
Minutes of the 40th Meeting of the
Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee

Thursday 8th Dec 2020
Online via Zoom

DRAFT

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

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

DRAFT

1. WELCOME

This meeting was the first online meeting for the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee. Cr **Tilbury** welcomed everyone online. This meeting was held to provide an update on progress in the development of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River System Coastal Management Program (CMP) and several additional projects.

2. APOLOGIES

Warren **Brown** (CCC); Sarah **Conacher** (NSW DPI); Mary **Howard**; Graeme **Plummer**; Axel **von Zelewski**

3. PRESENTATION:

Ana **Rubio** (Hornsby Shire Council) provided a presentation to update attendees on the progress of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River System Coastal Management Program (HNRS CMP). The presentation was given by Ana on behalf of the other five Partner Councils involved in the HNRS CMP and Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment, Energy, Climate Change & Sustainability (DPIE -EES) who all contributed to funding the project. Further detail is provided as part of Hornsby Council progress report (see Section 5 below).

4. CORRESPONDENCE and MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Not discussed at the meeting.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Acceptance of minutes of the Lower Hawkesbury Estuary Management Committee meeting on Thursday 7th Nov 2019:

Minutes were sent to the committee by email requesting any changes. No changes were received.

5. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LOWER HAWKESBURY ESTUARY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Hornsby Shire Council

Transition to Stage 2 - Hawkesbury-Nepean River System Coastal Management Program

A new website is now accessible for the HNRS CMP <https://hawkesburynepeancmp.org/>. The content continues to develop with further improvements planned for early 2021. The Committee were encouraged to share across their networks as the website is intended to provide summary information on the CMP and its status.

The HNRS CMP is being developed through a collaborative partnership of six Councils along the tidal stretch of the Hawkesbury Estuary (including Brisbane Water, Pittwater and Broken Bay). The project will also consider key catchment processes of the wider drainage catchment and collaboration is being sought with all councils and public authorities that have management responsibilities across the HNRS. As the project progresses the community will be increasingly engaged for meaningful input in establishing appropriate management outcomes for river health.

The HNRS CMP is being developed in line with the requirements of the [NSW Coastal Management Framework](#). The CMP sets the long-term strategy for the coordinated management of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River System (and its catchments) consistent with the objectives of the *Coastal Management Act 2016*. The CMP framework enables councils, public authorities and local communities to identify and balance competing interests, issues, risks and priorities. There are five stages in CMP development. A Stage 1 Scoping Study has now been completed for of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River System.

The Scoping Study reviewed past management of the estuary system, developed a shared understanding of the current situation and identified a strategic path of the remaining CMP stages. A thorough literature review was undertaken of close to 200 reports, management plans and monitoring programs across the catchment(s). This explored the challenges and opportunities in implementing existing management activities while identifying information gaps that may impede improved river management outcomes.

A first-pass risk assessment was undertaken to identify stressors across the catchment, understand how existing arrangements address identified threats and residual risks and how they are likely to change over 20, 50 or 100 year timeframes. Some 66 stressors were identified across five key areas:

- Urbanisation and Land Use Impacts - significant urban development in the upper reaches of the HNR catchment will result in increased catchment runoff and urban stormwater discharge. This is likely to impact water quality and associated recreational and commercial activities (including public health and safety)
- Disturbance of riparian and aquatic habitat – leading to the presence of invasive species and diseases, the potential increase in harmful algal blooms and the inability to protect endangered, vulnerable and threatened species and communities
- Coastal and estuarine hazards – coastal processes, sea level rise, event-based flooding and inundation will increasingly impact low lying settlements and infrastructure
- Waterway use – conflicts may increase as the number of boats and recreational pressures of the river system and access points continues to increase
- Planning and governance - a lack of coordination across the HNR catchments could potentially lead to ineffective approaches in managing identified risks

Several knowledge gaps were identified during the Scoping Study. The table below identifies studies that are to be undertaken during Stage 2 to help determine risks, vulnerabilities & opportunities. The information obtained from these will also assist Stage 3 when we will collaboratively identify and evaluate estuary management options.

A funding application has been submitted under the NSW Government's Coast and Estuary Grant Program. If successful, the funding will cover (66%) of the expenses required for us to deliver Studies ID 1, 2, 6, 8, 10 and 13. The application will also fund a part-time project coordinator and engagement officer. We are hoping to receive news about the funding application by the end of January 2021. A second funding application will be submitted to cover the cost of the rest of the studies in mid-2021.

