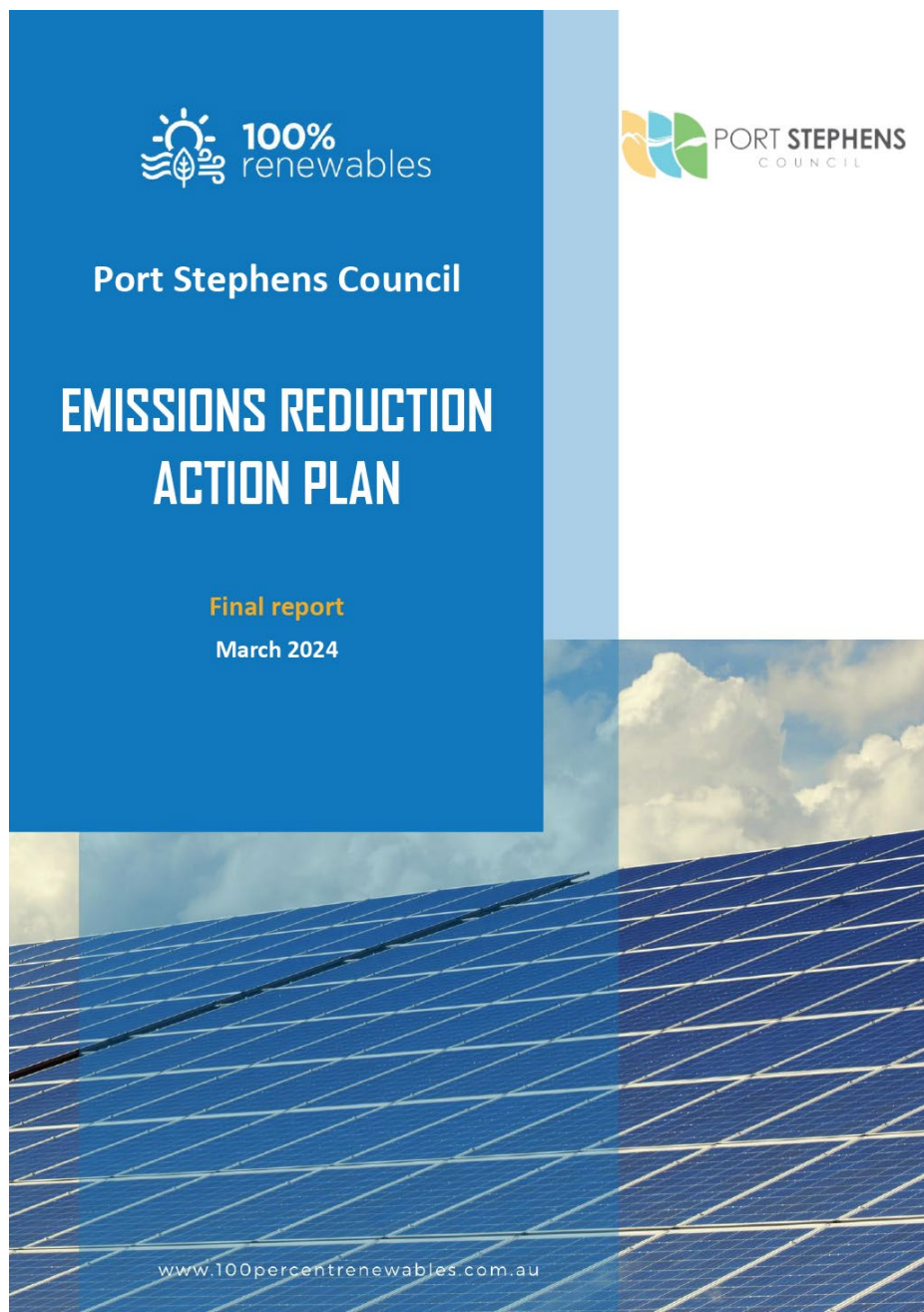
COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.



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FINAL EMISSION REDUCTION ACTION PLAN.



Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

Executive Summary

Port Stephens Council (Council) committed to the development of a Carbon Neutral Action Plan (CNAP) which outlines a strategy to achieve carbon neutrality for Council operations by 2025.

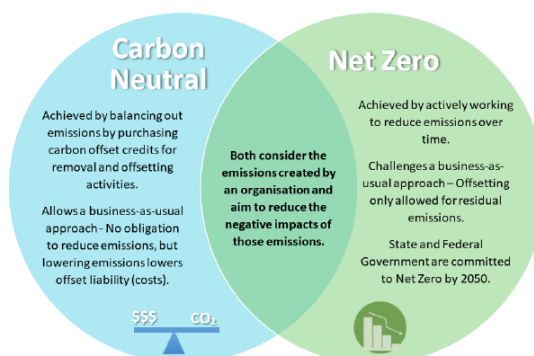
During the development of the Plan a decision was taken to rename the document to Port Stephens Emissions Reduction Action Plan (ERAP), to accommodate a potential expansion of strategic objectives beyond carbon neutrality to include net zero principles and targets, in line with State and Federal Government policy positions.

The ERAP outlines the short, medium and long term actions to reduce or remove Greenhouse Gas Emissions. A carbon footprint baseline is included in the ERAP to measure the success of the actions taken.

Background

Since Council's commitment in October 2021 to carbon neutrality for its operations by 2025, the Australian and NSW State Governments have legislated for a target of Net Zero emissions by 2050. In alignment with these legislative changes, and in addition to the shorter-term carbon neutrality actions, it is recommended Council also consider adopting longer-term Net Zero targets and associated emission reductions strategies.

Both Net Zero and carbon neutrality aim to achieve a balance between the amount of greenhouse gases emitted and the amount removed from the atmosphere, however, there is a subtle difference in approach. Carbon neutrality can be achieved immediately by purchasing carbon offset credits to balance an organisation's emissions with carbon removal or offsetting activities. Net Zero is achieved through a long term commitment to reducing emissions to the smallest amount possible, before purchasing offsets for any residual emissions that cannot be reduced. Carbon neutrality and Net Zero are objectives which can be pursued concurrently. Organisations can become carbon neutral in the short term while working towards a longer-term Net Zero target.



SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CARBON NEUTRAL AND NET ZERO PATHWAYS.

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The research undertaken for this ERAP addresses Council's needs in regards to better understanding the options, costs and benefits associated with both pathways, identifies key strategic objectives and provides a comprehensive exploration of emission reduction opportunities across all areas of the organisation.

Port Stephens Council Carbon Footprint

Council's carbon footprint for the 2022 financial year has been calculated to understand its potential offset obligations for the purposes of achieving carbon neutrality by 2025 and can be used as a baseline to measure the success of any future emission reduction actions. A total of 2,977 tonnes (scope 1 and 2) and 4,609 tonnes (scope 3) of carbon-dioxide equivalent was emitted by Council during the 2022 financial year, a 40% reduction on the previous financial year FIGURE 2.

While not mandatory for carbon neutrality, emissions and actions relating to scope 3 were also calculated for transparency and to provide Council with the option to transition to a Net Zero Strategy in line with the State and Federal Government commitments.

A full inventory of Council's emissions can be found in TABLE 10 and TABLE 11 and detailed breakdowns of emission sources and scopes can be found in SECTION 2. During FY 2022, the main contributors to Council's Scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint includes electricity and fleet fuel.

Emissions Reduction Strategy

This ERAP translates measures outlined in the emissions reduction strategy provided in SECTION 4 to identify a total of 101 actions to reduce Council's emissions, which are detailed in SECTION 5. The recommended actions have been categorised into short (2024-2026), medium (2027-2030) and long-term (2030+) timelines.

Regarding emission reduction targets, Council has committed to achieving carbon neutrality for its operations by 2025.

Based on stakeholder engagement, assessment of emission reduction opportunities, and the potential for aligning with current legislation, it is recommended that Council consider the following additional renewable energy and emissions reduction targets as part of a long-term commitment to achieving Net Zero:

- **Renew PPA contract of purchasing 100% renewable electricity beyond 2026:**
It is recommended that Council extends its PPA contract for its sites past 2026, to continually achieve substantial emissions reductions from purchased electricity.
- **Net Zero for Scope 1, 2 and 3 emission sources by FY 2050:**
It is recommended that Council considers committing to aligning with the NSW State Government target of Net Zero emissions by FY 2050, or earlier. This would involve a comprehensive, ongoing program of emission reduction works and value chain decarbonisation initiatives, implemented in accordance with the identified optimal timing, thereby minimising final carbon offset liability while maximising overall benefits to Council.

Council may also wish to select an interim target in line with NSW State Government targets. This approach of setting interim targets is in line with the Science based Target initiative (SBTi) which emphasises the need for measuring progress against a steady downward trajectory. Both these options

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Emissions Reduction Action Plan

would require establishment (through modelling or calculation of actual data) of a baseline carbon footprint year for 2005 or later. In the absence of any other established baseline year, FY 2022 (7,586 t CO₂-e) may be used to provide an indicative idea of potential feasibility:

- **50% emissions reduction by FY 2030:** The 2030 emissions forecast in Figure 10 of 4,159 t CO₂e, represents a 45% reduction on 2022 levels, just short of the NSW Government target.
- **70% emissions reduction by FY 2035:** The 2035 emissions forecast in Figure 10 of 2,393 t CO₂e, represents a 67% reduction on 2022 levels, again just short of the NSW Government target.

Council may wish to undertake further analysis prior to future reviews of this Emissions Reduction Action Plan, to inform whether and which new targets should be adopted.

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Port Stephens Council
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Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

Glossary of Key Terms and Abbreviations

Term	Definition
Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU)	A financial instrument issued by the Clean Energy Regulator to eligible projects that reduce GHG emissions. One ACCU represents one tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent (t CO ₂ -e) stored and that is not released into the atmosphere.
Baseline	A reference against which a company's emissions are tracked over time.
Battery electric vehicle (BEV)	A type of electric vehicle that relies solely on an electric battery to power an electric motor and propel the vehicle. Unlike hybrid vehicles, BEVs operate entirely on electricity stored in high-capacity batteries.
Battery energy storage system (BESS)	A technology that stores electrical energy in batteries for later use.
Business-as-usual (BAU)	The standard and routine operations of an organisation without any significant changes or deviations from its usual practices.
Carbon sequestration (or 'sequestration')	The absorption of CO ₂ and storage of carbon in biological sinks.
CO ₂ -equivalent (CO ₂ -e)	A standardised unit of measurement used to assess the climate impact of various greenhouse gases relative to carbon dioxide, expressed in terms of the GWP of unit of carbon dioxide, it provides a comparative basis for evaluating the emissions of different greenhouse gases in terms of their contribution to global warming.
Emission factor	A representative value used to relate the estimated quantity of greenhouse gas emissions with available activity data (e.g. tons of fuel consumed, tons of product produced).
Emissions	Release of GHG into the atmosphere.
Emissions boundary (or 'inventory boundary')	The emissions boundary draws the line between activities that fall within an organisation's control and those that do not as set out by the GHG Protocol.
Fugitive emissions	Emissions not directly controlled but arise from intentional or unintentional release of greenhouse gases (GHGs). These emissions typically stem from the production, processing, transmission, storage, and use of fuels and other chemicals, often through joints, seals, packing, gaskets, etc.
Global Warming Potential (GWP)	A factor used to describe the radiative forcing impact (i.e. degree of harm to the atmosphere) of one unit of a given GHG relative to one unit of CO ₂ .
Greenhouse gases (GHGs)	Gases that raise the Earth's surface temperature by trapping heat in the atmosphere. Main greenhouse gases are as follows: carbon dioxide (CO ₂), methane (CH ₄), nitrous oxide (N ₂ O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF ₆).
Indirect GHG emissions	Emissions resulting from the operations of the reporting entity, yet originating from sources owned or controlled by another entity.

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Term	Definition
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)	An international body of the United Nations tasked with assessing relevant scientific, technical, and socio-economic information to understand the risks associated with human-induced climate change.
Large-scale Generation Certificate (LGC)	A tradable certificate in Australia that represents the generation of one megawatt-hour of renewable energy. These certificates are part of Australia's Renewable Energy Target program.
Liabilities (or 'offset liabilities')	In the carbon context, offset liabilities refer to the commitments or obligations undertaken by entities to neutralise or compensate for their carbon emissions through initiatives such as purchasing carbon credits or investing in emission reduction projects.
Light Emitting Diode (LED)	A light bulb emits light when an electric current passes through it, serving as an energy-efficient and long-lasting lighting solution, suitable for various applications.
Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)	A contractual arrangement between a power generator (often a renewable energy project developer) and a power purchaser (typically a utility or large-scale consumer) outlining the terms of electricity sale.
Residual emissions	GHG emissions that remain after all reasonable efforts to reduce them have been implemented.
Scope 1 emissions (S1)	Direct GHG emissions from fuel combustion, gas consumption and fugitive emissions from refrigerant gases in air-conditioning equipment.
Scope 2 emissions (S2)	Indirect GHG emissions associated with purchase of electricity generated at fossil fuel power plants.
Scope 3 emissions (S3)	Indirect GHG emissions resulting from upstream and downstream processes within an entity's supply chain.
Sequestration	Refers to the capture and long-term storage of carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases to prevent their release into the atmosphere, typically to mitigate climate change.
Small-Scale Technology Certificate (STC)	A tradable certificate in Australia that represents the generation of one megawatt-hour of renewable energy. These certificates are part of Australia's Renewable Energy Target program, and apply to smaller sized systems less than 100 kW.
Variable Frequency (or Speed) Drive (VFD, VSD)	An electronic device used in motor control applications to regulate the speed and force of an electric motor, enabling precise control over its speed and, consequently, efficiency.

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MINUTE NO. 162.

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Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

Document Control

Document Name	Document Reference Number	Revision Provided to PSC	Date Provided to PSC	Author
Port Stephens Council Carbon Neutral Action Plan (original title)	Draft 1a	V4	Nov 23	100% Renewables
	Draft 1b	V9	Dec 23	100% Renewables
	Draft 2	V12	Feb 24	100% Renewables
Port Stephens Council Emissions Reduction Action Plan	Draft 3	V1	Mar 24	100% Renewables
	Final	Final	Apr 24	100% Renewables

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Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

1 Introduction

100% Renewables was engaged by Port Stephens Council for the development of a Carbon Neutral Action Plan (CNAP) in response to Council's resolution on the 12 October 2021 to "Commit to the goal of achieving Carbon Neutrality for Council operations by 2025". A preliminary study conducted in 2022 established Council's baseline greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and identified the need to develop an action plan to reduce Council's emissions over time. Those findings lead to a subsequent Council resolution on the 11 April 2023 endorsing funding for the "preparation of the Port Stephens Carbon Neutral Action Plan" which is the purpose of this report.

During the project a decision was taken to rename the document to Port Stephen's Emissions Reduction Action Plan (ERAP), to accommodate a potential expansion of strategic objectives beyond carbon neutrality to include net zero principles and targets, in line with State and Federal Government policy positions. Since the October 2021 Council resolution, the Australian Government has legislated Australia's GHG emissions target to reach Net Zero by 2050, with the New South Wales (NSW) State Government also introducing similar legislation to parliament in October 2023, which has since been passed into law. At the same time, the international standard organisation (ISO) released new unambiguous definitions for the terms Carbon Neutral and Net Zero. The research undertaken for this ERAP addresses Council's needs in regards to better understanding the options, costs and benefits associated with these goals.

Carbon neutrality is achieved by balancing out the carbon emissions an organisation produces by purchasing offsets. The Climate Active Organisation Standard is Australia's only voluntary standard for assessing carbon neutrality and can be used in a number of ways including:

- to better understand and manage the GHG emissions that occur as a result of the operations of an organisation.
- to provide a framework to credibly claim carbon neutrality; and
- as a pathway to be certified as Climate Active Carbon Neutral by the Australian Government.

The following emissions sources are deemed to be relevant to all organisations:

- Scope 1: All stationary energy and fuels used in buildings, equipment, machinery or vehicles in the organisation's control.
- Scope 2: All electricity consumed by buildings, equipment, machinery or vehicles in the organisation's control

In addition, the Standard also requires that all other direct and indirect emissions identified as arising as a consequence of an organisation's business activities must be assessed for relevance. The assessment of emissions relevance was undertaken during development of Council's carbon footprint, presented in Section 2.

While carbon neutrality simply requires emissions to be offset, Net Zero on the other hand is achieved by reducing emissions right across the organisation and its value chain (Scope 3) through a long term program of action before purchasing offsets for any residual emissions that cannot be reduced (see SECTION 4.2 for more information on offsets). In alignment with the legislative changes, and in addition to the shorter-term carbon neutrality actions, this report considers the case for adopting longer-term Net Zero targets and associated emission reduction strategies that are addressed in this ERAP.

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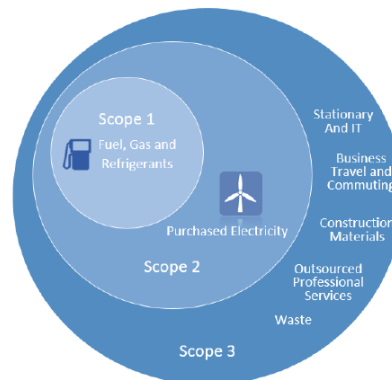


FIGURE 1: EMISSIONS SOURCES DIVIDED BY SCOPE SHOWING EXAMPLE SCOPE 3 VALUE CHAIN EMISSIONS RELEVANT TO PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL

Council has implemented numerous initiatives over recent years to reduce their operational GHG emissions such as the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, light emitting diodes (LEDs), water tanks, and solar pool preheating, utilising recycled materials, and signing up to a Power Purchasing Agreement (PPA) to secure 100% renewable energy from the grid. These initiatives have already greatly improved Council's position towards carbon neutrality, achieving a 40% reduction in GHG emissions since the 2021 Financial Year (the year prior to the resolution to be Carbon Neutral by 2025).

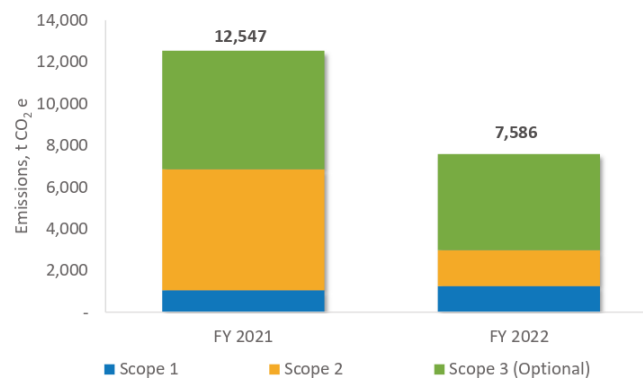


FIGURE 2: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL EMISSIONS FROM FINANCIAL YEAR 2021 TO FINANCIAL YEAR 2022 INCLUDING OPTIONAL RELEVANT SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS

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Emissions Reduction Action Plan

This ERAP identifies Council's operational emissions in detail in the carbon footprint (TABLE 10 and TABLE 11) calculated for the 2021-22 financial year and identifies feasible options for reducing these emissions, together with recommending appropriate timing of implementation across short, medium and long-term time horizons.

1.1 Background and strategic objectives

In 2022, a preliminary emissions study was conducted to collate and analyse Council's key emissions data and create a baseline carbon footprint. The study identified four key scope 1, 2 and 3 GHG emissions sources. These included scope 1 - machinery/fleet vehicles emissions (8.8%), scope 2 - electricity consumption (51%), and scope 3 - Council's operational waste to landfill (27%) and employee commuting (13.2%), and which combined gave a total of 12,547 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂-e) emitted by Council during the 2021 financial year. The preliminary emissions study also included broad offsetting options and pathways for further emissions reduction.

Carbon neutrality is achieved when the amount of GHG emissions are balanced by the number of carbon offsets purchased. Offsets can be purchased from a wide range of projects, including "emissions reduction" projects, such as energy efficiency upgrades, as well as "removal based" projects that pull carbon dioxide (CO₂) out of the air, such as tree planting and soil carbon sequestration. More information about these projects can be found in SECTION 4.2 and APPENDIX C on Offsetting/Insetting. Carbon Neutrality can be achieved relatively easily by any organisation at any stage, but it can come at considerable ongoing financial cost, especially where an organisation's emissions remain high or even increase over time, and is not necessarily reinvested into Council or the local economy.

Net Zero, on the other hand, is a commitment to a long-term decarbonisation pathway that first requires taking direct actions to reduce scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions to a minimum, and only then resorting to purchasing offsets to balance out the small amount of residual emissions. In accordance with ISO Net Zero Guidelines released at the end of 2022, residual emissions can only be offset by purchasing removal-based carbon offsets, as these types of offsets are considered to be the most reliable path to achieving additional emissions reductions and therefore considered to be of higher quality.

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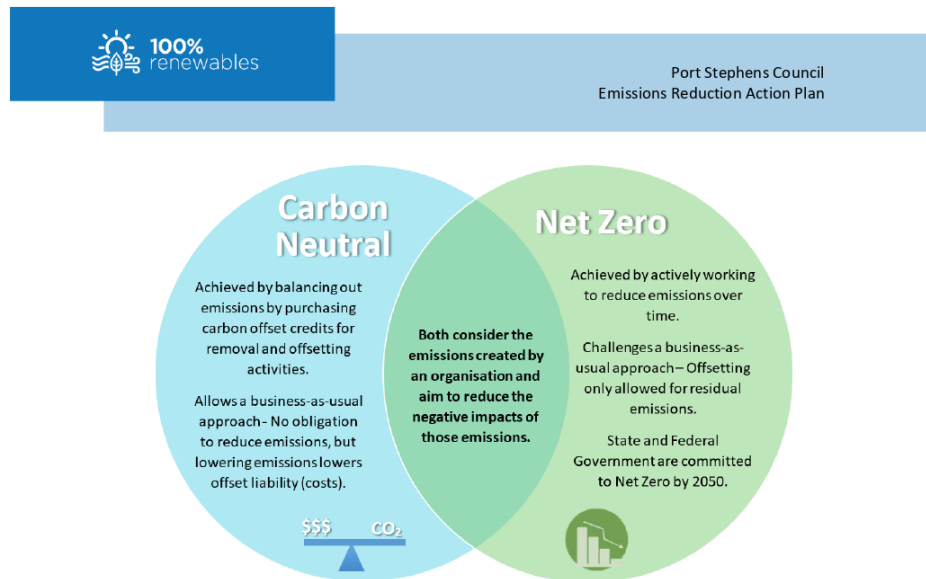


FIGURE 3: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CARBON NEUTRAL AND NET ZERO PATHWAYS.