ID	Studies identified for Stage 2	Northern Beaches	Central Coast	Ku-ring-gai	Hornsby	Hills	Hawkesbury
1	Hawkesbury River System Physical Processes - Abridgment Report						
2	Hawkesbury River System Ecological Processes - Abridgment Report						
3	Brisbane Water CM SEPP Mapping Update						
4	Bathymetric Survey of Brisbane Water Estuary						
5	Bathymetric Survey of Pittwater Estuary						
6	Estuary Tidal Inundation Study and Risk Assessment						
7	Broken Bay Coastal Hazard Study Update						
8	Hawkesbury River Bank Erosion Update						
9	Pittwater Coastal Hazard Assessment						
10	Pittwater Beach Erosion and Recession Assessment						
11	Hawkesbury River System Socioeconomic Study						
12	Stage 2 Values, Threats and Opportunities Report & CVA Mapping						
13	Community and Stakeholder Engagement activities						

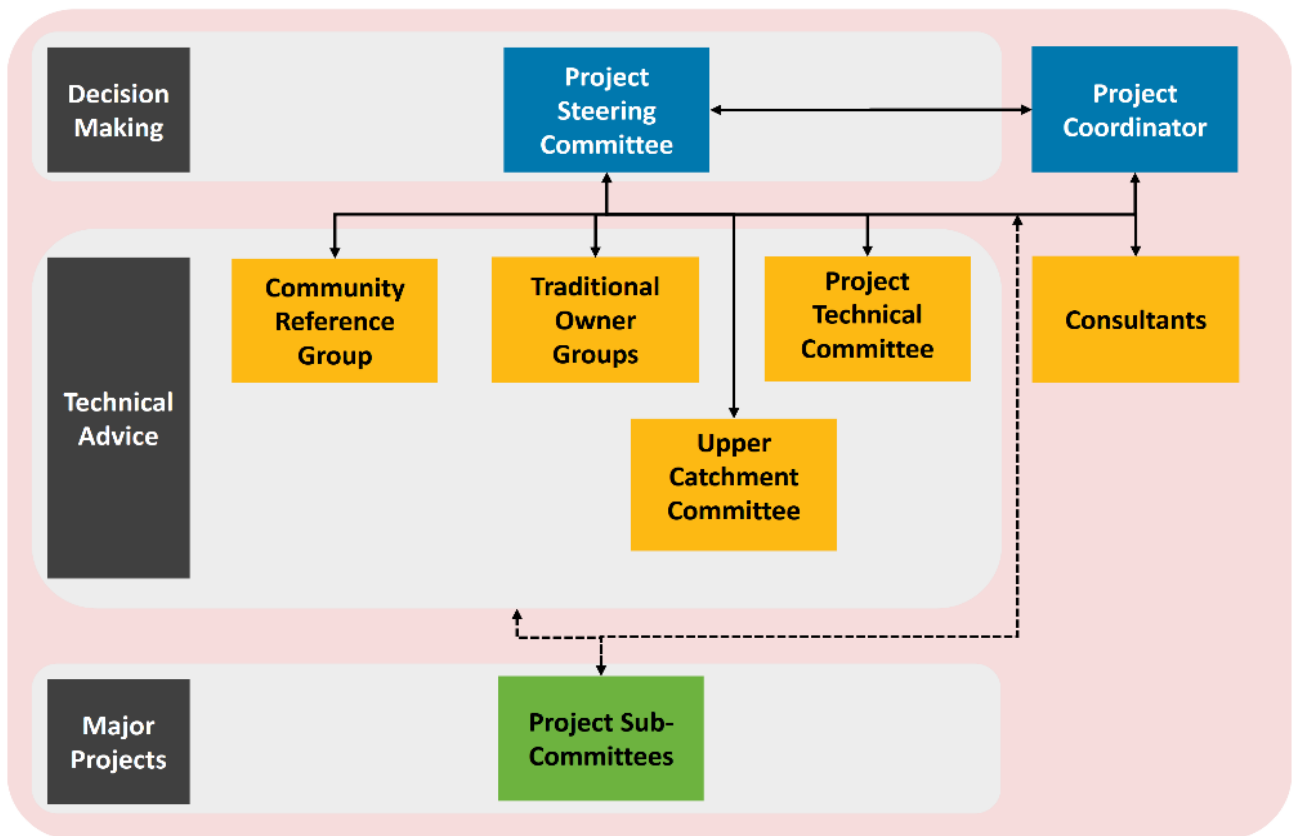
Note: Grey cells indicate those Councils that will be involved/funding each study.

A governance structure (as presented in the image following) has been agreed in support of the CMP development and enable a multi-tiered approach, with:

- A decision-making tier: a project steering committee (made of Partner Councils and DPIE) to guide project management
- A technical advice tier: to enable input from upper catchment councils, relevant agencies, community groups and traditional owners; and
- A major project tier: comprises of combinations of the above, to be utilised as necessary.

A part-time project coordinator position is proposed to support the progression of Stage 2. This role will assist with project management, improved communication among partner councils and stakeholders and to promote engagement and promotion of the project.

The current timeframe to complete the HNRS CMP is June 2024. Council will continue with on-going monitoring, research and on-ground projects over this period. Meetings of the Lower Hawkesbury EMP Committee will also occur periodically to complement CMP development and to ensure members have a forum to discuss matters of importance.



The collaborative approach to CMP development has already achieved a number of things:

- Efficiency savings through economies of scale – funding application for Stage 2 of CMP split across six Partner Councils. Since there are six Councils involved in the HNRS CMP the grant program allows for 20% of the over cost to be diverted to the engagement of a project coordinator. This position will provide centralised contact point, dissemination of project information and coordination through the multi-tiered CMP framework
- Coordinated approach to monitoring the Hawkesbury estuary involving partner councils, DPIE and Sydney Water
- CMP recognized at regional forums: Annual StreamWatch forum, Sydney Coastal Managers Forum and Hawkesbury River Keeper Forum
- 6-week meetings with Sydney Water: nutrient input modelling into the Hawkesbury
- WaterNSW – active discussions about Warragamba Dam releases
- Coordinated approach to community and stakeholder engagement

Other projects:

- Lantana removal - along Seymours Creek and adjacent to road into the Brooklyn Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Propagating River Mangroves – HSC has been successful in propagating mangroves in an industry leading project. Presentation to NSW Fisheries. Looking at options to engage with community considering covid restrictions. Currently planning to develop education and virtual engagement through a video for community on the topic.

-
- Dinghy storage – intention to tidy-up tinnies at the end of Baden Powell Ave and along the Brooklyn Bushcare site. HSC applied for funding under NSW Community Building Partnerships Program but were unsuccessful. Council is interested to confirm Brooklyn community support.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

Other Business

Sydney Water update on nutrient input modelling into the Hawkesbury

Sydney Water is currently undertaken significant work on modelling nutrient inputs into the Hawkesbury. This effort will assist to better manage the impacts of population growth along the Hawkesbury as per the 20-year plan of the Western City District Plan. The EPA has proposed a new regulatory framework that contributes to meeting the community's environmental values for the river while limiting nutrient concentrations from STPs - capping nutrient loads at current levels from STP at Yarramundi, Sackville and Berowra Creek. Hence, Sydney Water needs to model nutrient loads under current and future population growth scenarios and looking at options to reduce nutrient inputs, or at least not to make it worse. The target proposed is a challenge. Currently looking at recycling, re-using water options.

Ingrid

Ingrid mentioned that the Brooklyn Community Association BCA is nearing the completion of a Community Sustainability Strategy. She confirmed support for tidy-up of tinnies at the end of Baden Powell Ave and she can assist re-connecting with Brooklyn Public School as she thinks that the mangrove project will be a good one to get the students involved.

Berowra Water Progress Association via Cr Tilbury

At the Berowra Waters Progress Association AGM concerns about the impact of long net fishing (legal & illegal), plus commercial Crab Pot fishing on fish numbers in Calabash Bay/Berowra creek was raised.

ACTION 202001: Ana **Rubio** to discuss issue with Sarah Conacher and/or other NSW DPI Fisheries staff and communicate outcome to BWPA

Future Meetings

Next meeting – it will be coordinated with the consultation required for the completion of Stage 2 studies as part of the Coastal Management Program, as part of the community and stakeholder engagement activities.

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

CLOSE Meeting closed at 7:15pm