Carbon neutral and Net Zero are not mutually exclusive processes and can be pursued concurrently. Organisations can become carbon neutral in the short term while working towards a longer-term Net Zero target. The benefit of this approach is that the price required to offset emissions acts like an internal price on carbon which can make it easier to get business cases for practical emissions reduction projects over the line.

The ERAP details the actions Council can take to reduce its emissions and quantifies the carbon offset costs required to achieve various outcomes.

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Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

1.2 Project scope

The ERAP provides short, medium and long term actions that Council can undertake in order to reduce operational GHG emissions.

The scope of the ERAP includes the following actions:

TABLE 1: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL EMISSIONS REDUCTION ACTION PLAN – PROJECT SCOPE

Scope of work	Relevant Section
GHG boundary review to ensure alignment with Climate Active certification, inclusions and exclusions and comparison with market standards.	Section 2.2
Baseline emissions data review to identify any gaps within the Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and include processes to update baseline emissions data.	Section 2.3
Assessment of the costs and benefits of the current Carbon Neutral 2025 target and associated ERAP, including calculation of carbon offset costs.	Section 3.2
Assessment of the implications of the current PPA on the ERAP.	Section 3.1.1
Audit of 15 energy consuming sites to establish emission reduction strategies for those sites.	Sections 4.5, 5.1, 5.2, & 0
Modelling of representative sites to enable estimation of capital costs, benefits, payback period, and net present value.	Appendix A
Assessment of Council's current operational initiatives and practices achieving carbon reduction outcomes, and identify opportunities to enhance their contribution to Carbon Neutrality.	Section 4
Preparation of a ERAP for Council endorsement including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emission reduction strategies for Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions; Prioritisation of emissions reduction strategies 	Section 5
Offset purchasing guidelines and an offset purchasing monitoring and reporting schedule/program.	Section 5.4
An emissions reduction pathway to 2050.	Section 4.12
Information on compliance with Climate Active certification, should it be required in future.	Section 3.2.2

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Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

1.3 Global and National Context

1.3.1 Global context

At a global level, the call to action for countries to act on climate change has been increasing for several years. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, *Climate Change 2021: the Physical Science Basis* the global population has already emitted over 85% of all emissions, if to remaining within the 1.5°C of warming threshold. Key agreements and reports that underpin international consensus to act include:

1. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹
2. Paris Agreement²
3. Special IPCC report on 1.5°C warming (SR15)³, and
4. IPCC Sixth Assessment Reporting cycle (AR6)⁴

To align with global Net Zero goals and principles Council would be required to:

1. Minimise GHG emissions from stationary fuel combustion such as diesel (Scope 1);
2. Minimise GHG emissions from transport fuel combustion (Scope 1);
3. Minimise GHG emissions from electricity consumption (Scope 2);
4. Address supply chain (eg waste) emissions (Scope 3); and
5. Remove or offset all remaining emissions.

1.3.2 National, State, and local government policies

In Australia, the commitment to addressing climate change is becoming more uniform and aligned towards international goals across all levels of government. This includes the following ambitious efforts towards decarbonisation by 2050:

- The Federal Government legislated an emissions reduction target of 43% by 2030 (from 2005 levels) and is committed to Net Zero by 2050.
- Majority of Australia's states and territories are committed to additional emission reductions Targets.
- NSW Government legislated a target of 50% emissions reduction by 2030, a 70% emissions reduction by 2035, and Net Zero by 2050.

To reach these targets, NSW Councils are focussing on the following actions:

1. Increased focus and priority on reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainability.
2. Development and implementation of a Climate Change Mitigation Plan or similar for both Council and community emissions.
3. Increased public engagement, education and literacy on climate change and opportunity.
4. Alignment with state and national climate goals and initiatives (FIGURE 4).
5. Potential for increased funding and support from state and federal governments for climate action.

¹ Sourced from <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>

² Sourced from <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climatechange/>

³ Sourced from https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2022/06/SR15_Full_Report_HR.pdf

⁴ Sourced from https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf

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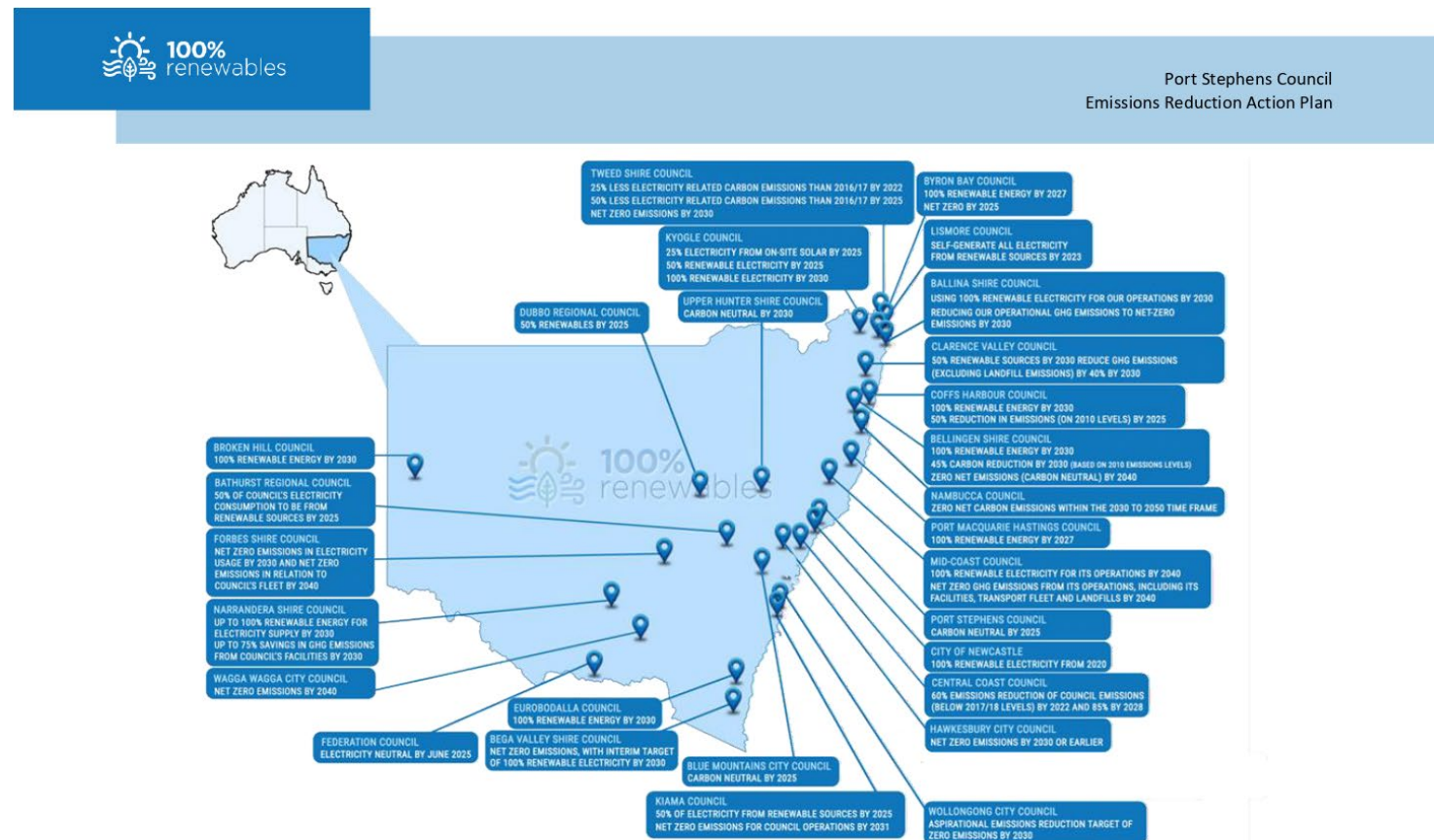


FIGURE 4: NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENTS EMISSIONS REDUCTION AMBITIONS, 2022

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2 Port Stephens Council's Carbon Footprint

Council's carbon footprint was calculated using the methods laid out in the Climate Active Guidelines and GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard.

2.1 Overview of emissions scopes

To help differentiate between different greenhouse gas emission sources, emissions are classified into the following scopes according to the GHG Protocol⁵ – Corporate Standard:

- **Scope 1 emissions** are direct emissions generated at Council operations through fuel combustion, gas consumption, and fugitive emissions from refrigerant gases in air-conditioning equipment.
- **Scope 2 emissions** are indirect emissions caused by consuming electricity. Such emissions are generated outside the organisation (i.e. fossil fuel power plants), but Council is indirectly responsible for them.
- **Scope 3 emissions** are also indirect emissions and happen upstream and downstream of Council's operations, these are also known as value chain emissions. Typical examples include staff commute, outsourced professional services and waste to landfill.

Council could declare carbon neutrality for Scope 1 and 2 emissions, however full accounting for Scope 3 emissions would be required when working towards a Carbon Neutral status in line with the Australian Government's Climate Active scheme and/or a Net Zero commitment.

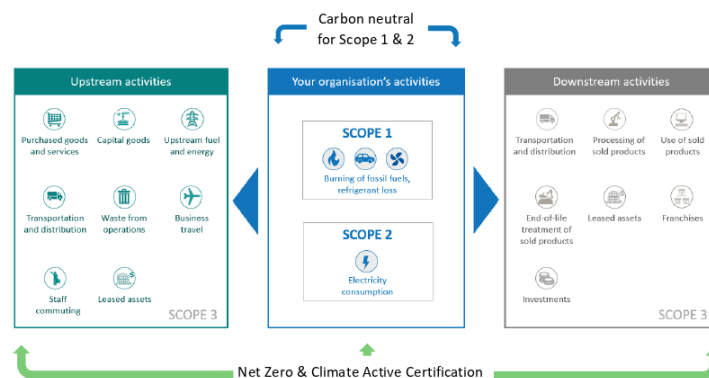


FIGURE 5: SCOPE 1, 2 AND SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH STRATEGIC OPTIONS.

⁵ Sourced from <https://ghgprotocol.org/>



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2.2 Scope of emissions assessed for Port Stephens Council

Council’s carbon footprint consists of scope 1, scope 2 and relevant scope 3 emissions, as illustrated in the emissions boundary in FIGURE 6 below. Council’s emissions boundary was established through a ‘Relevance Test’ that was conducted with key internal stakeholders to identify which emission sources are relevant to Council for inclusion in the boundary. The current emissions coverage is measured in accordance with the Australian Government’s Climate Active standard, which provides a framework for measuring greenhouse gas emissions and attaining Carbon Neutrality aligned with the GHG Protocol. Included emissions are classified as quantified if data on the emissions was available during the data collection phase of this project and non-quantified if data was not available. The Climate Active standard also provides comprehensive guidance on how to measure, reduce, offset, validate and report emissions arising from an organisation’s operations. Further insights into the Climate Active standard and the conducted Relevance Test for the development of Council’s emissions boundary are available in APPENDIX B.

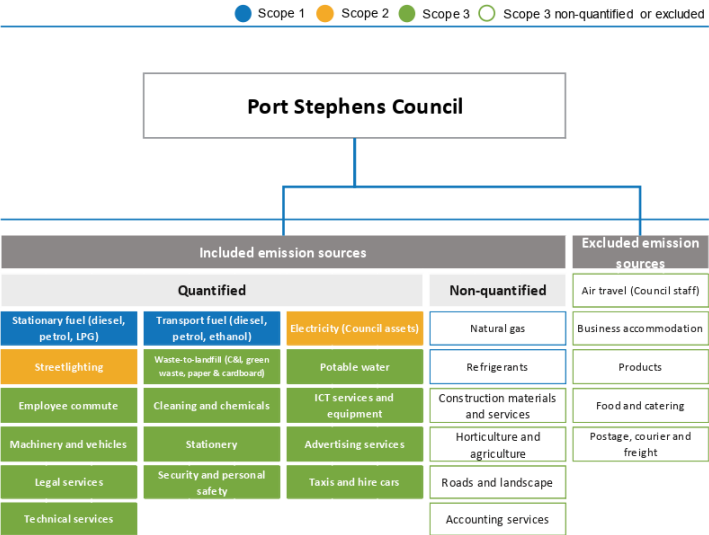


FIGURE 6: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL EMISSIONS BOUNDARY SHOWING SCOPE 1 AND 2 EMISSION SOURCES AND RELEVANT OPTIONAL SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS

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The carbon footprint developed for FY 2022 had a number of emission sources excluded through the relevance test process or classified as non-quantified based on the availability of data. In future, as the organisation changes or as data becomes available, Council's footprint may include additional emission sources, such as:

- Business travel and accommodation (e.g. flights)
- Embodied emissions in building, road, and bridge construction or alteration projects
- Food and catering expenses
- Office equipment, supplies and furniture expenses
- Postal and courier services
- Staff clothing expenses
- Extensive list of availed professional services (e.g. accounting, education, insurance, subscriptions & periodicals)

2.3 Council's Activity Data for FY 2022

The following subsections explain the GHG calculation results for Council's key emission sources for the financial year 2022 (FY 2022).

2.3.1 Scope 1 – Direct Emissions produced by Council

2.3.1.1 Fuel

2.3.1.1.1 FUEL USE FOR TRANSPORTATION AND PLANT

Council purchases fuel for mobile or transportation-related purposes via fleet card accounts from multiple providers. Fuel consumption for FY 2022 was extracted from a summary report with granular information on unit brands & models, fuel and vehicle types, and purchased fuel amounts from each provider. Council fleet, inclusive of light commercial and heavy vehicles, trailers and plant (e.g. excavators, loaders, tractors, fire trucks and other 'red fleet' vehicles), consumes three types of fuel: diesel, petrol, and ethanol (as extracted from consumed E10 ULP). TABLE 2 presents a summary of Council's fleet fuel consumption.

TABLE 2: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – FLEET FUEL CONSUMPTION FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022

Fuel type	Fleet fuel consumption for Financial Year 2022	Percentage
Diesel	374 kL	96.5%
Petrol	13 kL	3.5%
Ethanol	0.27 kL	0.1%
Total	387 kL	100.0%

2.3.1.1.2 FUEL USE FOR STATIONARY PLANT EQUIPMENT

Combustion of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for stationary energy purposes at Council assets represents about 2% of the total carbon footprint, representing a material but relatively minor source of emissions. This raises the question of LPG's importance as a policy target, which is addressed in section 4.4. To estimate bottled LPG consumption across Council assets for FY 2022, invoices spanning August 2021 to February 2022 for purchased bottled LPG at holiday parks were analysed to construct

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a calculation model that correlates consumption with total expenditures. TABLE 3 provides a breakdown of estimated bottled LPG use per Council asset sub-type.

TABLE 3: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – ESTIMATED BOTTLED LPG CONSUMPTION FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022

Council asset sub-type	Estimated LPG use for Financial Year 2022	Percentage
Holiday parks	76 kL	90.4%
Depots	4 kL	4.6%
Emergency services	3 kL	3.1%
Buildings	2 kL	1.8%
Total	84 kL	100.0%

Council possesses a range of small plant that consists of smaller-scale machinery and equipment, such as blowers, brush cutters, and chainsaws. Emissions from fuel use for the some of the small plant equipment were not quantified for this project. All small plant is generally fuelled using the operators or team leaders purchase card, however some purchases of fuel are known to be completed using credit cards rather than a fuel card. These purchases are later reimbursed, but this data is not easily available. While the extent to which fuel purchases are being made with credit cards is likely to be relatively minor, Council may wish to quantify this in future to ensure that materiality can be assessed and emissions accounted for as appropriate.

2.3.1.2 Refrigerants

Accounting for refrigerant gas leakages from air-conditioning and refrigeration systems is mandatory under the GHG Protocol. Due to a recent change of supplier, Council did not have access to relevant data (e.g. refrigerant charge top-up data) for estimating emissions from refrigerants for FY 2022, so an 'uplift factor' was applied to ensure an upward adjustment to the carbon inventory. Such adjustment accounts for emissions that could not be reasonably estimated or quantified. Based on work experience with various Councils and businesses, emissions from refrigerants typically comprise about 1-3% of a carbon footprint. For this inventory, a 1% uplift factor was applied.

2.3.2 Scope 2 – Indirect Emissions from Purchased Electricity

2.3.2.1 Electricity

Prior to establishing renewable energy power purchase agreements (PPA) for use in streetlighting and operations at Council assets, purchased grid electricity is the top contributor to Council's carbon footprint, with combined emissions representing roughly 25% of the total. Grid electricity consumption for both streetlighting and Council assets was analysed using basic meter data, billed on both monthly and quarterly cycles.

Contracts involving PPA commenced in January 2022 and involved replacing electricity retailers. This switch led to variations in billing cycles and coverage periods for the first and second halves of the year, taken to be 184 days from June 1st to December 31st of 2021 for the first retailer and 181 days from January 1st to June 30th of 2022 for the second, for simplicity. For some accounts, the covered period was shorter than the full period under each retailer. Such accounts were normalised to either an 184-day or 181-day estimate, as applicable.

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TABLE 4 and TABLE 5 below present summaries of Council's electricity usage by asset type and sub-type for FY 2022. As per the latest Climate Active Guidelines on accounting for electricity emissions⁶, under the market-based approach, grid electricity consumption under a PPA may only be claimed as zero emissions (i.e. assigned an emission factor of zero) through surrendering of large-scale generation certificates (LGCs). Based on the information provided by Council that generated LGCs through PPA were surrendered, only the usage for the first half of the year contributed emissions to Council's carbon footprint.

TABLE 4: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – ELECTRICITY USE DURING THE 2022 FINANCIAL YEAR BY COUNCIL ASSET TYPE

Council Asset Type	Usage for Jul 1 – Dec 31, 2021 (without PPA)	Usage for Jan 1 – Jun 30, 2022 (under PPA)	Total usage for Financial Year 2022	Percentage
Council assets	2,353,706 kWh	2,897,508 kWh	5,251,213 kWh	76.2 %
Streetlighting	864,767 kWh	778,537 kWh	1,643,304 kWh	23.8 %
Total	3,218,473 kWh	3,676,045 kWh	6,894,518 kWh	100.0 %

TABLE 5: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – ELECTRICITY USE DURING THE 2022 FINANCIAL YEAR BY COUNCIL ASSET SUB-TYPE

Council Asset Sub-type	Usage for Jul 1 – Dec 31, 2021 (without PPA)	Usage for Jan 1 – Jun 30, 2022 (under PPA)	Total usage for Financial Year 2022	Percentage
Sports, parks, public lighting and amenities	960,250 kWh	1,321,757 kWh	2,282,007 kWh	33.1%
Streetlighting	864,767 kWh	778,537 kWh	1,643,304 kWh	23.8%
Swimming pools	681,603 kWh	749,400 kWh	1,431,003 kWh	20.8%
Buildings	545,902 kWh	652,976 kWh	1,198,879 kWh	17.4%
Depots	87,539 kWh	91,840 kWh	179,379 kWh	2.6%
Other	51,906 kWh	53,793 kWh	105,699 kWh	1.5%
Emergency services	26,504 kWh	27,742 kWh	54,246 kWh	0.8%
Total	3,218,473 kWh	3,676,045 kWh	6,894,518 kWh	100.0%

2.3.3 Scope 3 – Indirect Emissions from Council's Value Chain

2.3.3.1 Employee commute

Emissions from combusted fuel in employee-owned vehicles and public transportation contribute about 22% of the total footprint. Such sources are part of Council's value chain, hence associated emissions are treated as indirect Scope 3 emissions in the emissions boundary. In extracting activity data for estimating emissions resulting from employee commute, it is ideal to conduct commuting

⁶ Sourced from: [Climate Active – Electricity accounting](#)

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surveys that capture labour classifications (i.e. full-time, part-time and temporary), number of annual work days, and average distances per commuting mode, among Council staff. Applying the same methodology employed in the FY 2021 carbon inventory, it is assumed that, on a daily basis, 98% of Council staff travel approximately 30 km to work by car, while a further 1% travel roughly 5 km by bus, and the remaining 1% walk to work for about 2 km.

TABLE 6 lists the proportions across transportation modes taken by Council staff and corresponding one-way distances per day. As the data suggests, most of the staff travel via personal cars. This information was applied in combination with the change in staff FTE to proportionally scale the number of employees and annual work days from FY 2021 to FY 2022, and eventually derive modelled data on annual distances, as shown in TABLE 7.

TABLE 6: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – PROPORTIONS AND AVERAGE ONE-WAY DISTANCES PER COMMUTING MODE DURING THE 2022 FINANCIAL YEAR

Commute modes	Percentage of total	Average one-way distance per day
Car	98%	30 km
Bus	1%	5 km
Walking	1%	2 km

TABLE 7: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – MODELLED EMPLOYEE COMMUTE DATA FOR FY 2022

Parameter	Financial Year 2021	Financial Year 2022
Staff FTE	560	547
Number of employees		
Full-time	470	459
Part-time	130	127
Casual	49	48
Average number of work days per week per employee		
Full-time	5	5
Part-time	2	2
Casual	1	1
Total number work days per year		
Full-time	117,500	114,848
Part-time	13,000	12,707
Casual	2,450	2,395
Annual distance per commute mode		
Car	7,817,460 pax.km	7,641,028 pax.km
Bus	13,295 pax.km	12,995 pax.km
Walking	5,318 pax.km	5,198 pax.km

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2.3.3.2 Waste

Solid waste emissions resulting from waste disposed of through Council operations account for approximately 8% of the total carbon footprint. Since Council does not operate a landfill, emissions from residential waste, as gathered from kerbside bin collection at households, would only be accounted for in a Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Inventory (GPC). The waste contractor does not separate Council generated waste from community generated waste during collection. Considering Council's goal currently relates to operational emissions, an estimate of the waste Council generated through its operations was calculated as a proportion of total waste collected. TABLE 8 below lists waste collection data from skip bins, 120-litre and 240-litre bins, further processed and categorised by generation source (i.e. Council asset sub-type) and waste type.

TABLE 8: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – COUNCIL OPERATIONAL WASTE FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022

Council asset sub-type	Commercial & industrial (C&I) waste	Garden & green waste	Paper & cardboard waste
Sports, holiday parks, and amenities	313 t	2.9 t	2.6 t
Other	59 t	-	3.3 t
Depots	42 t	-	0.4 t
Buildings	7.8 t	-	0.8 t
Swimming pools	6.1 t	-	-
Emergency services	0.1 t	-	-
Total	427 t	3 t	7 t

2.3.3.3 Water

Emissions related to the consumption of potable water at Council assets constitutes around 8% of Council's total carbon footprint. The consumption of water can create emissions because the processes involved in extracting, treating, and transporting water, often require energy, contributing to carbon emissions. Usage data was extracted from bulk meter data billed on a quarterly basis. In cases where accounts had coverage periods shorter than a full year, activity data was normalised to a 365-day estimate. Noting that a separate provider is responsible for management of water supply and wastewater treatment, emissions associated with such processes are not considered within Council's emissions boundary.

TABLE 9: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – WATER CONSUMPTION FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022

Parameter	Total for Financial Year 2022
Water consumption	613,912 kL

2.3.3.4 Other scope 3 emission sources

Upstream scope 3 emission sources identified in the Relevance Test have been incorporated into Council's emissions boundary. Council provided a general ledger extract of expenditure data categorised into cleaning and chemicals, ICT services and equipment, machinery and vehicles, and outsourced professional services.

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2.4 Council's FY 2022 carbon footprint

Port Stephens Council's carbon footprint for the financial year 2021-22 (FY 2022) was estimated to be 7,586 tonnes of carbon dioxide-equivalent (t CO₂-e), based on Council's established emissions boundary. The inventory tables in TABLE 10 and TABLE 11 list Scope 1 and 2 emission sources, and Scope 3 emission sources, respectively, with corresponding emissions in t CO₂-e, and assessed percentage contributions to the subtotal footprint.

TABLE 10: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL'S FY 2022 SCOPE 1 AND 2 EMISSIONS

Emission source	Activity data	Units	Scope 1 (t CO ₂ -e)	Scope 2 (t CO ₂ -e)	Subtotal (Scope 1 & 2)	%
Stationary fuel – LPG	84	kL	131		131 t CO ₂ -e	4.4%
Fleet fuel						
Diesel	374	kL	1,016		1,016 t CO ₂ -e	34.1%
Petrol	13	kL	31		31 t CO ₂ -e	1.0%
Ethanol	0.27	kL	0.003		0 t CO ₂ -e	0.0%
Electricity	5,251,213	kWh		1,223	1,223 t CO ₂ -e	41.1%
Street lighting	1,643,304	kWh		502	502 t CO ₂ -e	16.8%
Uplifts						
Refrigerants			75		75 t CO ₂ -e	2.5%
Subtotal			1,253	1,724	2,977 t CO ₂ -e	100.0%

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TABLE 11: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL'S FY 2022 SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS⁷

Emission source	Activity data	Units	Scope 3 (t CO ₂ -e)	Subtotal (Scope 3)	%
Stationary fuel – LPG (Upstream activities)	84	kL	44	44 t CO ₂ -e	0.9%
Fleet fuel – Upstream activities (e.g. fuel extraction, production, transportation)					
Diesel	374	kL	250	250 t CO ₂ -e	5.4%
Petrol	13	kL	8	8 t CO ₂ -e	0.2%
Ethanol	0.27	kL	0	-	-
Waste					
Commercial & industrial	427	t	556	556 t CO ₂ -e	12.1%
Green waste	3	t	4.63	5 t CO ₂ -e	0.1%
Paper & cardboard	7	t	23	23 t CO ₂ -e	0.5%
Electricity – Upstream activities (e.g. fuel extraction, transmission & distribution losses)	5,251,213	kWh	135	135 t CO ₂ -e	2.9%
Streetlighting – Upstream activities (e.g. fuel extraction, transmission & distribution losses)	1,643,304	kWh	55	55 t CO ₂ -e	1.2%
Water	613,912	kL	569	569 t CO ₂ -e	12.3%
Stationery	237,099	\$	61	61 t CO ₂ -e	1.3%
Employee commute					
Bus	12,995	pax.km	1.58	2 t CO ₂ -e	0.0%
Car	7,641,028	pax.km	1,695	1,695 t CO ₂ -e	36.8%
Cleaning and chemicals					
Cleaning and janitorial equipment and supplies	25,131	\$	5.97	6 t CO ₂ -e	0.1%
Cleaning	30,080	\$	3.30	3 t CO ₂ -e	0.1%
ICT services and equipment					
IT equipment	38,229	\$	5.20	5 t CO ₂ -e	0.1%
Internet	207,895	\$	29	29 t CO ₂ -e	0.6%
Computer and technical services	1,464,213	\$	203	203 t CO ₂ -e	4.4%
Telecommunications	259,745	\$	40	40 t CO ₂ -e	0.9%
Machinery and vehicles					
Motor vehicle hire	3,831,579	\$	677	677 t CO ₂ -e	14.7%
Industrial machinery and equipment	224,891	\$	44	44 t CO ₂ -e	1.0%
Motor vehicles	111,315	\$	37	37 t CO ₂ -e	0.8%
Professional services					
Advertising services	347,762	\$	42	42 t CO ₂ -e	0.9%
Legal services	344,723	\$	45	45 t CO ₂ -e	1.0%
Security and personal safety	219,026	\$	51	51 t CO ₂ -e	1.1%
Taxis and hire cars	1,344	\$	0.89	1 t CO ₂ -e	0.0%
Technical services	148,083	\$	24	24 t CO ₂ -e	0.5%
Subtotal			4,609	4,609 t CO ₂ -e	100.0%

⁷ Scope 3 emissions for fuel & electricity include upstream activities such as fuel extraction, production and transportation, infrastructure development, and specifically for electricity, transmission & distribution losses.

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2.4.1 Scope 1 & 2 Emissions

At Council, scope 1 emissions come from the direct use of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), diesel, petrol, ethanol and refrigerants and scope 2 emissions come from purchased electricity. For FY 2022, the main contributors to Council's scope 1 and 2 emissions were from the combustion of diesel fuel for Council's own fleet, generating 1,016 t CO₂-e of scope 1 emissions, and purchased electricity which generated 1,223 t CO₂-e of scope 2 emissions (FIGURE 7). In January 2022 a renewable energy PPA was implemented for use in streetlighting and operations at Council assets, reducing emissions from purchased electricity to zero for approximately 6 months of the year. Emissions from scope 2 will remain at zero so long as Council continues to purchase 100% Renewable energy.

2.4.2 Scope 3 Emissions

The included Scope 3 emissions are relevant under the Climate Active scheme and should also be considered if perusing Net Zero. Scope 3 emissions come from both up and down Council's value chain. The composition of these emissions is unique to Port Stephens Council as they come from indirect emissions created from all the specific products and services that Council uses or produces for the community. As expected, the broad nature of scope 3 emissions mean they contribute the largest proportion of Council's carbon footprint when combined (FIGURE 7). For FY 2022 the main contributors to Council's scope 3 emissions were from business travel, including employee commuting (1,697 t CO₂-e) and motor vehicle hire (677 t CO₂-e), emissions related to the supply of water to Council (569 t CO₂-e) and waste produced through council activities, including commercial and industrial waste, green waste, paper and cardboard (584 t CO₂-e).

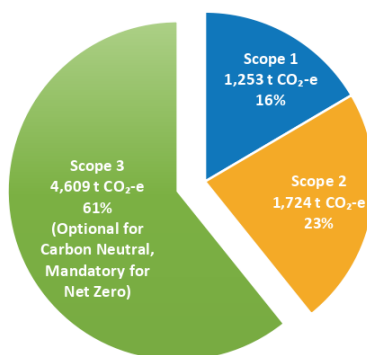


FIGURE 7: SPLIT OF PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL'S FY 2022 CARBON FOOTPRINT BY SCOPE SHOWING MANDATORY SCOPE 1 AND 2 EMISSIONS AND OPTIONAL SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED UNDER A NET ZERO STRATEGY.

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3 Achieving Carbon Neutrality in 2025

Port Stephens Council committed to a goal of being carbon neutral for operational emissions by 2025. This goal is achievable by purchasing carbon offset credits to balance out Council's emissions for FY 2025. To accurately calculate the number of carbon offset credits required Council will need to recalculate its carbon footprint in 2025. The forecast of Council's business-as-usual (BAU) emissions calculated below can give an estimation of Council's emissions over time without implementing any further emission reduction initiatives. The BAU forecast can then be used to estimate the number of offsets required depending on the emission reductions achieved at different points in time (FIGURE 9).

3.1 Business-as-usual (BAU) forecast emissions

To provide a context for developing an optimal strategy to achieve carbon neutrality and/or Net Zero, it is crucial to establish both the baseline carbon footprint as well as projected future emissions, accounting for anticipated shifts in Council operations and external circumstances. In developing a high-level estimate of 'business-as-usual' or BAU emissions, the following factors are considered:

- Emissions reduction influenced by external factors (e.g. grid decarbonisation).
- Forecast population growth and accompanying impact on demand for Council services.
- Additions, divestments, and significant operational changes, considering their temporary, periodic or permanent nature.

BAU emissions have been estimated to FY 2050, providing a depiction of Council's emissions in the absence of any new actions beyond FY 2022 to reduce emissions.

3.1.1 Summary of assumptions used for BAU forecast

The population in the Port Stephens Local Government Area (LGA) experienced remarkable growth between 2008 and 2018, ranking as the third fastest among LGAs in the Hunter Region. Over this period, the population increased from 64,316 people in 2008 to 72,695 in 2018⁸ – an increase of 8,379 people, or approximately 13%.

Over the next twenty years to 2041 the population of Port Stephens is forecast to grow by in excess of 18,500 people. Such growth equates to an overall rise of 25% over two decades, translating to a 2.22% growth rate year-on-year. As the population grows, Council's service operations are likely to expand to meet the evolving needs of the community, and this rate of change is accounted for in the BAU forecasts.

The following outlines other modelling assumptions used to create the BAU forecast of Council's emissions:

- Emissions not related to electricity increase at 2.22% annually to 2050.
- Electricity demand for all Council assets and streetlighting rises at 2.22% per annum, but emissions intensity declines at a rate aligned with the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) and AEMO forecasts.
- Council's PPA contract for purchasing electricity from renewable sources remains in effect until 2026, entailing continuous surrender of LGCs.

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2017-18, Cat. 3218.0 (released 27 March 2019)

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- Exported energy from the 200+-kW solar array at the Port Stephens Council Administration Building accounts for eligible emissions reductions via surrendered LGCs.

FIGURE 8 and FIGURE 9 illustrate business-as-usual forecasts for Council's energy demand and emissions over the next decades:

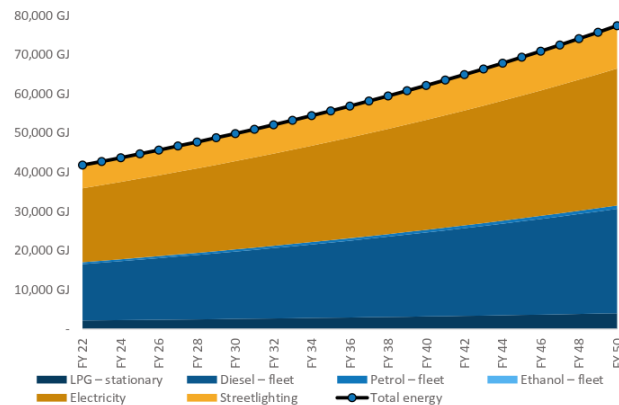


FIGURE 8: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – BUSINESS-AS-USUAL ENERGY DEMAND FORECAST

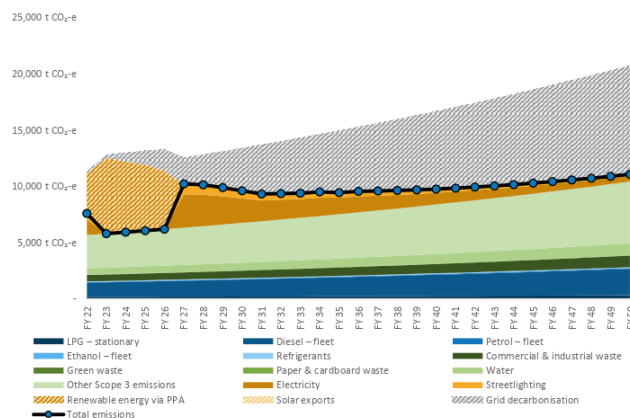


FIGURE 9: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – BUSINESS-AS-USUAL EMISSIONS FORECAST ASSUMING NO EXTENSION TO POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT AT END OF CONTRACT IN 2026

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3.2 Purchasing Carbon Offset Credits in 2025

The single most significant determinant of the overall cost of becoming carbon neutral will be the carbon offset credit price. There are several types of acceptable offsets, with prices (\$/tonne) varying depending on a project's location, type of activity, potential co-benefits, and the accreditation standard. Many different offsets are available in the market, resulting in a range of costs for Council to obtain Carbon Neutral status under Climate Active based on the projected carbon emissions in 2025 and as calculated in the BAU forecasts (action to reduce the carbon footprint would lower offset purchase requirements).

In order to retain its Carbon Neutral status past 2025, Council would be required to re-calculate its carbon footprint and purchase offsets for the emissions on an annual basis. These ongoing annual costs are difficult to predict as they are subject to the volatility of the carbon market.

3.2.1 Climate Active Accreditation

As of February 2024, Climate Active is the only government-accredited carbon neutral certification scheme in Australia. Achieving Carbon Neutral under Climate Active incurs costs from the purchase of carbon offsets, third-party verification and program membership fees. There may also be fees associated with engaging a consultant to develop the organisation's emissions inventory.

Climate Active certification requires offsets be purchased for scope 1, 2 and all relevant scope 3 emissions. Certification increases the price of achieving Carbon Neutrality but also provides clarity surrounding the claim. The costs provided in the tables below have been calculated on this basis. In addition to financial costs, there will also be human resources required to manage the requirements of achieving certification.

Given the inherent volatility of the carbon market and fluctuations in credit availability, the costs per tonne of offset used in estimating options 1 to 3 are based on September 2023 carbon market prices and have not been projected for 2025.

Based on the prices incurred from licence fees, third party verification and carbon offsets, **offsetting emissions would most likely incur costs between \$53,000 and \$490,000 to become Carbon Neutral by FY 2025 under the Climate Active scheme.** The following tables detail subranges of costs associated with purchasing the cheapest available offsets, international offsets with social benefits, and Australian offsets, respectively.

TABLE 12: OPTION 1 – PROJECTED COSTS FOR PURCHASING CHEAPEST OFFSETS AVAILABLE

Licence Fee (ex GST)	Verification Fee (ex GST)		Carbon offset cost International		TOTAL ESTIMATED FEES (ex GST)	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
\$7,818.18	\$2,900	\$15,000	\$41,841	\$159,355	\$52,559	\$182,174

TABLE 13: OPTION 2 – PROJECTED COSTS FOR PURCHASING INTERNATIONAL OFFSETS WITH SOCIAL BENEFITS

Licence Fee (ex GST)	Verification Fee (ex GST)		Carbon offset cost International: REDD		TOTAL ESTIMATED FEES (ex GST)	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
\$7,818.18	\$2,900	\$15,000	\$90,078	\$173,342	\$100,796	\$188,342

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TABLE 14: OPTION 3 – PROJECTED COSTS FOR PURCHASING AUSTRALIAN OFFSETS

Licence Fee (ex GST)	Verification Fee (ex GST)		Carbon offset cost Australia		TOTAL ESTIMATED FEES (ex GST)	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
\$7,818.18	\$2,900	\$15,000	\$251,047	\$466,231	\$261,766	\$489,049

3.2.2 Carbon Neutrality for Scope 1 and 2 emissions

Climate Active is the only carbon neutral certification scheme recognised by the Australian Government. It is possible for Council to use the Climate Active Standard as a framework to achieve carbon neutrality for energy-related Scope 1 and 2 emissions for FY 2025, and not undergo certification. However, this approach does not grant Climate Active endorsement or trademark use for the designated year.

Noting that Council's Scope 2 emissions will be effectively zero by FY 2025 due to renewable energy purchase via PPA, Council will only need to offset direct Scope 1 emissions it generates from fuel, gas and refrigerants.

Based on September 2023 carbon market prices for costs per tonne of offset as used in Section 3.2.2, **offsetting independently reported Scope 1 emissions would most likely incur costs between \$12,000 and \$129,000 to declare as carbon neutral for Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions for FY 2025.** TABLE 15 presents ranges of costs for purchasing cheapest available offsets, international offsets with social benefits, and Australian offsets.

TABLE 15: PROJECTED COSTS FOR PURCHASING OFFSETS FOR INDEPENDENT REPORTING OF \$1 EMISSIONS

Options	Carbon offset cost	
	Min	Max
Purchasing cheapest offsets available	\$ 11,587	\$ 44,130
Purchasing international offsets with social benefits	\$ 24,945	\$ 48,003
Purchasing Australian offsets	\$ 69,522	\$ 129,112

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4 Emission Reduction Strategy

4.1 Overview

In response to Council's requirements, this section identifies key strategic objectives and provides a comprehensive exploration of emission reduction opportunities across Scope 1, 2, and 3 to reduce liabilities related to purchasing offsets. Scope 3 emissions were considered to provide Council with an actionable roadmap to work towards Australian Government Climate Active certification of its Carbon Neutral status or to transition to a Net Zero strategy in line with the State and Federal Government commitments. This section specifies those objectives and articulates the business case for action in each of the main areas of opportunity.

The key actions undertaken in identifying and clarifying the objectives and opportunities for Council's emissions reduction included:

- **Site assessments (August 2023)**
 - Site assessments aimed to identify opportunities and gauge the feasibility of potential emission reduction strategies across Council operations.
- **Analysis of carbon footprint (August/ September 2023)**
 - Identified Council's main emission sources, or "hotspots", for focus on the areas of greatest impact.
- **Opportunities workshop (September 2023)**
 - Collaborative opportunities workshop convened various Council representatives, including operational and maintenance managers and aimed at:
 - Identifying diverse perspectives and insights.
 - Aligning key internal stakeholders on common goals and priorities.
 - Formulating a strategic vision for emissions reduction efforts.
- **Ongoing engagement with Council's Project Team**
 - Continuous collaboration with Council's Project Team was crucial to ensure that insights, progress, and challenges could be consistently communicated and addressed. This ongoing engagement ensures that the ERAP development remained responsive to evolving needs and priorities.
- **Technological research**
 - Research into relevant technologies through evaluating abatement potential and optimal timing, the ERAP well placed in the current technological landscape. This research is vital for steering Council towards solutions that align with both current and emerging best practices.

As a result of the actions above, the key objectives and areas of opportunity identified (TABLE 16) form the basis of Council's ERAP and are detailed in the following sections.

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TABLE 16: KEY OBJECTIVES FOR COUNCIL'S EMISSIONS REDUCTION STRATEGY AND AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY ON WHICH COUNCIL CAN FOCUS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES

ERAP Key Objectives	Areas of Opportunity
Scope 1 Emissions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce emissions from refrigerants. Reduce council gas consumption. Reduce emissions from council's fleet. Optimise charging infrastructure at Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gas to electric technologies Sustainable transport
Scope 2 Emissions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain zero emissions from electricity. Reduce council reliance on grid electricity. Optimise council electricity consumption. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewable energy purchases Behind the meter solar Energy efficiency
Scope 3 Emissions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce emissions from employee commuting. Reduce emissions from waste. Consider emissions during procurement and project planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste Low carbon procurement
All Scopes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding for carbon reduction projects. Monitor changes to council emissions over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offsetting/ insetting Funding opportunities Improved data management

The development of opportunities for achieving these objectives adopts a holistic approach, going beyond reliance on a few key technologies to address a wide range of emission reduction opportunities across all scopes and emission sources. This ensures a thorough strategy that covers all relevant sources of Council's emissions, with the aim of reducing emissions while delivering long-term net cost savings wherever viable opportunities present.

Strategic considerations also support identification of opportunities for the ERAP, including the influence of policy and market trends and the evolving landscape of grid decarbonisation. Decarbonisation is expected to occur over the coming decade as coal-fired power stations in NSW and across Australia are phased-out and replaced with a transition to renewable energy generation technologies like solar, wind, pumped hydro and grid-scale batteries. Under the expected decarbonisation scenario, Australia's Energy Market Operator (AEMO) predicts⁹ that the electricity grid will be approximately 90% decarbonised by 2030 and close to 100% by 2040.

The following sections break down the key elements of relevance to developing an emissions reduction strategy specific to Council's needs. The structure of sections 4.2 through 4.10 has been arranged follows:

⁹ AEMO: <https://aemo.com.au/consultations/current-and-closed-consultations/2022-draft-isp-consultation>

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- **Objective:** As specified in TABLE 16, the objective describes the overarching aim or purpose of the emissions reduction strategy for Council.
- **Description:** Provides a detailed overview and assessment of the current state of play in relation to each area of strategy.
- **Opportunities:** Identifies and explores potential benefits associated with implementing various emissions reduction initiatives, such as cost savings and operational benefits.
- **Rationale:** Explains the underlying reasons and justifications for pursuing the identified emissions reduction opportunities, tying them to broader goals and responsibilities.
- **Strategies:** Outlines the general actions and approaches that will be employed to support the kind of objectives outlined in the emissions reduction strategy, noting there is often considerable overlap between strategies and objectives, not necessarily a one-to-one match.

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4.2 Offsetting / Insetting



Objective

- Monitor changes to Council emissions (and liabilities) over time.



Description

- To achieve a carbon neutral claim for Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2025 Council will need to purchase carbon offsets to balance out 100% of scope 1 and 2 emissions.
- If Climate Active certification is desired, relevant Scope 3 emissions would also need to be offset.
- To achieve Net Zero emissions by or before 2050, Council needs to assess the role of carbon offsets, either through purchasing or creating its own via sequestration.
- Monitoring emissions changes and carbon credit costs over time is crucial for effective decision-making.
- The cost of offsetting can vary widely. For further information about potential costs specific to Council refer to SECTION 3.2.



Opportunities

- Purchasing high-quality offsets from local and international abatement activities.
- Insetting projects such as carbon sequestration from tree planting. Climate Active developing guidelines for sequestration from the establishment of woody vegetation.



Rationale

- An accepted and common strategy for organisations aiming for Net Zero or Carbon Neutrality.
- Many projects have multiple benefits, contributing to broader sustainability efforts.
- Emissions from transport and fleet are substantial and will take some time to reduce, thereby requiring consideration of offsets if short term Carbon Neutral goals are to be met.



Strategy

- Minimise the need for offsets by first implementing all other feasible, cost-effective and beneficial opportunities.
- Analyse trends in emissions to determine any obligations relating to offsetting.
- Choose only high-quality offsets, such as
 - Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) from the Clean Energy Regulator
 - Certified Emissions Reductions (CERs) from Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects
 - Removal Units (RMUs) based on land use, land-use change, and forestry activities
 - Voluntary Emissions Reductions (VERs) from the Gold Standard
 - Verified Carbon Units (VCUs) from the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS)
- Optional (Short term carbon neutral Pathway): Purchase offsets for remaining scope 1, 2 and potentially scope 3 emissions from 2025.
- Optional (Net Zero Pathway): Purchase offsets for residual emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3) from 2050 or other target date.

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4.3 Sustainable transport – Scope 1



Objective

- Reduce emissions from Council's fleet.
- Reduce emissions from employee commuting.
- Optimise charging infrastructure at Council.



Description

- Fleet emissions contribute 17% of the Council's carbon footprint.
- Employee commute contributes 22% of the Council's carbon footprint.
- Immediate reduction of utility vehicles challenging without compromising service delivery.
- Limited public transport options and significant distances between homes and workplaces.
- Current limitations to EVs include higher upfront costs and limited model availability for utility vehicles.



Opportunities

- Options include replacing internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles with low or no emissions vehicles including hybrids or electric vehicles (EVs).
- Encouraging fuel-efficient driving practices.
- Implementing carbon offsets.
- Evaluate the current charging infrastructure at Council.
- Optimise infrastructure to support the increasing adoption of electric vehicles.
- Novated leasing arrangements offer benefits for reducing emissions from staff commute.
- Electric Vehicles expected to be the most cost-effective emissions reduction solution beyond 2027.
- Hybrid vehicles are a practical and cost-effective means to reduce emissions in the short term where EV model availability is not yet mature.
- By 2027, numerous high-quality electric alternatives for outdoor equipment types are expected.



Rationale

- Emission reduction and air quality improvement
 - Transitioning to low-emission vehicles directly reduces tailpipe emissions and improves air quality.
 - Improving air quality also enhances public health particularly through reductions in pollutants harmful to respiratory systems.
- Cost savings and efficiency
 - Low-emission vehicles, especially electric and hybrid models, generally have lower operational costs compared to traditional fuel-powered vehicles. This results in long-term savings for the council.
 - ICE vehicles are reaching limits in fuel efficiency improvement.
- Potential for incentives
 - Governments often provide incentives and grants for adopting low-emission vehicles, further reducing the financial burden.
- Renewable energy integration
 - Transitioning to low-emission vehicles aligns with a broader strategy of using renewable energy. Council's PPA for renewable energy would power the charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.

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Rationale

- Installing solar panels in parking lots can generate clean energy to directly power vehicles or contribute to the overall energy needs of the council, promoting sustainability.
- Leadership and public perception
 - Adopting low-emission vehicles showcases the Council's commitment to environmental stewardship, setting an example for the community and other organisations.
- Regulatory compliance and future-proofing
 - Global and possibly Australian plans to ban ICE vehicle sales by 2035.
 - Anticipating and proactively addressing future regulations on emissions, including potential bans on high-emission vehicles, positions the council to stay ahead of compliance requirements and avoid sudden disruption.



Strategy

- Prepare for a gradual transition to low emission vehicles including EVs, considering current limitations and anticipated advancements in technology.
- Synergise outdoor equipment transition and fleet transition as one process.

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4.4 Gas-to-electric technologies – Scope 1



Objective

- Reduce Council gas consumption.



Description

- Lakeside Leisure Centre is the only Council site connected to piped natural gas.
 - Natural Gas consumption data for this site was not available during the report preparation and has not been included in carbon footprint calculations.
- Widespread use of LPG bottles across Council, especially at tourist parks.
 - LPG represents at least 2% of Council's total emissions, signifying its material impact, though it does not constitute a sizeable proportion of overall emissions.



Opportunities

- Phase out smaller or less utilised gas equipment as it reaches the end of its useful life and requires replacement.
- Various electric technologies (e.g. heat pumps, hot water heaters, induction cooking, electric BBQs) can readily replace gas-operated technologies.
- Hot water can be provided by solar hot water or solar panels plus heat pump units.
- In theory, holiday parks could be converted to 100% electric and become largely energy independent through the extensive application of solar PV and battery energy storage solutions (BESS), along with solar and/or electric heat pump technologies.



Rationale

- Air quality improvement
 - Electric appliances produce no on-site emissions, contributing to better local air quality and public health.
- Reduced emissions
 - Electric power equipment often has fewer greenhouse gas emissions compared to burning fossil fuels like gas and LP, especially when paired with renewable energy.
- Renewable energy integration
 - Compatibility with renewable sources – transitioning to electric allows for easier integration of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power.
- Promoting sustainability
 - Supporting electric infrastructure aligns with sustainability goals and reduces dependence on finite fossil fuel resources.
- Energy efficiency
 - Electric appliances, especially those using advanced technologies, often exhibit higher energy efficiency compared to their gas counterparts.
- Smart grid integration

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Rationale

- Electric systems enable the implementation of smart grids, enhancing energy distribution, monitoring, and management.
- Resilience and security
 - Adopting electric systems can enhance energy resilience, reducing vulnerability to disruptions in gas supply chains.



Strategy

- Underpinning a gas transition strategy should be a commitment or policy by Council to transition to electric technologies powered by renewables over a reasonable timeframe.
- Long-term upgrade planning for Lakeside Leisure Centre, prioritising electric alternatives at the end of the equipment's life cycle.
- Conduct gas usage audits and capture consumption data.
- Explore spatial and fitness-for-purpose aspects of electric solutions for various applications.
- Consider technology-specific risks, such as proper sizing and performance factors when switching from gas-powered hot water heaters to heat pumps.

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4.5 Energy efficiency – Scope 1 and 2



Objectives

- Consider emissions during procurement and project planning.
- Optimise Council electricity consumption.
- Reduce emissions from refrigerants.



Description

- Significant energy efficiency initiatives have been undertaken across various infrastructure facets:
 - Streetlighting: Upgrading conventional streetlights to energy-efficient LED lamps.
 - LED upgrades across various facilities and further under consideration.
 - Heating Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) and other equipment upgrades undertaken during normal course of business.



Opportunities

- Ongoing rollout of LED streetlamps, with potential for future efficiency enhancements through variable controls and smart controllers.
- Further LED upgrades in buildings and facilities including consideration of motion sensor systems.
- Greater use of high-efficiency heat pumps and solar hot water.
- Incorporation of low-carbon and environmentally sustainable design (ESD) principles in holiday park cabins.
- Implementation of variable speed drives and efficient fan systems.
- Upgrading of equipment using high-emission refrigerants to low-emission alternatives.



Rationale

- Energy efficiency remains a cost-effective means of reducing energy consumption and managing greenhouse gas reductions. Energy efficiency can reduce required spend on PPA, delivering abatement more cheaply in the long run.
- Improving efficiency can offer a wide range of benefits, including reducing energy costs, minimising reliance on external energy sources, reducing load on electrical infrastructure, and improving service delivery.
- Minimal risks are associated with energy efficiency upgrades with robust business cases, specifications, and contractor management processes.



Strategy

- Optimise efficiency of existing equipment, including through use of more advanced control systems.
- Ensuring energy efficiency is prioritised in new capital projects or upgrades.
- Implement a regular maintenance regime for efficient equipment operation.
- Emphasis on considering selecting high efficiency upgrades during equipment and system upgrades for long-term emission reduction.
- Implement policies to ensure procurement of low emissions refrigerants.
- Develop/refine sustainable design and sustainable procurement criteria.

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4.6 Renewable energy purchases – Scope 2



Objective

- Ensure ongoing reduction or elimination of electricity emissions through strategic renewable energy purchases.



Description

- A PPA is the most popular approach to source renewable energy.
- Council transitioned to a 100% renewable Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for electricity consumption in January 2022, significantly impacting the carbon footprint.
- Council recognises that purchasing renewable energy is the most significant opportunity for ongoing reduction or elimination of electricity emissions.
- While the current PPA is effective until December 2026 (with an option to extend until 2030), it is important to continue purchasing renewable electricity until the grid substantially decarbonises.



Opportunities

- Ensure a new PPA is secured in time for the current contract expiry.
- Monitor opportunities for improved value for money in PPA contracts in preparation for current contract expiry.
- Consider investing in larger scale distributed electricity networks using solar PV and battery technology.
- Consider opportunities to minimise spend on PPA through providing for future electrical demand in alternative ways (e.g. via solar carparks).



Rationale

- The focus on maintaining zero emissions from grid electricity consumption aligns with the short-term goal of immediate carbon reduction and meeting 2025 Carbon Neutral target.
- Ensuring ongoing progress toward Net Zero emissions requires a commitment to renewable energy purchases, mitigating the environmental impact of electricity consumption.
- The PPA aligns with Council's commitment to sustainability, demonstrating leadership in environmental responsibility.
- By sourcing 100% renewable power, Council not only reduces its carbon footprint but also sets an example for the community and other entities.
- Ongoing commitment to the PPA ensures consistent emissions reductions and supports the development of a sustainable energy market.



Strategies

- Periodically monitor trends in grid emissions intensity. Continuous monitoring allows Council to adapt and optimise strategies based on the evolving grid emissions landscape, ensuring responsiveness to changing conditions.
- Assess the cost implications of various PPA options based on the difference between bundled electricity/LGC pricing options and the forecast price for wholesale electricity over the contract term.
- Financial considerations should guide renewable energy purchase practices by evaluating cost-effectiveness over the contract period.
- Ensure robust risk assessment processes in decision-making.

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4.7 Behind-the-meter solar – Scope 2



Objective

- Reduce Council reliance on grid electricity



Description

- Numerous sites have already incorporated solar PV systems, showcasing a commitment to renewable energy.
- A large solar PV array exceeding 200 kW has been installed on the Raymond Terrace Administration Building's roof.
 - Council has voluntarily surrendered created LGCs from this system, indicating the accounting of exported electricity as emissions reductions.
- Council prefers PV projects with a payback period within 7 years.



Opportunities

- Increase PV capacity on major buildings where justified.
- Three potential new or expanded solar PV systems have been modelled and assessed for feasibility, detailed in APPENDIX A. Representative facilities for modelling include:
 - Raymond Terrace Works Depot
 - Fingal Bay Holiday Park
 - Shoal Bay Holiday Park
- Holiday parks may have potential for distributed solar and battery solutions.
 - Technical feasibility checks and shading assessments are needed for further consideration.
- Solar carparks to accommodate growing demand for EV charging



Rationale

- Modelling indicates that facility types can generally achieve payback on solar PV systems within 6-8 years.
- Behind-the-meter solar PV installations have the potential to:
 - Reduce energy demand and costs:
 - Well-designed PV systems generate positive cash flow, typically after about the 6th year from installation.
 - Positive cash flow can be directed to a revolving energy fund or similar for other projects or cost management while maintaining service delivery levels.
 - Improve grid resilience:
 - Reduce electricity demand on peak days, mitigating the risk of local voltage drops.
 - Potential to wire solar PV to battery storage systems for backup power during network outages.
 - Demonstrate commitment to sustainability:

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**Rationale**

- Showcase ongoing commitment to sustainability and contribute to building Australia's distributed renewable energy infrastructure.
- Facilitate full electrification:
 - Onsite PV supports potential full electrification, avoiding the need for electrical infrastructure upgrades.
 - Offers cost-effective solutions to current reliance on LPG tanks at holiday parks.
- Mitigate future electricity price increases:
 - Reduce the risk of future electricity price increases, both standard grid electricity prices and/or PPA prices.
- Consistency with Net Zero principles:
 - Align with Net Zero principles by reducing energy use and emissions through direct actions with multiple benefits.

**Strategy**

- Verify performance of existing solar PV systems.
- Proceed with planned PV installations.
- Consider implementing modelled projects and other opportunities wherever substantial energy savings and favourable payback can be demonstrated.
- In addition to solar PV, explore the incorporation of batteries for building-specific connections, and assess feasibility based on anticipated surplus solar energy available for export.
 - Undertake scoping and modelling of potential microgrid configurations.
- Plan for increased provision of solar carports over time.

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4.8 Waste – Scope 3: Optional



Objective

- Reduce emissions from waste.



Description

- No operating landfill sites in the Local Government Area (LGA).
- Waste transferred for disposal outside Council's jurisdiction, contributing to Scope 3 emissions.
- Current council initiatives include:
 - Investigation and development of waste management strategies, including exploring new waste streams like soft plastics.
 - Efforts towards setting waste reduction goals and action plans.
 - Establishment of bin labelling and colour standards, with performance tracking through bin auditing.
 - Development of a roadmap for sustainable waste management practices.



Opportunities

- Focus on reducing waste, improving recycling practices, and encouraging local composting solutions.
- Seek grant funding for large-scale emissions reduction initiatives.
- Enhance waste management education initiatives.



Rationale

- While waste is not a dominant source of Council's carbon footprint, it is still substantial.
- Future Climate Active standards may mandate inclusion of Scope 3 waste emissions for Carbon Neutral accreditation.
- Managing waste aligns with the State government's ambitious goals, contributing to overall sustainability objectives and demonstrating commitment to environmental responsibility.
- Emphasising waste management supports the transition to a circular economy by minimising resource depletion and promoting the efficient use of materials.



Strategy

- NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 has a specific focus on reducing emissions from waste in NSW, especially through diversion from landfill and FOGO (Food Organic and Garden Organic) collection for all NSW households and businesses.
- Aim to develop a comprehensive policy, framework, action plan, and roadmap for sustainable waste management practices.
- Local initiatives and regional collaboration will be essential.
- Joint Organisation (JO)-level procurement for region-wide services.

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4.9 Low carbon procurement – Scope 3: Optional



Objective

- Consider emissions during procurement and project planning.



Description

- Low carbon procurement, while not currently central to Council's emissions reduction efforts, is gaining importance as organisations face growing pressure to address Scope 3 emissions. This comprehensive strategy contributes to Net Zero goals and offers benefits beyond emissions reduction.
- The current Procurement Framework features a fundamental commitment to sustainability, emphasising responsible purchasing practices and promotion of local suppliers and Australian-made products.



Opportunities

- Inclusion of additional Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and emphasis on Net Zero targets.
- Consideration of Climate Active Carbon Neutral accreditation for suppliers.
- Focus on sustainable materials, energy efficiency, and environmentally friendly practices.
- Ongoing enhancement of specifications for low or Net Zero emissions, such as:
 - Road and pavement construction
 - Building design policies
 - Business services
 - Building and public/park lighting
 - HVAC
 - Power and appliances
 - Water, wastewater, and irrigation pumps
 - Sporting oval lighting



Rationale

- Carbon offset liabilities
 - Contributes to Net Zero carbon reduction capacity, potentially reducing the need for additional offset measures in the long run.
- Waste reduction
 - Prioritising sustainable products reduces waste generation.
 - Choosing products with minimal packaging supports waste reduction.
- Resource conservation
 - Selecting resource-efficient, durable products conserves natural resources.
- Financial savings
 - Initial higher costs often result in long-term financial savings.
 - Energy-efficient equipment reduces operational costs over its lifecycle.
- Meeting stakeholder expectations
 - Procuring from sustainable sources mitigates risks, including reputational risks.
 - Aligns with societal expectations, enhancing the organization's reputation.

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Rationale

- Innovation and market leadership
 - Encourages innovation and positions the organisation as a market leader in sustainability.



Strategy

- Development and adoption of a Low Carbon Procurement Policy for Council.
- Capacity building for capital works staff, procurement staff, and operational teams involved in various aspects of procurement.
- Facilitate a greater emphasis on suppliers' knowledge of their carbon footprint and Net Zero strategies.

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4.10 Funding opportunities



Objective

- Identify funding for carbon reduction projects.



Description

- Council already manages a dedicated Sustainability Reserve established in 2012. Key details include:
 - The reserve was initially seeded from various council budgets.
 - A cap of \$250,000 exists, with no additional funds added post full project reimbursement.
 - The reserve supported solar projects, contributing to Council's Carbon Neutrality initiative.
- Near-future evaluation
 - Intention to evaluate the reserve's guidelines and management.
 - Opportunity to implement report recommendations and establish clear directives for supported projects.
- Council's Sustainability Reserve :
 - Maintain, develop and capitalise Council's existing Sustainability Reserve to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy projects (similar to a Revolving Energy Fund).
 - Use savings generated from energy projects to replenish the reserve for future initiatives.
 - Leverage reserve for a continuous cycle of sustainable projects without additional strain on the council's budget.



Opportunities

- Australian Government Funding Programs
- Local Government Grants
- State Government Energy and Climate Change Funding Programs
- Renewable Energy Rebate or Grant Programs
- Climate Change and Adaptation Funds
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)
- On-bill financing
- Community and Environmental Foundations
- Regional Development Funds
- Innovation Grants
- A Revolving Energy Fund or similar ensures a self-sustaining financial mechanism, where the returns generated from initial investments are continually reinvested, enabling the council to fund and implement a consistent stream of environmentally sustainable projects without solely relying on external sources.



Rationale

External funding:

- Scale and scope of projects
 - External funding allows Council to take on more extensive and impactful projects that might exceed the capacity of its internal revolving fund alone.
- Addressing comprehensive sustainability goals

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Rationale

- Complementary external funds enable Council to address a broader range of sustainability objectives, contributing to comprehensive and integrated solutions.
- Risk mitigation
 - Relying solely on the internal Sustainability Reserve may expose the council to financial risks and limitations. External funds diversify the funding sources, reducing dependence on a single reservoir.
- Accelerating project timelines
 - External funding allows Council to expedite project implementation by providing additional financial resources.
- Meeting ambitious targets
 - Related to the above, external funding helps facilitate the realisation of ambitious environmental targets set by Council.
- Enhancing community impact
 - External funding allows for the implementation of projects with more substantial community impact, aligning with public expectations and demands.
- Demonstrating regional and national leadership
 - External funds support Council's participation in regional and national initiatives, reinforcing its commitment to broader sustainability and environmental agendas.



Strategy

- Align internal Sustainability Reserve with success factors observed in similar funds:
 - Develop realistic cash flow scenarios and seed funding requirements.
- Commit adequate internal Council resources to the pursuit of funding opportunities.
- Identify and act on short-term opportunities.

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4.11 Data management plan

To facilitate robust and accurate emissions reporting in the future, both for internal use and potential external reporting, it is recommended that Council establish a comprehensive tracking system that takes into account the sources of activity data, recording processes, emission factors applied, implementation of data quality improvement plans, and the identification and documentation of changes attributable to specific activities.

It is advisable for Council to establish a system for managing and tracking all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions data, which are typically dispersed across the following reporting systems:

- Utility or resource data management platform (provided by a third party)
- Electricity data obtained from retailers
- Fuel card or bulk fuel records from diesel and petrol suppliers
- Water consumption data from supplier
- Internal tracking and records for electricity, natural gas, water, stationary and fleet fuel use
- Internal records of waste data from waste contractors
- Asset register of air-conditioning units (chillers, split-type and packaged units), including information on refrigerant gas used and recharge capacity
- Expenditure records from finance extract
- Tracking of yearly FTE numbers and annual employee surveys for staff commute information

The table below outlines the current tracking of reported emission sources and suggests improvements to enable the reporting of a comprehensive footprint across Council.

TABLE 17: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – ACTIVITY DATA SOURCES AND SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS IN DATA COLLECTION

Emission source	Activity data source	Suggested improvement in data collection
Stationary fuel (LPG)	Finance extract	• Develop an internal database of LPG consumption for all relevant Council facilities, for a more precise collection of activity data (in kL).
Fleet fuel	Internal reporting, fleet cards	• Incorporate the data collection of fuel consumption for diesel and petrol-powered machinery and equipment (e.g. generators, blowers, brush cutters & chainsaws) into Council's existing system for fleet fuel.
Natural gas	None	• Consider using a utilities management portal to consolidate and streamline the collection of gas-related data.
Refrigerants	None	• Establish an asset register detailing the specific refrigerant type and corresponding charge (in kg) for all major refrigeration and air conditioning systems.
Grid electricity imports	Meter extract, bills, invoices	• Investigate the potential for adopting an energy management system such as Azility or Envizi to harness enhanced features such as real-time

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Emission source	Activity data source	Suggested improvement in data collection
Streetlighting	Bills, invoices	monitoring, dynamic data visualisation and reporting, as well as robust analytics and insights capabilities.
Self-consumed and exported electricity from solar PV	Solar PV monitoring portal export	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a detailed monitoring system to capture interval data on self-consumption and exports from Council's solar PV systems, to better assess the systems' performance.
Waste	Internal data reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the data collection for generated waste from capital works into Council's existing system. Measure distribution across the different waste mix types or categories via audits to facilitate improved emissions estimates.
Water	Meter extract, bills, invoices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil.
Employee commute	Commuting survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider conducting an employee commute survey annually to better estimate staff commute emissions.
Cleaning services, chemicals and equipment	Finance extract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor the annual expenditures relating to cleaning services and equipment procured by Council.
ICT services and equipment	Finance extract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor the annual expenditures relating to ICT services and equipment procured by Council.
Industrial machinery and motor equipment	Finance extract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor the annual expenditures relating to machinery and motor equipment procured by Council.
Advertising services	Finance extract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor the annual expenditures relating to professional services procured by Council.
Legal services	Finance extract	
Security and personal safety	Finance extract	
Taxis and hire cars	Finance extract	
Technical services	Finance extract	

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4.12 Emissions reduction pathway to 2050

Following workshops conducted with key internal stakeholders and comprehensive analyses of data provided, an emissions reduction pathway was developed to assist Port Stephens Council to reduce emissions moving forward.

The pathway is based on initiatives like renewable energy PPAs, and abatement opportunities via onsite solar, energy efficiency, gas transition, as well as initiatives related to transportation, landfill emissions, and sustainable procurement, as detailed in Table 18. Implementation timelines and scale of each measure within the pathway may be adjusted in the future as circumstances evolve and further insights are gained.

TABLE 18: MODELLED ASSUMPTIONS FOR DEVELOPING PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL'S EMISSIONS REDUCTION PATHWAY TO NET ZERO

Emission source	Scenario to reduce emissions	Timing
Stationary fuel	Fully transition from bottled gas use to induction cooking and electrified heating from FY 2030 until FY 2050.	FY 2030 → FY 2050
Transport fuel	Progressively transition Council's passenger fleet (light & heavy vehicles), as well as plant and outdoor equipment to low- or zero-emission vehicles by FY 2035.	FY 2024 → FY 2035
Purchased electricity	Extend PPA contracts and continue purchase of 100% renewable electricity beyond FY 2026. It is assumed that Council would continue procuring renewable power even after the initial contract expires, with this need potentially expiring when the grid is wholly or largely renewable.	FY 2022 → FY 2050
Electricity – on-site solar PV	Install new solar PV systems in the medium-term to increase onsite solar capacity. Sizes of modelled solar PV systems are as follows: 1. Raymond Terrace Works Depot - 50 kW 2. Lakeside Leisure Centre - 74.8 kW 3. Fingal Bay Holiday Park - 59.7 kW 4. Shoal Bay Holiday Park - 38.7 kW	FY 2028 → FY 2030
Electricity – energy efficiency	Implement energy efficiency measures to achieve year-on-year electricity demand reduction. Based on the assumption that Council undertakes identified actions to improve energy efficiency across Council assets, reducing electricity consumption to a 10% reduction by FY 2035, and further progressing to a 25% reduction by FY 2050	FY 2024 → FY 2035 FY 2035 → FY 2050

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Emission source	Scenario to reduce emissions	Timing
Waste	Council will implement waste diversion measures from FY 2024 to achieve 90% average recovery rate across all waste streams by FY 2050.	FY 2024 → FY 2050
Employee commute	Progressively transition to 100% purchases of low- or zero-emission vehicles among Council staff.	FY 2024 → FY 2035
Sustainable procurement	Council will integrate sustainable procurement within business and operational models. A linear progression to 50% emissions reduction by 2050 has been modelled for the pathway.	FY 2028 → FY 2050
Purchasing carbon offsets	Council will purchase carbon offsets in 2050 to achieve Net Zero status across Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3 emissions (based on developed emissions footprint).	FY 2050

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Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan**4.13 Setting emissions reduction targets**

Council has committed to becoming a Carbon Neutral organisation for its operational emissions by 2025.

Based on stakeholder engagement, assessment of emission reduction opportunities, alignment with current legislation, it is recommended that Council consider the following renewable energy and emissions reduction targets as part of a long-term commitment to achieving Net Zero:

- **Renew PPA contract of purchasing 100% renewable electricity beyond 2026:**
It is recommended that Council extends its PPA contract for its sites past 2026, to continually achieve substantial emissions reductions from purchased electricity.
- **Net Zero for Scope 1, 2 and 3 emission sources by FY 2050:**
It is recommended that Council commits to aligning with the NSW State Government target of Net Zero emissions by FY 2050, or earlier. This would involve a comprehensive, ongoing program of emission reduction works and value chain decarbonisation initiatives, implemented in accordance with the identified optimal timing, thereby minimising final carbon offset liability while maximising overall benefits to Council.

The assumptions listed in TABLE 18 above in conjunction with the targets suggested above have been used to inform the emissions reduction forecast shown in FIGURE 10 below, representing an ambitious though feasible emissions reduction pathway for Council.

Council may also wish to select an interim target in line with NSW State Government targets. This approach of setting interim targets is in line with the Science based Target initiative (SBTi) which emphasises the need for a steady downward trajectory. Both these options would require establishment (through modelling or calculation of actual data) of a baseline carbon footprint year for 2005 or later. In the absence of any other established baseline year, FY 2022 (7,586 t CO₂-e) may be used to provide an indicative idea of feasibility:

- **50% emissions reduction by FY 2030:** The 2030 emissions forecast in Figure 10 of 4,159 t CO₂-e, represents a 47% reduction on 2022 levels, just short of the NSW Government target.
- **70% emissions reduction by FY 2035:** The 2035 emissions forecast in Figure 10 of 2,525 t CO₂-e, represents a 68% reduction on 2022 levels, again just short of the NSW Government target.

Council may wish to undertake further analysis prior to future reviews of this ERAP, to inform whether and which new targets should be adopted.

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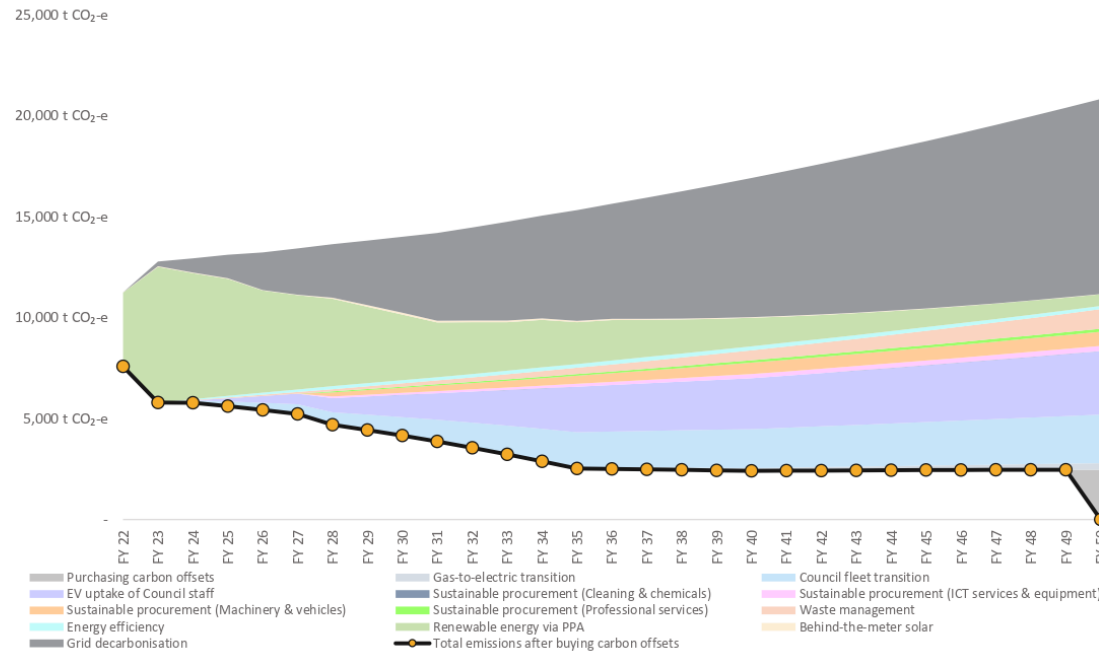


FIGURE 10: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL'S EMISSIONS REDUCTION PATHWAY

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5 Port Stephens Council Emissions Reduction Action Plan

This section translates the strategic considerations outlined in the previous section into clear, actionable and prioritised measures. These measures consider both impact and cost-effectiveness to ensure an efficient use of resources, focusing on initiatives that yield optimal returns in emissions reduction. The goal of the ERAP is to reduce emissions and in an alignment with Council's operational processes, financial context, and the broader trajectory of sustainable development.

To attain substantial reductions in energy consumption and carbon emissions, Port Stephens Council must allocate time, resources and financial support to a comprehensive multi-year program that will see the implementation of measures aimed at reducing emissions. A primary focus should be on investing in initiatives that not only contribute to emissions abatement, but also improve Council's bottom line. Such initiatives are categorised into short, medium and long-term timelines, prioritised based on the significance of the emission source in Council's inventory, with consideration of costs and maturity of the recommended technologies. The opportunities outlined in this section expand upon the broad measures outlined in the SECTION 4.

Some initiatives implemented in the short-term are expected to carry forward into the medium and long-term, whilst some are designed to be built upon by new measures during those timeframes. Some initiatives will not be available until the medium or long-term due to financial, technological or other constraints. It is expected that as the ERAP is implemented, new opportunities may arise that have not been outlined here while some that have been outlined may need to be altered or abandoned as new opportunities arise.

It is therefore recommended that this plan be reviewed by 2027 together with an updated carbon footprint. Revisions should prioritise refinement of medium-term actions and engagement of new Council members to ensure the plan remains dynamic and adaptable.

Within the tables that follow, actions identified with a * are especially relevant to achieving Council's short term target, with a focus on Scope 1 and 2 emissions, those without are relevant to a more comprehensive, longer term Net Zero target.

5.1 Short-term (FY 2024-26) Action Plan

Following the evaluation of on-site measures, the existing electricity market, sustainable transport, behind-the-meter solar, energy efficiency, gas-to-electric transition, waste management, and sustainable procurement opportunities, a proposed short-term action plan for Council is outlined in TABLE 19 below. Short-term actions can reduce the costs of Carbon Neutral by reducing the number of offsets required in 2025 and reduce emissions towards Net Zero.

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TABLE 19: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – SHORT-TERM ACTION PLAN FOR COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
1.1*	Consider emissions during procurement and project planning	Develop Sustainable Procurement Guidelines.	Develop guidelines to support employees to consider emissions and sustainability during procurement and project planning.	Business Improvement	Sustainable Planning	All Scopes
1.2*		Adopt sustainability criteria within Council's project management framework	Adopt sustainability criteria within Council's project management framework to ensure that emissions are considered during the project planning stage as risks, budget and resourcing are evaluated and integrated.	Business Improvement	Sustainable planning	All Scopes
1.3		Adopt sustainable events guidelines	Adopt sustainability criteria with regards to both internal Council events and external events held on Council land or held in partnership with Council.	Business Improvement	Sustainable events	Scope 3
1.4		Investigate Council supplier Net Zero positions	Conduct hotspot analysis and supplier segmentation on Council's value chain by FY 2025.	Sustainable procurement	Procurement data	Scope 3
1.5*		Investigate educational programs to increase awareness of sustainability across Council	Investigate introducing a series of ongoing education programs to improve sustainability literacy across Council. Topics could include the efficient use of electric tools, sustainable water practices, availability of EVs, embodied carbon awareness, and more.	Business Improvement	Sustainable planning	All Scopes

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
1.6*		Optimise HVAC use in Council buildings	Identify energy-efficient systems through Council's procurement with the aim of improving energy efficiency.	Sustainable procurement	HVAC	Scopes 1 & 2
1.7*		Update procurement Framework to include ESD and emissions considerations	Update Council's existing procurement framework to reflect greater consideration of emission reduction objectives	Sustainable procurement	Services and equipment purchasing	All Scopes
1.8*		Update tender documentation to include ESD and emissions considerations	Revise tender documentation for holiday parks to incorporate environmentally sustainable design (ESD) principles, ensuring such factors are considered when evaluating options for cabins that are due for replacement. Explore energy-efficient solutions surpassing code requirements for insulation, glazing, appliances, and electrification. Explore the feasibility of incorporating optional solar heating, solar PV, and battery storage, especially in areas without shade.	Energy efficiency	Sustainable design	All Scopes
1.9*		Upgrade to energy-efficient split systems at end-of-life.	Identify energy-efficient systems through Council's procurement process for the replacement of AC units at end-of-life, aiming to improve the overall energy efficiency of the facility.	Energy efficiency	HVAC	All Scopes

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
2.1*	Identify funding for carbon reduction projects	Explore grant options	Investigate the availability of grants to fund the implementation of actions outlined in the Emissions Reduction Action Plan and other sustainable projects across Council.	Finance	Sustainability funding	All Scopes
2.2*		Review sustainability reserve	Review the requirements of Council's Sustainability Reserve to ensure that the fund can support the implementation of actions in the Emissions Reduction Action Plan and sustainable project across Council.	Sustainable procurement	Sustainability funding	All Scopes
3.1*	Maintain zero emissions from electricity	Monitor grid decarbonisation	Monitor trends in grid emissions intensity to optimise the leveraging of grid decarbonisation in line with the review of the PPA.	Grid decarbonisation	Electricity supply	Scopes 2 & 3
3.2*		Review PPA agreement and plan for end of contract in 2026	Subject to an initial assessment of the feasibility of alternative market offers for purchasing renewable energy, review continuation of 100% renewable PPA past the expiry date in 2026.	Purchasing renewable energy	Electricity procurement	Scope 2
4.1	Monitor changes to Council emissions over time	Collect data from capital works projects	Capture data on recycled and landfilled waste from capital works.	Waste management	Waste data	Scope 3
4.2*			Capture data on material usage and liquid fuel consumption for capital works.	Sustainable procurement	Procurement data	Scopes 1 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
4.3		Collect data on employee commuting	Administer a commuting survey among Council staff to capture data for assessing emissions from employee commute.	Sustainable transport	Staff commute	Scope 3
4.4*		Collect data on natural gas and LPG consumption	Capture natural gas and LPG consumption data.	Gas-to-electric transition	Gas heating	Scopes 1 & 3
4.5*		Collect data on fugitive emissions from refrigerants	Capture data on refrigerant top-up charges for HVAC units across Council assets.	Energy efficiency	HVAC	Scope 1
4.6*		Explore emissions tracking software	Explore software options for capturing emissions data for long-term reporting and monitoring purposes.	Business Improvement	Data management	All Scopes
4.7*		Maintain database of Council Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions	Create a systematic procedure for collecting and managing the data required to calculate Council's carbon footprint, including setting up designated folders for staff to deposit data (e.g. refrigerant charges).	Emissions Monitoring	Data management	All Scopes
4.8*		Determine offsetting requirements.	Analyse the data regarding Council's progress towards reducing emissions to determine any obligations relating to offsetting and to ensure Council meets its targets.	Emissions Monitoring	Offsetting	All scopes

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
5.1*	Optimise Council electricity consumption	Investigate pool temperatures and review Winter closure periods	Investigate potential to reduce operational hours at Council owned swimming pools and/or reduce pool heating temperatures.	Energy efficiency	Sustainable planning	Scope 2
5.2*		Monitor efficiency and suitability of Council's solar PV systems	Continue to monitor current yield and export from the 211-kW solar array at the Raymond Terrace Administration Building, and assess its impact on peak demand to identify opportunities for energy demand optimisation and associated cost reductions.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - LGC	Scopes 2 & 3
5.3*		Optimise HVAC use in Council buildings	Set up the central controller at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot to maximise the functionality of the split and VRV systems for energy-efficient operation.	Energy efficiency	HVAC	All Scopes
5.4*		Optimise lighting at Council buildings and facilities	Ensure that the lighting at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot is turned off at night, and consider dimming / occupancy sensors for external night lights.	Energy efficiency	Lighting	Scopes 2 & 3
5.5*			Investigate upgrading fluoro lighting to LED at Councils Buildings including approximately 60-70 36-W twin fluoro battens and 10 x CFL fittings with LEDs at the Meadowie Community Centre and all remaining twin 36-W fluoro battens	Energy efficiency	Lighting	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
			to LED at the Tomaree Library and Community Centre.			
5.6*			Continue to upgrade sports field lighting to LED.	Energy efficiency	Lighting	Scopes 2 & 3
5.7*			Investigate if LED technology can replace conventional fluorescent or mercury lights for UV disinfection control systems at the Lakeside Leisure Centre.	Energy efficiency	UV disinfection system	Scopes 2 & 3
5.8*			Assess the potential for installation of VSD control for the two 15-kW recirculating direct-on-line (DOL) pumps at the Tilligerry Aquatic Centre, as well as implementation of night mode, dynamic control, and fixed speed options.	Energy efficiency	Pumping	Scopes 2 & 3
5.9*			Confirm that three 15-kW pumps at the Tomaree Aquatic Centre are DOL-controlled and assess the scope for VSD control to reduce energy demand, including an assessment of fixed speed setting, night setback and dynamic control.	Energy efficiency	Pumping	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
5.10*		Support Community User Groups to reduce electricity consumption	Develop an education program for Community User Groups aimed at promoting sustainable use of electricity for fridges, hot water and lighting across Council assets.	Energy efficiency	Community User Groups	Scopes 2 & 3
5.11*			Investigate the potential to offer a small grant program designed to increase the uptake of energy-efficient equipment (e.g. refrigerator upgrades) for Community User Groups.	Energy efficiency	Community User Groups	Scopes 2 & 3
5.12*		Upgrade heat pumps for water heating	Proceed with the planned replacement of the indoor Rheem heat pump at the Lakeside Leisure Centre within the next two years.	Energy efficiency	Water heating	Scopes 2 & 3
6.1*	Optimise charging infrastructure at Council	Increase charging infrastructure at Council	Integrate evaluation and strategic planning for EV charging infrastructure in the upcoming Council fleet plan, with the aim of a phased, medium-to-long term transition to battery electric vehicles (BEVs) for Council's passenger cars and utility vehicles.	Sustainable transport	Fleet transition	Scopes 1 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
6.2*		Monitor suitability of charging infrastructure	Analyse the usage of the new charging stations at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot. Review a suitable timeframe for deploying additional chargers and explore short-term options for powering utes and other light commercial vehicles (LCVs). Ensure that the installed charging capacity at the depots is sufficient to meet future demands regarding battery-powered small plant.	Sustainable transport	Fleet transition	Scopes 1 & 3
7.1*	Reduce Council gas consumption	Transition from gas heating and cooking to electric alternatives.	Explore alternatives to gas for cooking and heating at the Holiday Parks, beginning with cabins that are due for replacement in the coming years. Collaborate with industry suppliers to convey the potential shift towards fully electric cabins for water heating and induction cooking in the future.	Gas-to-electric transition	Gas heating	Scopes 1 & 3
8.1*	Reduce Council reliance on grid electricity	Investigate BESS for sites with solar PV	Investigate the potential of a battery energy storage system (BESS) at the Raymond Terrace Administration Building to help reduce the site's peak demand and capacity based on current export levels and timing.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
8.2*			Investigate the feasibility of implementing a battery system at the Tomaree Library and Community Centre to enhance self-consumption of solar energy.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3
8.3*		Rollout solar PV across Council buildings	Develop a rollout plan and explore potential funding sources to facilitate the implementation of solar opportunities identified at holiday parks.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV	Scopes 2 & 3
8.4*		Rollout solar PV across Council buildings	Complete planned 89kW expansion to solar at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3
9.1*	Reduce emissions from Council's fleet	Create an organisational position on home charging	Develop an organisational position concerning the reimbursement of electricity consumption associated with charging EVs, particularly in the context of Council fleet vehicles (including commuter use vehicles).	Sustainable transport	Fleet transition	Scopes 1 & 3
9.2*		Create a plan to transition fleet to low or no emission vehicles.	Create an EV Working Group tasked with implementing initiatives aimed at increasing EV uptake among Council staff and within Council fleet vehicles.	Sustainable transport	Fleet transition	Scopes 1 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
9.3*	Reduce emissions from employee commuting		Update Council's fleet & procurement policies to reflect a proactive strategy for supporting accelerated adoption of vehicles featuring advanced fuel-efficient & electric technologies (e.g. hybrid EVs, plug-in hybrid EVs).	Sustainable transport	Fleet transition	Scopes 1 & 3
9.4*		Optimise fuel efficiency in fleet vehicles	Investigate potential use of telematics data from Council's existing fleet to monitor driving behaviours and mileage, to facilitate informed decision-making, optimise operational efficiency, minimise fuel consumption, and promote sustainable driving practices.	Sustainable transport	Fleet transition	Scopes 1 & 3
9.5*		Transition fossil fuel-powered small plant to electric options	Explore the feasibility of transitioning to battery-powered small plant equipment.	Sustainable transport	Fleet transition	Scopes 1 & 3
10.1		Increase EV uptake across Council	Investigate options for incentivising the adoption of personal electric vehicles among Council staff. For example, in a novated lease arrangement, Council assumes responsibility for lease payments deducted from an employee's pre-tax salary, leading to substantial savings due to fringe benefits tax (FBT) exemptions. Alternatively, Council may investigate offering 'free charging' options to employees via installation of	Sustainable transport	Staff commute	Scope 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
			charging stations at solar carports in workplaces (e.g. Council depots).			
10.2*		Optimise use of public transport and ridesharing	Explore options for encouraging increased use of public transport and ridesharing among Council staff.	Sustainable transport	Staff commute	Scope 3
10.3		Reduce employee travel requirements	Optimise employee work-from-home arrangements and use of video conferencing for meetings where possible.	Sustainable transport	Staff commute	Scope 3
11.1*	Reduce emissions from refrigerants	Consider global warming potential (GWP) when upgrading HVAC systems	Create an asset upgrade plan for the Tomaree Library and Community Centre for transitioning R22 units to ones utilising lower GWP gases (e.g. R32), and achieve notably higher energy efficiency, targeting an EER of around 4+.	Energy efficiency	HVAC	Scope 1

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emissions Scope
12.1	Reduce emissions from waste	Educate staff on waste reduction	Implement staff education & training as part of Council's Waste Minimisation Plan and as specified in the Waste Management Strategy 2021-2031.	Waste management	Waste reduction	Scope 3
12.2		Implement new waste streams where possible	Investigate feasibility of implementing new waste streams (e.g. soft plastics, textiles, food waste, business waste, core flutes and internal operational waste) and other measures to support separation of garden organics (GO) and food organics & garden organics (FOGO).	Waste management	Waste reduction	Scope 3
12.3		Implement Waste Management Strategy	Implement short-term measures as specified in Council's Waste Management Strategy 2021-2031, with a key focus on meeting established waste diversion targets.	Waste management	Waste strategy	Scope 3
12.4		Optimise litter bin placement	Continue to develop Council's comprehensive litter-bin mapping with the aim of convenient litter bin placements.	Waste management	Waste reduction	Scope 3

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5.2 Medium-term (FY 2027-30) Action Plan

Following the evaluation of on-site measures, the existing electricity market, sustainable transport, behind-the-meter solar, energy efficiency, gas-to-electric transition, waste management, and sustainable procurement opportunities, a proposed medium-term action plan for Council is outlined in TABLE 20 below. Medium-term actions can reduce the ongoing costs of Council retaining its carbon neutrality to 2030, or continue to reduce emissions towards Net Zero.

TABLE 20: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – MEDIUM-TERM ACTION PLAN FOR COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
1.1*	Consider emissions during procurement and project planning	Develop a sustainable procurement roadmap	Develop a sustainable procurement roadmap that incorporates sustainability requirements (e.g. low-carbon components, high levels of recycled content, energy-efficient) in specifications and evaluation criteria for services, equipment and products in Council's procurement.	Sustainable procurement	Services and equipment purchasing	All Scopes
1.2*		Increase awareness of sustainability across Council	Establish and conduct internal engagement and training programs to promote the integration of sustainability criteria in all Council procurement decisions.	Sustainable procurement	Services and equipment purchasing	All Scopes

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
1.3*		Upgrade holiday park cabins to low-carbon design options as they become available	As holiday park cabins undergo upgrades, consistently explore the market for innovative and low-carbon design options that can effectively lower emissions and operational costs for both Council and/or the park operator. Market testing can provide valuable insights into the size of the holiday cabin market in Australia and available leverage for promoting greater innovation.	Energy efficiency	Sustainable design	All Scopes
2.1*	Optimise Council electricity consumption	Continue with the LED lighting upgrades	Continue with the LED lighting upgrades for the other facilities at the Tomaree Sports Complex and other sports fields in the LGA through Council funds, grants, and other available resources. Consider that cost-effectiveness tends to be poor with low utilisation or hours of use, so lighting replacements typically depend on planned upgrades and grant funding for community sports.	Energy efficiency	Lighting	Scopes 2 & 3
2.2*		Upgrade to more energy-efficient systems at Council Buildings	Gradually transition to electronically commutated (EC) fans at the Raymond Terrace Administration Building where feasibility and cost-effectiveness are demonstrated.	Energy efficiency	HVAC	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
2.3*			Gradually upgrade to more energy-efficient split systems at the Raymond Terrace Library through procurement as existing units fail or reach end-of-life status.	Energy efficiency	HVAC	Scopes 2 & 3
2.4*			Gradually upgrade to more energy-efficient split systems at the Koala Sanctuary Holiday Park through procurement as existing units fail or reach end-of-life status.	Energy efficiency	HVAC	Scopes 2 & 3
3.1*	Optimise charging infrastructure at Council	Upgrade power charging capacity as needed	Upgrade power charging capacity across Council as needed to support increasing demand for powering additional battery-powered equipment.	Sustainable transport	EV charging infrastructure	Scopes 1 & 3
4.1*	Reduce Council gas consumption	Transition holiday park cabins and amenities to electric solutions powered by renewable sources	Transition cabins and amenities at the Holiday Parks that are currently using gas (both bulk and bottled) to electric solutions powered by renewable sources progressively over time. Council may consider implementing a 'no new gas' policy and engaging stakeholders to streamline the electrification process as assets are replaced. Evaluate the spatial and fitness-for-purpose aspects of electric solutions for various applications.	Gas-to-electric transition	Gas heating	Scopes 1 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
5.1*	Reduce Council reliance on grid electricity	Continue investigating BESS for sites with solar PV	Explore the potential for a distributed solar and battery solution at Fingal Bay Holiday Park. Beyond the suggested buildings, assess the feasibility of expanding solar to cabins, particularly those not nearing replacement age. Prioritise areas such as the 2-bed budget and 3-bed house & villa sections, which seem to have less shading compared to the 2-bed standard villa section.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - Distributed solution	Scopes 2 & 3
5.2*			Explore the potential for a distributed solar and battery solution at the Shoal Bay Holiday Park. In addition to the three main buildings, assess the feasibility of expanding solar to cabins, with a specific focus on S301 to S309, S201 to S209, and S401a to S420. An indicative estimate of 50 kW solar PV capacity may be installed.			

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
5.3*			Explore the potential for a distributed solar and battery solution at Halifax Holiday Park. In addition to the two main buildings, assess the feasibility of expanding solar to cabins, with a specific focus on H401A, H701 to H718, H101, H202, H203, as well as the new villas H503 to H505. An indicative estimate of 75 kW solar PV capacity may be installed.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - Distributed solution	Scopes 2 & 3
5.4*			Explore the potential for a distributed solar and battery solution at Thou Walla Holiday Park. Assess the potential for expanding solar to cabins, with a focus on PV1 to PV6, B1 to B5, FV1 to FV5. An indicative estimate of 25 kW solar PV capacity may be installed.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - Distributed solution	Scopes 2 & 3
5.5*		Continue to rollout solar PV across Council buildings	Consider expanding the 10-kW system on the new office building at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot with a 25-kW system to accommodate the remainder of the roof. Additionally, install a further 25-kW solar array on the roofs of the workshop/store buildings.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
5.6*			Install solar panels on the north-facing section of the building's roof at Medowie Community Centre. Alternatively, consider replacing the 5-kW system with a larger one that spans the entire awning, and upgrade to higher wattage panels for increased efficiency.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3
5.7*			Install a distributed solar PV system with cumulative capacity of 59.7 kW on the roofs of the reception, old and new amenities buildings to meet the buildings' daytime electricity demand at the Fingal Bay Holiday Park.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3
5.8*			Assess the potential for the installation of a 38.7-kW solar PV array on the roofs of the reception, amenities, conference and entertainment buildings at the Shoal Bay Holiday Park.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3
5.9*			Assess the feasibility of installing solar PV on the roof of the amenities block and office building (H301) at Halifax Holiday Park. An estimated potential capacity of 20 kW may be installed.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
5.10*			Evaluate the feasibility of installing solar PV on the roof of the amenities block at Thou Walla Holiday Park. An estimated potential capacity of 10 kW may be installed.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3
5.11*			Install a solar PV system with an estimated capacity of 50-75 kW on the roof of the main Admin Centre or café at the Koala Sanctuary Holiday Park.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3
5.12*			Evaluate the feasibility of an expanded solar array capable of meeting the majority of the site's electricity demands at the Nelson Bay Works Depot. An estimated additional capacity of 25-30kW PV can cover the site's existing needs, with the potential for a larger array in consideration of the gradual electrification of vehicles. Explore suitable locations such as the western roof of the workshop or the roof of the fabrication workshop.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof - STC	Scopes 2 & 3
6.1*	Reduce emissions from Council's fleet	Increase uptake of low and zero-emission vehicles across Council	Agree on a strategy for the deployment of charging infrastructure and uptake of low and zero-emission vehicles among Council's fleet, inclusive of considerations for various charging infrastructure types and locations.	Sustainable transport	EV charging infrastructure	Scopes 1 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
6.2*			Facilitate Council's trial initiatives for low and zero-emission vehicles such as battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), including heavy vehicles and outdoor equipment.	Sustainable transport	Electric vehicles and hybrids	Scopes 1 & 3
6.3*		Upgrade power charging capacity as needed	Gradually deploy charging infrastructure at Council buildings to accommodate future needs for charging utes, other light commercial vehicles (LCVs), and eventually heavy vehicles (e.g. trucks), as aligned with the agreed overarching strategy and trial outcomes for Council fleet transition.	Sustainable transport	EV charging infrastructure	Scopes 1 & 3
7.1	Reduce emissions from employee commuting	Increase uptake of low and zero-emission vehicles across Council	Advance the rollout of initiatives (e.g. novated lease arrangements) to encourage adoption of personal electric vehicles among Council staff. Set procurement targets for the uptake of low and zero-emission vehicles by FY 2030.	Sustainable transport	Staff commute	Scope 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
8.1	Reduce emissions from waste	Implement new waste streams identified during previous phase	Subject to feasibility of identified measures in the short-term, proceed with implementing new waste streams and other initiatives to support separation of garden organics (GO) and food organics & garden organics (FOGO).	Waste management	Waste strategy	Scope 3
8.2		Progress Council's Waste Management Strategy	Maintain progress on actions to be implemented from Council's Waste Management Strategy 2021-2031. Assess impact of abatement measures on emissions.	Waste management	Waste strategy	Scope 3

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5.3 Long-term (FY 2031+) Action Plan

Following the evaluation of on-site measures, the existing electricity market, sustainable transport, behind-the-meter solar, energy efficiency, gas-to-electric transition, waste management, and sustainable procurement opportunities, a proposed long-term action plan for Council is outlined in TABLE 21 below. Longer-term actions will continue to reduce the ongoing costs of Council retaining carbon neutrality by continuing to reduce emissions towards Net Zero.

TABLE 21: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – LONG-TERM ACTION PLAN FOR COUNCIL OPERATIONS

Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
1.1*	Consider emissions during procurement and project planning	Maintain awareness of sustainability across Council	Continue to provide internal engagement and training programs for promoting the integration of sustainability criteria in all Council procurement decisions.	Sustainable procurement	Services and equipment purchasing	All Scopes
1.2*		Maintain high level of focus on sustainability at Council	Continue to develop and refine specifications and evaluation criteria for services, equipment, and products in Council's value chain, ensuring inclusion of sustainability requirements.	Sustainable procurement	Services and equipment purchasing	All Scopes
2.1*	Reduce Council gas consumption	Continue to reduce usage of gas at Council	Replace gas and water heating equipment with electric solutions (e.g. electric heat pumps) at Lakeside Leisure Centre.	Gas-to-electric transition	Gas and water heating	Scopes 1 & 3
2.2*			When upgrading or replacing hot water systems at the Koala Sanctuary Holiday Park, initially focusing on older accommodations followed by cabins in the longer term, explore electric hot water heating options to reduce emissions from gas.	Gas-to-electric transition	Water heating	Scope 1 & 2

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
3.1*	Reduce Council reliance on grid electricity	Continue to evaluate feasibility of battery energy storage systems (BESS)	Explore the feasibility of BESS at Raymond Terrace Works Depot if further solar installations are planned in the future, and if the solar capacity exceeds the daytime demand from the grid.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3
3.2*			Explore the feasibility of BESS at Raymond Terrace Administration building in conjunction with the assessment of solar carports and potential EV charging infrastructure for Council fleet.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3
3.3*			Explore the feasibility of BESS at Raymond Terrace Library in conjunction with any future proposals for expanding solar capacity on the roof of the building.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3
3.4*			Investigate the scope for a solar carport to augment the rooftop system, potentially incorporating BESS at Lakeside Leisure Centre. Implement solar carport with BESS where cost-effectiveness is demonstrated, and where the site's demand justifies it and can contribute to reducing peak demand and capacity.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Carport & BESS	Scopes 2 & 3
3.5*			Explore the feasibility of integrating BESS in conjunction with a larger array to meet most of the site's energy demands with solar at Medowie Community Centre.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
3.6*			Explore the feasibility of integrating BESS at Koala Sanctuary Holiday Park into an expanded solar PV solution for meeting most of the site's energy demand through on-site solar, thereby mitigating peak capacity charges.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3
3.7*			Explore the feasibility of integrating BESS at Nelson Bay Works Depot in conjunction with the expanded solar array to maximise solar self-consumption.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3
3.8*			Assess the potential for BESS at the Tomaree Library and Community Centre in conjunction with any proposed expansion of solar systems at the site.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3
3.9*		Continue to rollout Solar PV at Council sites	Assess the feasibility of hosting a solar carport spanning the 24 parking spaces in the carpark area adjacent to the Administration Building at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Carport	Scopes 2 & 3
3.10*			Assess the potential for implementing solar carport at the Raymond Terrace Administration Building in the parking area adjacent to the Administration Building.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Carport	Scopes 2 & 3
3.11*			Assess and implement additional solar at the Tilligerry Aquatic Centre in the form of solar carport in the front carpark.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Carport	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
3.12*			If a feasible distributed solution is identified, formulate a business case, explore potential grant funding opportunities, and proceed with the development and implementation of a distributed solution at the Holiday Parks.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Distributed solution	Scopes 2 & 3
3.13*			Assess the potential for expanding the solar capacity at the Koala Sanctuary Holiday Park, considering the available space on the Administration Centre roof, roofs of the two western-most motel accommodation blocks, and the site's parking areas. An estimated 130-150 kW of solar PV could generate the equivalent power to meet the site's grid requirements.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Roof	Scopes 2 & 3
3.14*			Evaluate and implement additional solar at the Tomaree Aquatic Centre in the form of a solar carport based on an assessment of future demand.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Carport	Scopes 2 & 3
3.15*			Alongside the assessment for solar carport, explore the case of incorporating a battery storage system to optimise solar self-consumption and effectively manage peak demand and capacity at the Tomaree Aquatic Centre.	Behind-the-meter solar	BESS	Scopes 2 & 3

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Action #	Objective	Action	Description	Category	Sub-category	Emission Scope
3.16*			Explore further opportunities for solar expansion, with an emphasis on solar carport solutions at the Tomaree Library and Community Centre.	Behind-the-meter solar	Solar PV - Carport	Scopes 2 & 3
4.1*	Reduce emissions from Council's fleet	Continue to transition Council's fleet & machinery to low and zero-emission vehicles and plant	Continue to upgrade the remainder of Council's fleet and machinery to low and zero-emission alternatives as they become available.	Sustainable Transport	Electric Vehicles and Hybrids	Scopes 1 & 3

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Emissions Reduction Action Plan**5.4 Monitoring and Review**

Regularly updating Council's carbon footprint, at least bi-annually, is important for responsible progress-tracking on emission reduction targets, policies, and initiatives. Aligning Council's next update with the 2024-2025 financial year at the latest is crucial for timely monitoring and ensuring the specified 2025 targets are met.

This Emissions Reduction Action Plan should be reviewed by 2027 in conjunction with an up-to-date carbon footprint. The revision should include a focus on refining medium-term actions and garnering support from new council members, ensuring the plan remains dynamic and adaptable. In undertaking the review, an emphasis on fleet transition planning and the potential for emission reduction target adjustments and an expanded scope coverage, is recommended.

**Appendix A: Modelled solar PV opportunities at Council sites****Fingal Bay Holiday Park**

An opportunity identified for the medium term (FY 2026-2030) involves deploying a distributed solar PV system on several facilities at the Fingal Bay Holiday Park, with the aim of meeting most of the buildings' daytime energy demand.

FIGURE 11, FIGURE 12, FIGURE 13, and FIGURE 14 show aerial views of modelled solar PV (total capacity of 59.7 kW) layout configurations on the reception and amenities buildings at the park.



FIGURE 11: FINGAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – RECEPTION



FIGURE 12: FINGAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – AMENITIES (NEAR POOL)

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FIGURE 13: FINGAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – AMENITIES (ALONG GOOYAH)



FIGURE 14: FINGAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – AMENITIES (ALONG ORANA)

FIGURE 15 illustrates estimated grid electricity consumption before and after solar PV installation. To generate the site's average load profile, desktop research was undertaken to obtain load profiles specific to holiday parks. Such profiles were subsequently adjusted to align with the site's estimated annual demand. Note the observed lack of export arising from the theoretical load profile representing the holiday park's total demand, with the modelled solar arrays offsetting only a portion of the demand from select buildings. For more refined estimates, a comparison of building-specific load profiles against theoretical output from the installed solar PV on a per-building basis may be conducted.

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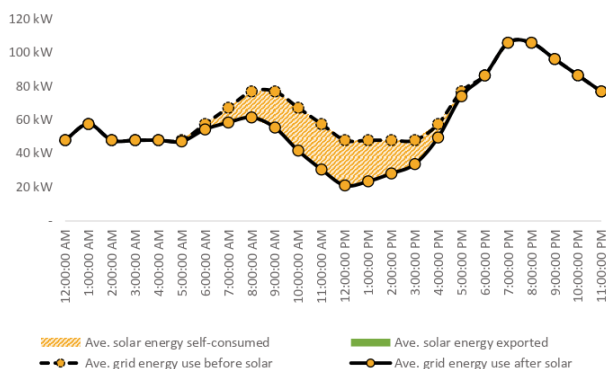


FIGURE 15: FINGAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – MODELLED LOAD PROFILES BEFORE AND AFTER SOLAR PV

Considering the technical parameters obtained from the modelling, along with the following assumptions, a high-level cost-benefit analysis was conducted for the proposed system. TABLE 22 presents a summary of the assessment.

- Electricity rate of ~\$ 0.14 per kWh for estimating annual savings offset by the system is derived from mean electricity rates (excluding fixed costs like meter reading) from January to June 2022.
- Indicative feed-in tariff for solar exports is estimated at ~\$ 0.06 per kWh.
- Indicative year-1 operational maintenance costs is at ~\$ 15 per MWh of solar yield.
- Escalation rate for electricity charges is at ~6% per annum.
- Escalation rate for operational maintenance costs is at ~2.5% per annum.
- Degradation rate of solar PV performance estimated at ~1% per year.
- Discount rate of ~5% is applied for estimating the total net present value (NPV) of the system.

TABLE 22: FINGAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – 59.7-KW SOLAR PV COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Description	Value
System size	59.7 kW
Estimated capital cost	\$ 71,604
Estimated year-1 annual savings	\$ 8,878
Internal rate of return	17%
Payback period	6.9 years
Net present value (NPV)	\$ 146,313
Year-1 self-consumption	72 MWh pa

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Raymond Terrace Works Depot

A similar medium-term opportunity involving the expansion of the existing solar PV system at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot was identified. FIGURE 16 shows the aerial view of a modelled 50-kW solar PV array appended to the existing 10-kW system at the depot. Researched load profiles specific to commercial spaces were used as a reference and were adjusted to align with the site's estimated annual demand, resulting in the chart in FIGURE 17.



FIGURE 16: RAYMOND TERRACE WORKS DEPOT

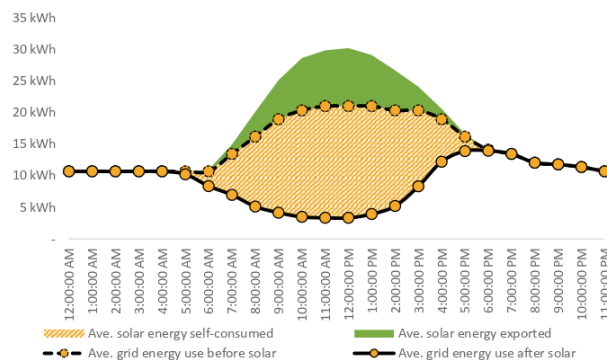


FIGURE 17: RAYMOND TERRACE WORKS DEPOT – MODELLED LOAD PROFILES BEFORE AND AFTER SOLAR PV

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Together with the retrieved parameters from the modelling, the assumptions outlined for the proposed system at the Fingal Bay Holiday Park was re-applied to the depot, resulting in a high-level cost-benefit analysis summarised below:

TABLE 23: RAYMOND TERRACE WORKS DEPOT – 50-KW SOLAR PV COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Description	Value
System size	50.0 kW
Estimated capital cost	\$ 60,000
Estimated year-1 annual savings	\$ 7,561
Internal rate of return	16%
Payback period	6.9 years
Net present value (NPV)	\$ 112,980
Year-1 self-consumption	51 MWh pa

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Shoal Bay Holiday Park

Following the outcomes of the assessment from the conducted site visits, it is recommended to investigate the implementation of a distributed solar PV system on the roofs of various facilities at the Shoal Bay Holiday Park, to meet the buildings' electricity requirements during daytime and reduce reliance on grid imports. FIGURE 18, FIGURE 19 and FIGURE 20 show aerial views of modelled solar PV (total capacity of 38.7 kW) layout configurations on select buildings at the Shoal Bay Holiday Park.



FIGURE 18: SHOAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – RECEPTION



FIGURE 19: SHOAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – AMENITIES BUILDING

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FIGURE 20: SHOAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – CONFERENCE AND ENTERTAINMENT BUILDINGS

FIGURE 21 illustrates estimated grid electricity consumption before and after solar PV installation. Similar to the process conducted for Fingal Bay Holiday Park, load profiles specific to holiday parks, which bear a resemblance to residential ones, were referenced and adjusted to align with the site's annual demand, helping to determine the estimated amount of solar energy available for self-consumption. As with Fingal Bay Holiday Park, refined estimates necessitate comparisons of building-specific load profiles against the theoretical output from the installed solar PV on a per-building basis.

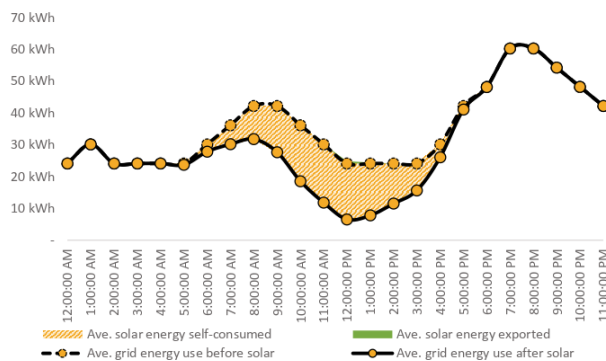


FIGURE 21: SHOAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – MODELLED LOAD PROFILES BEFORE AND AFTER SOLAR PV

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Applying the parameters generated from the modelling above, together with assumptions previously outlined for Fingal Bay Holiday Par and replicated for Shoal Bay Holiday Park, a high-level cost-benefit analysis may be developed as follows:

TABLE 24: SHOAL BAY HOLIDAY PARK – 38.7-KW SOLAR PV COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Description	Value
System size	38.7 kW
Estimated capital cost	\$ 46,458
Estimated year-1 annual savings	\$ 5,906
Internal rate of return	17%
Payback period	6.7 years
Net present value (NPV)	\$ 98,213
Year-1 self-consumption	47 MWh pa

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Summary of modelled solar PV

The table below summarises the modelling outcomes for solar PV opportunities identified for the three representative facilities. Such opportunities are considered feasible and cost-effective, with favourable payback periods of less than seven years.

TABLE 25: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – MEDIUM-TERM SOLAR PV OPPORTUNITIES: REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES

Site name	Description of potential opportunity	Solar PV size	Indicative costs (\$)	Year-1 cost savings (\$)	Payback (years)	IRR	Est. energy savings (%)	Emissions abatement (t CO ₂ -e)
Fingal Bay Holiday Park	<i>Medium-term option:</i> Install a distributed solar PV system with cumulative capacity of 59.7 kW on the roofs of the reception, old and new amenities buildings to meet the buildings' daytime electricity demand.	59.7 kW	71,604	8,878	6.9	17%	13%	47.0
Raymond Terrace Works Depot	<i>Medium-term option:</i> Consider expanding the 10-kW system on the new office building with a 25-kW system to accommodate the remainder of the roof. Additionally, install a further 25-kW solar array on the roofs of the workshop/store buildings.	50.0 kW	60,000	7,561	6.9	16%	40%	33.4
Shoal Bay Holiday Park	<i>Medium-term option:</i> Assess the potential for the installation of a 38.7-kW solar PV array on the roofs of the reception, amenities, conference and entertainment buildings.	38.7 kW	46,458	5,906	6.7	17%	15%	30.8
Total		148 kW	178,062	22,345	6.9	17%	22%	111.3

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Emissions Reduction Action Plan**Appendix B: Establishing Council's emissions boundary**

Defining the emissions boundary marks the first step in the carbon accounting process. The boundary denotes the coverage and extent of the carbon account, determined through a set of criteria designed to identify emission sources and decide which of the identified sources are to be included or excluded.

Emission sources under the Climate Active standard

In consideration of the potential for Council to certify as Carbon Neutral under the Australian Government-accredited standard, Climate Active, the following emission sources – Scopes 1 and 2, as well as relevant Scope 3 emission sources – were assessed for inclusion or exclusion in Council's emissions boundary.

1. Stationary energy and fuel used in buildings, machinery or vehicles under Council's control (e.g. natural gas, fuel consumption for generators or vehicles)
2. Electricity consumption in buildings, machinery or vehicles under Council's control
3. All other emissions likely to be influenced by Council must be assessed for relevance

Broad categories of Scope 3 emission sources for consideration include:

1. Purchased goods and services.
2. Capital goods
3. Fuel- and energy-related activities (not included in Scope 1 or Scope 2)
4. Upstream transportation and distribution
5. Waste generated in operations
6. Business travel
7. Employee commuting
8. Upstream leased assets
9. Downstream transportation and distribution
10. Processing of sold products
11. Use of sold products
12. End-of-life treatment of sold products
13. Downstream leased assets
14. Franchises
15. Investments

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Relevance test

The 'relevance test' under Climate Active determines whether an emission source aside from stationary energy, fuel and electricity under the operational control of Council, should be included or excluded from the emissions boundary. The test established that an emission source can be excluded if fewer than two of the five relevance criteria shown in Figure 22 below are met.

Criteria	Description of Emission Source
Size	Emissions from this source are large compared to the organisations scope 1 and 2 emissions.
Influence	The organisation is able to influence or reduce these emissions.
Stakeholder	Stakeholders (eg. the community) would consider these emissions critical.
Risk	These emissions contribute to the organisations GHG risk exposure.
Outsourcing	These emissions come from activities previously undertaken by the organisation but now outsourced.

FIGURE 22: CRITERIA USED TO CONDUCT A RELEVANCE TEST UNDER CLIMATE ACTIVE

Included and excluded emission sources

As per Climate Active guidelines, Council's carbon footprint must include stationary energy, fuel (scope 2 emissions) and electricity consumption (scope 2), as well as all other relevant scope 3 emission sources identified through the 'relevance test'. FIGURE 23 illustrates the procedure for determining whether a scope 3 emission source is included or excluded according to the Climate Active standard. As shown below, non-relevant emission sources can be excluded from the boundary. Relevant emission sources for which data is unavailable or calculated emissions are deemed immaterial can be non-quantified but must be included in the boundary.

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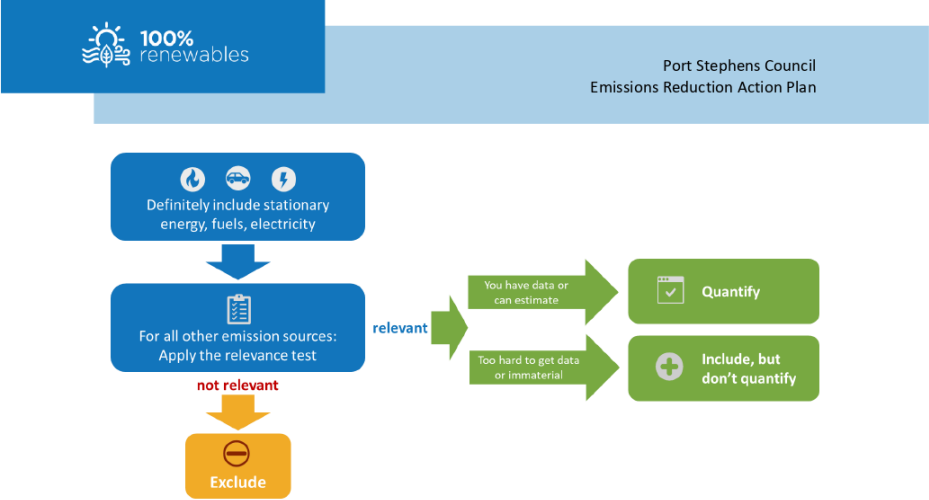


FIGURE 23: HOW TO IDENTIFY INCLUDED OR EXCLUDED EMISSIONS UNDER CLIMATE ACTIVE

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1

FINAL EMISSION REDUCTION ACTION PLAN.



Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

In consultation with Council and based on the boundary assessment, the following Scopes 1, 2 and 3 emission sources were established to constitute Council's Climate Active-compliant emissions boundary for FY 2022.

TABLE 26: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – SUMMARY OF EMISSION SOURCES BOUNDARY ASSESSMENT

Emission source	Relevant?	Quantified?	Emission source component		
			Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
Stationary fuel – LPG	Yes	Yes	✓	-	✓
Fleet fuel – diesel	Yes	Yes	✓	-	✓
Fleet fuel – petrol	Yes	Yes	✓	-	✓
Fleet fuel – ethanol	Yes	Yes	✓	-	✓
Electricity	Yes	Yes	-	✓	✓
Waste	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Potable water	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Employee commute	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Cleaning equipment and supplies	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Cleaning services	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
IT equipment	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Internet	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Computer and technical services	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Telecommunications	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Motor vehicle hire	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Industrial machinery and equipment	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Motor vehicles	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Advertising services	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Legal services	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Security and personal safety services	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Taxis and hire cars	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Technical services	Yes	Yes	-	-	✓
Natural gas	Yes	No	✓	-	✓
Refrigerants	Yes	No	✓	-	-
Construction and material services	Yes	No	-	-	✓
Horticulture and agriculture	Yes	No	-	-	✓
Roads and landscape	Yes	No	-	-	✓
Accounting services	Yes	No	-	-	✓
Air travel (Council staff)	No	No	-	-	✓
Business accommodation	No	No	-	-	✓
Products	No	No	-	-	✓
Food and catering	No	No	-	-	✓
Postage, courier and freight	No	No	-	-	✓

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FINAL EMISSION REDUCTION ACTION PLAN.



Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

The information presented in TABLE 26 above is visually displayed in FIGURE 24 below to clearly show which emission sources were included and excluded from Council's boundary.

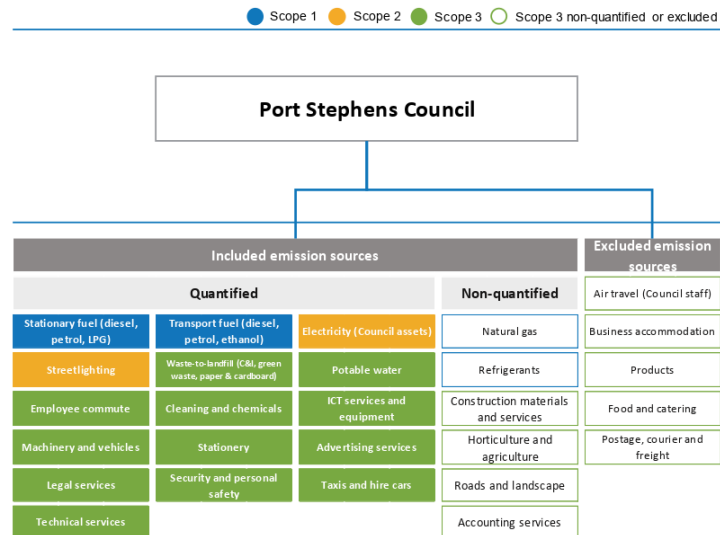


FIGURE 24: PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL – FY 2022 CARBON FOOTPRINT EMISSIONS BOUNDARY

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1

FINAL EMISSION REDUCTION ACTION PLAN.



Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

Appendix C: Climate Active requirements for sequestration insetting

Draft Climate Active Guidelines

The guidelines for including carbon sequestration within a Climate Active carbon account are currently under development and expected to be finalised by the end of 2023. These guidelines are applicable to entities seeking to measure carbon sinks from trees and shrubs they have planted in addition to GHG emissions. The guidelines outline the five steps for achieving Climate Active Carbon Neutral certification: measure, reduce, offset, verify, and disclose.



FIGURE 25: STEPS TO ACHIEVING CLIMATE ACTIVE CARBON NEUTRAL CERTIFICATION

The guidelines are distinct from the Emission Reduction Fund (ERF) methods, which have specific rules for carbon offsets projects.

- While there are some similarities between the guidelines and ERF methods, the main differences lie in the starting and ending points of the processes.
- Unlike ERF methods, the guidelines do not require the plantings to be new and do not generate Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) or any other tradeable carbon credit unit.
- If the plantings are included in an ERF project generating ACCUs, the sequestration cannot be accounted for using the Climate Active guidelines. However, voluntary cancellation of ACCUs can be used to offset emissions.

Eligibility requirements

The current draft eligibility requirements for inclusion of tree planting activities in carbon footprint calculations are summarised in Table 27:

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 1

FINAL EMISSION REDUCTION ACTION PLAN.



Port Stephens Council
Emissions Reduction Action Plan

TABLE 27: CLIMATE ACTIVE'S DRAFT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CARBON ACCOUNTING FOR SEQUESTRATION ACTIVITIES

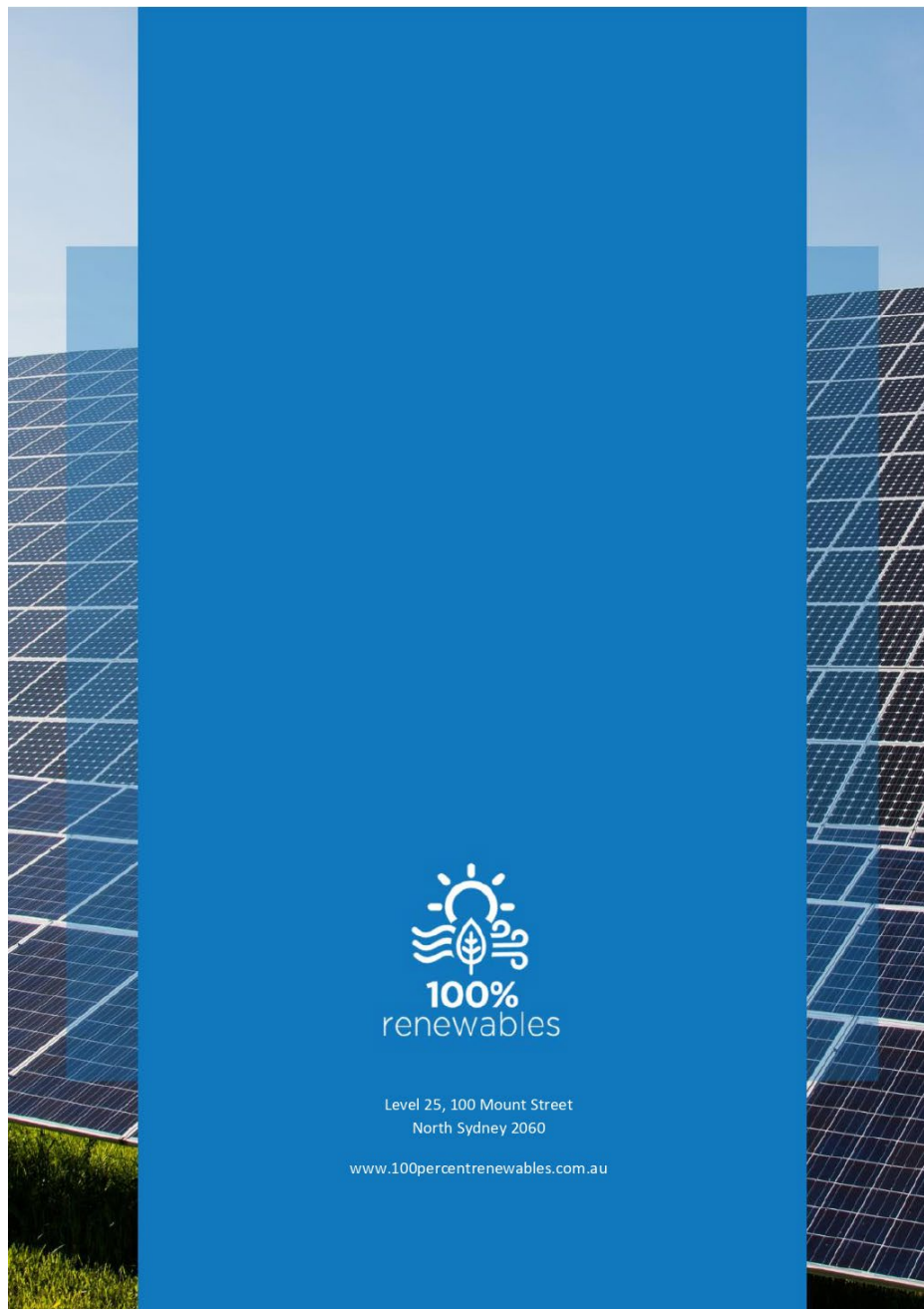
Relevant eligibility criteria
The trees and shrubs must be planted in an area that falls under the operational control or supply chain of the entity;
The planting event must have occurred in or after 1990;
The practical minimum plot area is 0.2 ha;
This area must be located in Australia in an area where FullCAM (Full Carbon Accounting Model) coverage exists;
The area must have been free of forest cover for at least 5 years before the trees are planted;
The area must not have been cleared over the 5 years prior to planting;
The entity must plant species of trees that has the potential to be at least 2 metres tall and reach a crown cover of at least 20% of the planting area, and either:
Consists of native species planted to match the structure and composition of local vegetation and is planted at a minimum of 200 stems per hectare (or higher if using specific calibrations);
Is a species-specific planting that matches the species, geometry and density conditions set out in the Emission Reduction Fund (ERF) environmental planting FullCAM guidelines.
The planting must not be part of an ERF project or any other carbon offset program.

Method overview

In brief, Climate Active's tree planting accounting guidelines require that the net abatement amount from tree planting activities for a reporting period be determined by calculating the change in total carbon stock across all plots within the project areas, considering emissions from fire and clearing events.

For modelling abatement outcomes from tree planting activities, Climate Active requires use of CSIRO's FullCAM software to assess the Carbon Neutrality claims of entities seeking Climate Neutral certification. By requiring the use of FullCAM, Climate Active can ensure annual estimates of the carbon sequestration (removal) and emissions associated with land-use activities, such as afforestation, reforestation, and forest management, can be accurately and consistently calculated across a wide range of different environments and management regimes.

To account for observed trends in forest permanence and to ensure abatement from tree planting activities is not overestimated, Climate Active applies a 70% "conservative multiplier" to abatement estimates to allow for a "reversal buffer". A reversal buffer serves as a precautionary measure to address uncertainties and potential changes in the carbon storage capacity of the project area.



**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES - 8 JULY 2025 -
MINUTE NO. 162.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025****ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 MINUTE NO. 275, 12 OCTOBER 2021.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 12 OCTOBER 2021****NOTICE OF MOTION****ITEM NO. 2****FILE NO: 21/268337****EDRMS NO: PSC2017-00019****CARBON NEUTRALITY****COUNCILLOR: RYAN PALMER****THAT COUNCIL:**

- 1) Commit to the goal of achieving carbon neutrality for Council operations by 2025.
- 2) Determine a suitable funding source to support Council in achieving this goal
- 3) Provide a report to Council on a roadmap to achieving carbon neutrality.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 12 OCTOBER 2021
MOTION**

275	Mayor Ryan Palmer Councillor Giacomo Arnott It was resolved that Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Commit to the goal of achieving carbon neutrality for Council operations by 2025.2) Determine a suitable funding source to support Council in achieving this goal3) Provide a report to Council on a roadmap to achieving carbon neutrality.
------------	--

The motion was carried.

**BACKGROUND REPORT OF: JANELLE GARDNER – STRATEGY &
ENVIRONMENT SECTION MANAGER****BACKGROUND**

Climate change is a significant global challenge that directly impacts the Port Stephens community. Impacts such as increased sea level rise, intensity and frequency of storms, bushfire and rainfall patterns are challenging the way we manage our environment.

PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL**192****PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL****203**

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 12 OCTOBER 2021

Over the past few years, Council has implemented a number of initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint. These include:

- Installation of solar photovoltaic systems at Council's Administration Building, Salamander Waste Transfer Station, libraries, community centres and Rural Fire Service buildings.
- Installation of solar pool pre-heating at Lakeside Leisure Centre, Tomaree Aquatic Centre and Tilligerry Aquatic Centre.
- Use of recycled glass 'greencrete' in the upgrade of Tanilba Bay roundabout.
- Installation of Building Management System and Programmable Logic Controller at our Administration Building, Lakeside Leisure Centre and many sports and community buildings to deliver energy efficiencies and lower operating costs.
- Installation of water-saving irrigation and stormwater harvesting at Medowie Park and Kindlebark Oval.
- Installation of variable-speed drives at Lakeside Leisure Centre plus Kangaroo Street and Stockton Street flood pumps to save energy consumption.
- Installation of energy-saving LED field lighting at Ferodale Netball Courts, Tomaree Netball Courts and Tomaree Sports Complex, Administration Building, Tomaree Library and Community Centre, Council works depots, Birubi Surf Club and a number of community centres and halls.

The New South Wales State Government has adopted emission reduction and renewable energy policies that aim to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050. Port Stephens Council will support these actions by committing to ensuring Council operations are carbon neutral by 2025.

To achieve this, Council will ensure any emissions released into the atmosphere from the organisation's activity will be balanced by the equivalent amount of emissions being removed. Council will work closely with the community, business and all levels of government to influence behaviour change, reduce energy demand and protect and enhance the natural environment. Council will:

- Undertake a review of current emissions to determine the baseline
- Commit to monitoring emissions on an annual basis
- Work with our community to develop a Sustainability Strategy
- Implement actions via the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework that deliver carbon neutrality
- Advocate to the NSW Environment Minister, the Hon Matt Kean and Premier, the Hon Dominic Perrottet, to request assistance in achieving carbon neutrality.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 22 JULY 2025

**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES - 8 JULY 2025 -
MINUTE NO. 162.**

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 2 MINUTE NO. 275, 12 OCTOBER 2021.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 12 OCTOBER 2021

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.05pm.



Port Stephens Council Emission Reduction Action Plan (ERAP) 2025 Progress Report



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Background

In October 2021, Port Stephens Council committed to achieving Carbon Neutrality by 2025. In response, Council commenced a number of measures, including calculating its baseline carbon footprint for the 2021 financial year to establish a starting point for emissions reduction efforts.

A strategic roadmap was developed in 2022, identifying the need for widespread changes and outlining the offsetting liabilities required to reach the targeted neutrality.

In 2023, the Council engaged a Carbon Neutral specialist to assist in developing an Emission Reduction Action Plan (ERAP). This plan involved recalculating Council's carbon footprint, incorporating latest data and best practices, and defining targeted actions to reduce emissions progressively over time. The ERAP also recommended a shift towards a Net Zero target, aligning with international standards and state and federal commitments.

Figure 1 illustrates the changes in Council's carbon footprint between 2021 and 2022, with a revised calculation scheduled for 2026 to monitor ongoing progress.

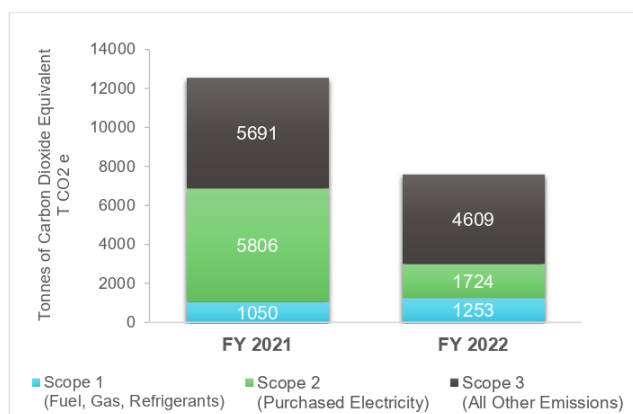


Figure 1: Carbon footprint for the 2021 and 2022 Financial Years showing 40% reduction in Council's operational emissions during that period.

Council's resolution to achieve Carbon Neutrality and the implementation of the associated ERAP have played a key role in embedding a culture of emissions reduction within the organisation. These initiatives have fostered greater awareness across all levels of Council, ensuring that sustainability considerations are factored into decision-making processes and operational practices.

Key Achievements to Date



Solar Panels installed across Community Halls, Libraries, Sport Clubs, Administration Buildings, Depots and Holiday Parks



Council powered by 100% Renewable Electricity via a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)



Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Installed at Council's Administration Building to support the growing Electric Vehicle Fleet



Energy Efficient Heat Pumps and Solar Pool Heating installed at all Council-owned Aquatic Centres



LED Lighting upgrades across Sporting Fields, Streetlights and Buildings



Implementation of New Waste Streams including Textile, Polystyrene, Timber and Green waste



Holiday Parks donated more than 250 items to Local Community Groups including Lounges, Fridges and Dining Settings



Emission Reduction Action Plan developed & over 60% of Short Term Actions now underway



Upgrades to Battery Electric Landscaping and Power Tools for Holidays Parks and Council Maintenance

Status of Emission Reduction Initiatives

Since committing to Carbon Neutrality in October 2021, Council has been working to reduce its emissions through a range of different projects and initiatives which have been rolled out across the organisation. While these projects include the short-term actions outlined in the ERAP, there were also a number of other initiatives rolled out before the ERAP was developed, which have contributed to the emission reductions achieved to date.

Emission Reduction Actions Undertaken in 2022

A number of key actions were completed in 2022 to reduce operational emissions including:

- The expansion of the photovoltaic (PV) solar array on the Council Administration Building. Electricity consumption and electricity bill savings followed.
- Council entered into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for 100% renewable energy. The PPA reduced the emissions from Council's purchased electricity by 60% in the 2022 financial year, and 100% in proceeding years.
- Council calculated its basic carbon footprint for the 2021 financial year, which established Council's baseline emissions.



Figure 2: Council Administration Building PV solar array expansion completed in 2022.

Table 1 below summarises the emission reduction actions completed or initiated during 2022:

Table 1: Emission reduction initiatives initiated or completed in 2022

Name of Project or Initiative	Related ERAP Objective	Status	Outcome
Introduce Circular Economy Procurement to Council	Objective 1. Consider Emissions During Procurement and Project Planning	Ongoing	Waste Project Officer began working with the Hunter Joint Organisations (HJO) in 2022 to increase circular procurement at Council.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 3 2025 ERAP PROGRESS REPORT.

Name of Project or Initiative	Related ERAP Objective	Status	Outcome
Upgrade to Heat Pump at Lakeside Leisure Centre - 50m Outdoor Pool	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Lakeside Leisure Centre – 50m outdoor pool heat pumps replaced.
Implement New Waste streams - Timber Trial	Objective 12. Reduce Emissions from Waste	Complete	Timber recycling trial ran from 2022-2024 with 377t timber waste diverted from landfill; currently at tender for contract to allow for ongoing diversion;
Implement New Waste streams - Polystyrene		Complete	2022-2025 polystyrene 5.68t or 9 pallets of A grade quality diverted from landfill.
Implement New Waste streams - Street Sweepings		Complete	Between 2022-2025, 982t street sweeping waste diverted from landfill.
Salamander Way – Circular Asphalt Trail	Objective 1. Consider Emissions During Procurement and Project Planning	Complete	Salamander Way project - trialling circular economy asphalt that incorporates recycled materials

Actions Undertaken in 2023

In March 2023, Council endorsed funding for the preparation of an Emissions Reduction Action Plan to progress the Carbon Neutral commitment. This project included a thorough analysis into the emissions Council was responsible for and recalculated the carbon footprint for the 2022 financial year. The project included undertaking audits of 10 Council owned community buildings and developed strategies to reduce emissions at those sites.



Figure 3: Sports field lighting LED upgrade at Yulong Oval, Medowie completed in 2023.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 3 2025 ERAP PROGRESS REPORT.

Table 2 below summarises the actions undertaken or initiated during 2023:

Table 2: Emission reduction initiatives initiated or completed in 2023.

Name of Project or Initiative	Related ERAP Objective	Status	Outcome
Investigate a solution to capture sustainability impacts (ERAP)	Objective 4 - Monitor Changes to Council Emissions Over Time	Ongoing	Council commenced investigations to improve data capture and reporting processes
Building Energy Efficiency Audits	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Comprehensive audits undertaken of Council's highest emissions buildings, including aquatic centres, administration buildings, holiday parks, libraries and depots with actions provided in ERAP.
Upgrade heat pumps at Tilligerry Aquatic Centre	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	25m pool heat pumps replaced - 3 x electric heat pumps, heat boost pump & pool solar
Upgrade heat pumps at Tomaree Aquatic Centre	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Tomaree Aquatic Centre – 50m pool heat pumps replaced
Install variable-speed drives (VSD) for Council flood pumps.	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Installing variable-speed drives (VSD) at Lakeside Leisure Centre, Kangaroo Street and Stockton Street flood pumps to reduce energy consumption
Yulong Oval Sports Field lighting upgrade	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Outdoor LED lighting upgrades installed to fields 1/2/3
Brandon Park Sports Field lighting upgrade	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Outdoor LED lighting upgrades to baseball diamond / netball courts / multisport court
Soldiers Point Tennis Courts lighting upgrade	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Outdoor LED lighting upgrades to courts 1/2/3
Tilligerry Tennis Club sports field lighting upgrade	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Outdoor LED lighting upgrades to courts 1/2/3
LED Lighting at Council Administration Building	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Complete	Upgrades completed within the Council Chambers, all staff areas and external lighting converted to LEDs

Shoal Bay Waterfront Upgrade	Objective 12: Reduce Emissions from Waste	Complete	Greencrete Concrete and recycled material park furniture used.
George Reserve Project	Objective 12: Reduce Emissions from Waste	Complete	Utilised recycled plastic lumber instead of virgin timber
Ferodale Road 700m asphalt project	Objective 12: Reduce Emissions from Waste	Complete	46,125 waste glass bottle equivalents, 74t of recycled asphalt and crumb rubber from 664 end-of-life tyres used
Glenelg Street 85m asphalt project	Objective 12: Reduce Emissions from Waste	Complete	34,625 waste glass bottle equivalents, 55t of recycled asphalt and crumb rubber from 499 end-of-life tyres used
Optimise Litter Bin Placement	Objective 12: Reduce Emissions from Waste	Complete	Initial litter bin mapping complete
Garden Organics (green bins)	Objective 12: Reduce Emissions from Waste	Complete	Garden organics service implemented in LGA to redirect green waste from landfill and processed into an environmentally sustainable compost product.



Figure 4: Garden Organics services were implemented in 2023.

Actions Undertaken in 2024

In 2024, Council commenced the roll out of the short term actions identified in the ERAP. This included:

- The purchase of Council's first electric vehicle – a van associated with Council's libraries.
- The continued roll out of the \$900,000 investment in solar panels across pools, depots and community buildings, and the replacement of the heat pump for Council's largest indoor pool at Lakeside Aquatic Centre.
- The implementation of Council's waste strategy including key objectives to engage in regional cooperation, expand available waste streams and investigate smart waste technology.

- The rollout of LED lighting upgrades at sporting fields, and investigating the availability of grant funding to continue supporting the rollout of these projects.



Figure 5: A Library Van became the first addition to Council's EV Fleet during 2024.

The table 3 below summarises the actions undertaken or initiated during 2024:

Table 3: Emission reduction actions initiated or completed in 2024.

Name of Project or Initiative	ERAP Action or Objective	Status	Outcome
Council Net Zero Accelerator Training	1.5 - Investigate Educational Programs to increase awareness of Sustainability across Council	Complete	Council Environment Officers completed the Council Net Zero Accelerator course provided by the Hunter Joint Organisation
Birubi SLSC Air-conditioning replacement	1.9 - Upgrade to energy-efficient Split Systems at End of Life.	Complete	Birubi SLSC Air-conditioning replaced with energy efficient system
Grant Funding for ERAP Projects	2.1 - Explore Grant Options	Ongoing	Council utilised grant funding to support the rollout of ERAP actions, including the NSW State Government EV Fleets funding to purchase a new electric fleet vehicles.
Review of Council Reserves	2.2 - Review Sustainability Reserve	Complete	Reserve requirements reviewed
Monitor Grid Decarbonisation	3.1 - Monitor Grid Decarbonisation	Ongoing	Council staff attended Ausgrid Climate Resilience working group meetings during which the evolving status of the electricity grid was discussed.

LED Lighting upgrades at the Holiday Parks	Objective 5. Optimise Council Electricity Consumption	Ongoing	Accommodation & Facility lighting transitioning to LED lighting across all Holiday Parks
Installation of occupancy sensors at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot	5.4 - Optimise Lighting at Council Buildings and Facilities	Complete	Lighting occupancy sensors installed at the Raymond Terrace Works Depot to improve safety and sustainability outcomes.
Bowthorne sports field lighting upgrade	5.6 - Optimise Lighting at Council Buildings and Facilities - Continue to upgrade sports fields to LED	Complete	Outdoor LED lighting upgrades to fields 1/2
Nelson Bay Netball courts lighting upgrade	5.6 - Optimise Lighting at Council Buildings and Facilities - Continue to upgrade sports fields to LED	Complete	Outdoor LED lighting upgrades to 6 netball courts
Tomaree Sports Complex sports field lighting upgrade	5.6 - Optimise Lighting at Council Buildings and Facilities - Continue to upgrade sports fields to LED	Complete	Outdoor LED lighting upgrade to fields 2/3/4/5
Bill Strong Oval sports field lighting upgrade	5.6 - Optimise Lighting at Council Buildings and Facilities - Continue to upgrade sports fields to LED	Complete	Outdoor LED lighting upgrade rugby field
Upgrade of Indoor Pool Heat Pump at Lakeside Leisure Centre	5.12 - Upgrade to Heat Pump at Lakeside Leisure Centre - Indoor Pool	Complete	Indoor pool heat pump replaced
Solar PV Installation at Lakeside Aquatic Centre	8.4 - Rollout Solar across Council	Complete	80kW's of solar installed at Lakeside Aquatic Centre. The roof of this building is now fully covered in solar PV and solar pool heating.
Transition Council Fleet to Electric	9.2 - Create a plan to transition fleet to low or no emission vehicles	Complete	Council purchased its first two electric vehicles, a van to service the libraries, and an EV ute to use as a staff pool vehicle. With small plant upgrades from petrol to electric being implemented across the fleet. More than

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 3 2025 ERAP PROGRESS REPORT.

			\$200,000 was spent on the transition to electric during 2024, with funding provided from the fleet budget and grants.
Holiday Park Air conditioner Upgrades	11.1 - Consider global warming potential when upgrading HVAC Systems.	Complete	All air-conditioners using R22 Refrigerant, were removed and replaced at all Holiday Parks
Sheet textile recycling	12.2 - Implement New Waste Streams where possible	Complete	"Give a Sheet" textile recycling drop off day diverted 1.3t from landfill
Litter Bin sensor trial	12.3 Implement Waste Management Strategy	Ongoing	2024-2025 Bin sensor trial started; exploring options for compactor bins



Figure 6: Solar PV and solar pool heating installed at Lakeside Aquatic Centre in 2024.

Actions Undertaken or Scheduled for 2025

In 2025, Council has continued to implement the Short Term Actions of the ERAP including expanding its electric vehicle fleet and charging infrastructure.

Table 4 below summarises the actions undertaken, initiated or scheduled in 2025:

Table 4: Emission reduction actions initiated, completed or scheduled for 2025.

Name of Project or Initiative	ERAP Action or Objective	Status	Outcome
Review of Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)	3.2 - Review PPA Agreement and Plan for end of contract in 2026	Scheduled	This review is set by Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Council's (SSROC) responsible for the creation of Council's

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 3 2025 ERAP PROGRESS REPORT.

			current PPA. This review is expected to occur in the second half of 2025.
Solar PV Monitoring at Council Administration Building	5.2 - Monitor efficiency and suitability of Council's Solar PV system	Ongoing	Current PV system is performing to required standards. No change to system required at this time. Monitoring is ongoing for life of system.
Mallabula sports field lighting upgrades	5.6 - Optimise Lighting at Council Buildings and Facilities - Continue to upgrade sports fields to LED	Complete	LED upgrades to fields 1, 2 and the training area.
Increased Council EV Charging capacity.	6.1 - Increase charging infrastructure at Council	Ongoing	EV charging at Council Administration building has been increased to maximum capacity. Potential to increase charging at depots as required.
Monitor Council EV Charging capacity.	6.2 - Monitor suitability of charging infrastructure	Ongoing	Council currently has suitable EV charging stations for the current Electric Vehicle Fleet.
Reduce gas consumption at the Holiday Parks	7.1 - Transition from gas heating and cooking to electric alternatives at the Holiday Parks -	Ongoing	This action gradually occurs during upgrades of accommodation and facilities. Council is investigating potential shift to fully electric cabins.
Transition Council Fleet to Electric	9.2 - Create a plan to transition fleet to low or no emission vehicles	Ongoing	Council has increased its EV fleet from 0 to 3 vehicles, with a fourth vehicle currently on order. Grant funding has been used to support this transition. New electric portable tools purchased for waste depots. Over \$375,000 has been spent transitioning to electric assets during 2025.
Optimise Council Existing Fleet	9.4 - Optimise Fuel Efficiency in Fleet Vehicles	Ongoing	Council monitors fuel usage through its fleet management software.
Upgrade the HVAC at the Tomaree Library and Community Centre	11.1 - Consider global warming potential when upgrading HVAC Systems.	Scheduled	Council has commenced procurement for replacement of the HVAC.
Staff Waste Education	12.1 - Educate Staff on Waste Reduction	Ongoing	Implement staff education & training as part of Council's Waste Minimisation Plan and as specified in the Waste Management Strategy 2021-2031.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025**ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 3 2025 ERAP PROGRESS REPORT.**

Textile Recycling Drop Off Days	12.2 - Implement New Waste Streams where possible	Ongoing	Drop off days for textile doubled, with two events scheduled in 2025
Waste Management Strategy 2021-2031	12.3 - Implement Waste Management Strategy	Ongoing	Council continues to implement its Waste Management Strategy 2021-2031.
Optimise litter Bin Placement	12.4 - Optimise litter Bin Placement	Ongoing	Litter bin sensor trial commenced



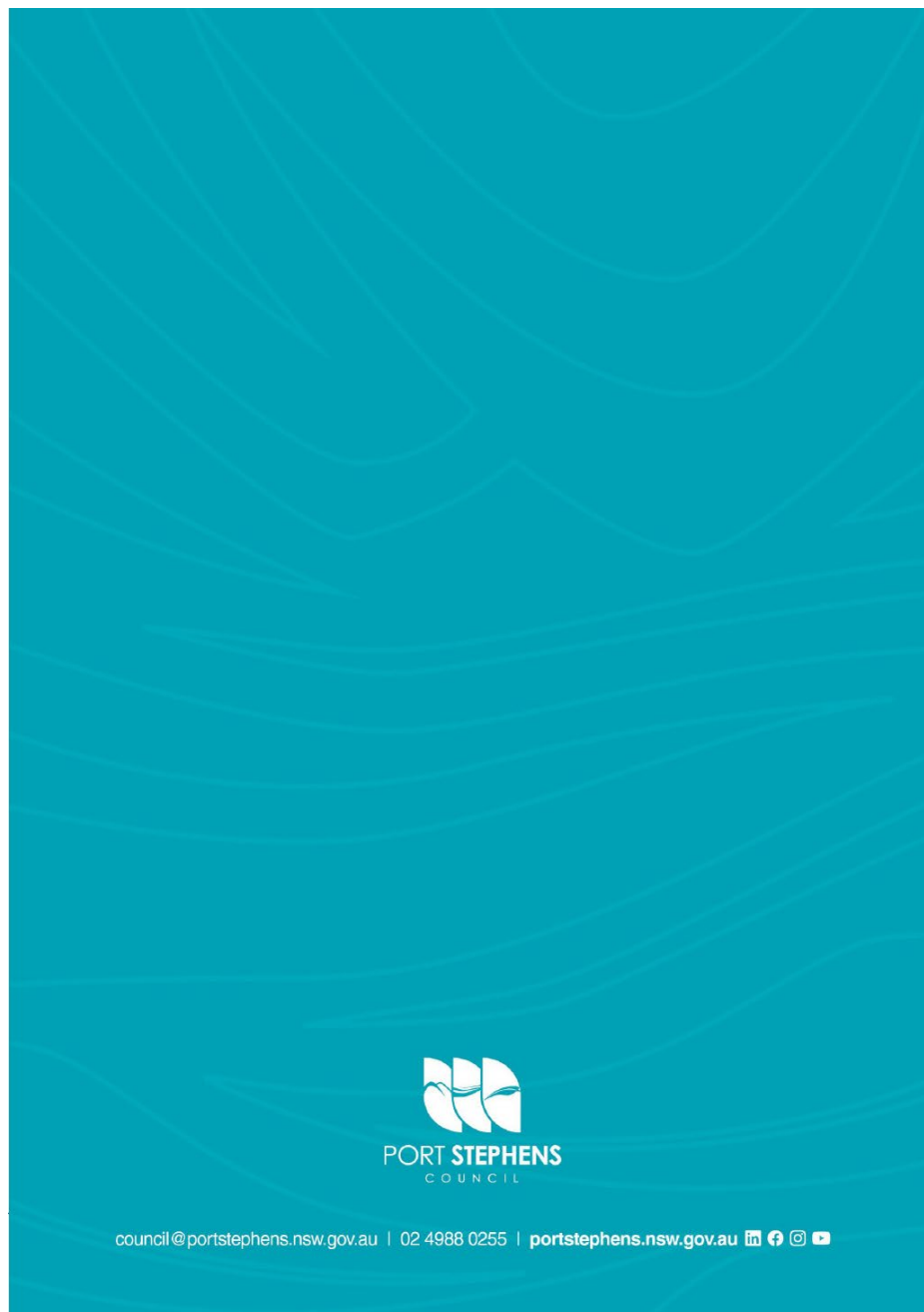
Figure 7: Council added an Electric Ute to its EV Fleet in 2025.

ERAP Status

Council continues to progress the ERAP as shown in Table 5 below. There are currently over 60% of short term actions underway. Of these, 3 actions have been completed and over 40% require incremental and ongoing action. The ERAP anticipates that some of these actions will continue in the medium and long term. Table 5 shows progress as reported in past Information Papers to allow comparisons over time. Council recognises the limitations of this style of reporting and is working to improve data collection and reporting metrics to more clearly illustrate progress.

Table 5: Status to date of short term actions in the Emission Reduction Action Plan.

Focus Area	Objectives	No. of Short Term Actions	% Short Term Actions Underway		
			Nov 2024	Feb 2025	May 2025
All Emissions	Identify funding for carbon reduction projects.	2 Actions	100%	100%	100%
	Monitor changes to Council emissions over time.	8 Actions	25%	25%	50%
Scope 1 Emissions Direct Greenhouse Gas emissions from fuel combustion, gas consumption and fugitive emissions from refrigerant gases in air-conditioning equipment.	Reduce emissions from refrigerants.	1 Action	100%	100%	100%
	Reduce Council gas consumption.	1 Action	100%	100%	100%
	Reduce emissions from Council's fleet.	5 Actions	40%	60%	60%
	Optimise charging infrastructure at Council.	2 Actions	100%	100%	100%
Scope 2 Emissions Indirect Greenhouse Gas emissions associated with purchase of electricity generated at fossil fuel power plants.	Maintain zero emissions from electricity.	2 Actions	50%	50%	100%
	Reduce Council reliance on grid electricity.	4 Actions	25%	25%	50%
	Optimise Council electricity consumption.	12 Actions	33%	50%	50%
Scope 3 Emissions Indirect Greenhouse Gas emissions resulting from upstream and downstream processes within Council's supply chain.	Reduce emissions from employee commuting.	3 Actions	0%	0%	66%
	Reduce emissions from waste.	4 Actions	100%	100%	100%
	Consider emissions during procurement and project planning.	9 Actions	22%	40%	45%
Total		53 Actions	41%	51%	62%



**ITEM 1 - ATTACHMENT 1 ORDINARY COUNCIL MINUTES - 8 JULY 2025 -
MINUTE NO. 162.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025****ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 4 MINUTE NO. 092, 11 APRIL 2023.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 11 APRIL 2023**

ITEM NO. 2

FILE NO: 22/109005
EDRMS NO: 79-2022-3-1**CARBON NEUTRALITY PROJECT UPDATE**REPORT OF: BROCK LAMONT - STRATEGY & ENVIRONMENT SECTION
MANAGER
GROUP: DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:**

- 1) Note the status update for the Carbon Neutrality project.
- 2) Endorse the allocation of funding for the preparation of the Port Stephens Carbon Neutral Action Plan.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 11 APRIL 2023
MOTION**

092	Councillor Leah Anderson Councillor Glen Dunkley It was resolved that Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Note the status update for the Carbon Neutrality project.2) Endorse the allocation of funding for the preparation of the Port Stephens Carbon Neutral Action Plan.3) Quarterly updates be provided in the Council Information Papers on the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan and how Council is tracking to meet the target in 2025.
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Councillor Peter Kafer returned to the meeting at 7:52pm.
Councillor Matthew Bailey returned to the meeting at 7:52pm.

Cr Anderson requested the following amendment, which was consented to be included in the motion.

"That quarterly updates be provided in the Council Information Papers on the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan and how Council is tracking to meet the target in 2025."

Those for the Motion: Crs Leah Anderson, Giacomo Arnott, Matthew Bailey, Glen Dunkley, Peter Francis, Peter Kafer, Steve Tucker and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL

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MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025**ITEM 2 - ATTACHMENT 4 MINUTE NO. 092, 11 APRIL 2023.****MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 11 APRIL 2023**

The motion was carried.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update and identify next steps in the development of a Carbon Neutral Action Plan for Port Stephens Council.

At its meeting of 12 October 2021, Minute No. 275 (**ATTACHMENT 1**), Council resolved to:

- 1) Commit to the goal of achieving carbon neutrality for Council operations by 2025.
- 2) Determine a suitable funding source to support Council in achieving this goal.
- 3) Provide a report to Council on a roadmap to achieving carbon neutrality.

Council has implemented a number of initiatives to reduce operational greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. A summary of activities and initiatives is as follows:

- Participating in a Power Purchasing Agreement to secure 100% renewable energy from the electricity grid
- Installing a solar photovoltaic system on Council's Administration Building, reducing annual energy consumption by 25%
- Installing solar photovoltaic systems on many of Council's libraries, community centres and Rural Fire Service buildings
- Installing solar pool pre-heating at Lakeside Leisure Centre, Tomaree Aquatic Centre and Tilligerry Aquatic Centre
- Installing solar photovoltaic system and water tank at Salamander Waste Transfer Station
- Use of recycled glass 'greencrete' in capital works projects
- Installing Building Management Systems and Programmable Logic Controllers at our Administration Building, Lakeside Leisure Centre and many sports and community buildings to deliver energy efficiencies and lower operating costs
- Installing variable-speed drives (VSD) at Lakeside Leisure Centre, Kangaroo Street and Stockton Street flood pumps to reduce energy consumption
- Installing energy-saving LED field lighting at sports facilities
- Installing energy-saving LED lighting at Council's Administration Building, Tomaree Library and Community Centre, Council works depots, surf clubs, community centres and halls
- Reduction in overall waste to landfill through reuse of recycled materials and materials diversion. During the data collection period, Council saved 8,865 kg of CO₂-e of GHG emissions by utilising recycled materials over virgin materials
- Cross organisational consultation, data collection and gap analysis in partnership with NSW Sustainability Advantage to establish carbon baseline figures and establish key focus areas.

Whilst the initiatives that Council has put in place have greatly reduced the organisations GHG emissions, a number of areas remain as the focus for further

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emissions reductions in order to achieve Carbon Neutral status by the target date of 2025.

The focus areas for continued and future GHG emission reductions include electricity consumption (51%), Councils operational waste to landfill (27%), commuting (13.2%), and fleet vehicles and machinery emissions (8.8%).

In order to progress the project further, Council requires specialist knowledge and expertise that is not resourced within the organisation. Sustainability specialist providers in this industry have been contacted to provide estimated costs for the services required by Council to continue to progress the project.

Should the recommendation be accepted, a sustainability specialist would be engaged through Council's procurement process to undertake the summarised scope of work below:

Deliverables	
Comprehensive Carbon Audits (10 to 15 sites)	Audit of Council's highest emissions producers such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aquatic centres• Waste facilities• Administration buildings• Holiday parks• Libraries• Depots
Comprehensive Cost Benefit Analysis	Consideration and recommendation of emissions reduction options including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational process efficiencies, data collection, monitoring and reporting improvements.• Projected emissions reductions and scenario modelling.• Estimated costs to implement actions.• Estimated costs to maintain operations.• Payback period from operational savings.
Carbon Neutral Action Plan	Preparation of document and agreed action plan for Council endorsement.

Council sought an estimated quote for the provision of the above services, with the assistance from carbon neutral experts. The provision of the above services is estimated at \$47,000 (inc. GST). Cost is subject to Council's procurement process to ensure best value of services, and therefore the final cost may change. To continue to progress this project, the allocation of funding for this purpose is requested.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 11 APRIL 2023**COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

Strategic Direction	Delivery Program 2022-2026
Environmental Sustainability	Develop and deliver a program for Council leading the way to a climate positive future and mitigating environmental risks.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There is an immediate financial implication for the Carbon Neutrality project to resource the requisite skills and expertise.

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		
Reserve Funds	Yes	Est. \$47,000	Sustainability Reserve. Adoption of the recommendation will resource the next phase of the Carbon Neutrality project.
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	No		

LEGAL, POLICY AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

There is not a legal requirement for Council to achieve carbon neutrality. Local Government plays an important role in reducing Australia's GHG emissions in their role as community leaders and creating environmentally sustainable regions. This assists in working towards the NSW State Government's target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
There is a reputational risk that Council would not achieve its commitment to Carbon Neutrality of Council's operational emissions by 2025 should resources not be allocated.	Medium	Accept the recommendation.	Yes
There is a financial risk that Council would need to fund the emissions gap to achieve its commitment to Carbon Neutrality of Council's operational emissions by 2025 should resources not be allocated.	Medium	Accept the recommendation.	Yes

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Includes Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

Council's commitment to achieving carbon neutrality for Council operations by 2025 is an ambitious target that requires sufficient resourcing to be reached. Responding to climate change protects the natural and built environment for the benefit of the community and generations to come. Resourcing this project would reduce potential damage to Council assets, reduce disruption to the delivery of Council's services, reduce future costs associated with GHG emissions and set the example for the Port Stephens community.

CONSULTATION

Consultation with key stakeholders has been undertaken by the Strategy and Environment Section for technical refinement and awareness of the intent of the plan.

Internal

- Community Services Section
- Assets Section
- Finance Section
- Organisational Support Section

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External

- NSW Government – Sustainability Advantage

OPTIONS

- 1) Accept the recommendations.
- 2) Amend the recommendations.
- 3) Reject the recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Minute No. 275, 12 October 2021.

COUNCILLORS ROOM

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.