



## MINUTES

# FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (CENTRAL AREA)

at 4.00 pm

Thursday 10 November 2022

### In Attendance

Councillor J Dorahy (Chair up to 5:20pm), Councillor C Blakey (Chair from 5:20pm to close), S Milling – Transport for NSW, A Monk – Transport for NSW, N Pomfret – DPI, S Raini – DPI, S Gray – GRC Hydro, F Taaffe – GRC Hydro, R Summers – community representative, D Hearne – community representative, J Groves – NEFRAG member, D Green – Land Use Planning Manager, I Ghetti – Transport, Asset + Stormwater Manager, J Harris – Floodplain + Stormwater Unit Leader, P Milevski – Civil Engineer Urban Drainage, C Robinson – WCC Emergency Management Officer, R Dorman – Administration Officer



# INDEX

ITEM	PAGE NO.
Contents	
1	STANDING AGENDA ITEMS ..... 4
1.1	Welcome and Introduction ..... 4
1.2	Acknowledgement of Country ..... 4
1.3	Apologies ..... 4
1.4	Disclosures of Interests ..... 4
1.5	Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting ..... 4
2	FLOOD MANAGEMENT UPDATE ..... 4
2.1	Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review ..... 4
2.2	SMART Waterways project ..... 5
2.3	Allans Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review ..... 5
2.4	Wollongong City Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review ..... 5
2.5	Recent Floodplain Risk Management Plan Implementation ..... 6
2.5.1	Fairy & Cabbage Tree Creek – McMahon Street Basin Detailed Design ..... 6
2.5.2	Allans Creek – Debris Control Structure at The Avenue (Figtree Oval) ..... 6
2.6	Brief Update on LGA wide progress ..... 6
2.6.1	Exhibition of Mullet Creek and Towradgi Creek Floodplain Risk Management Studies & Plans 6
3	GENERAL BUSINESS ..... 6
3.1	Business Arising from Previous Minutes ..... 6
3.2	What are your observations and takeaways of the waterway/creek flows during the first and second flooding and possible flooding events over the past year (Cr J Dorahy) ..... 6

3.3 Appreciation expressed..... 6

4 NEXT MEETING ..... 7

5 CLOSE MEETING..... 7

The meeting closed at 5:30pm. .... 7

## 1 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

### 1.1 Welcome and Introduction

In line with NSW Health guidelines about Novel Coronavirus, we have made some changes to the way we are engaging the community, to keep our staff and people in our community safe. Instead of having face-to-face conversations with people, meetings are currently being conducted via Teams.

Attendees introduced themselves and their position.

### 1.2 Acknowledgement of Country

The traditional owners of the land were acknowledged.

### 1.3 Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Cr Tania Brown, Motiur Rahman (WCC Floodplain Management Engineer), Jeremy Morgan (WCC Manager ISP), Ray Piatek (WCC Senior Stormwater and Floodplain Design Engineer), Yelia Pandika (WCC Floodplain Management Engineer), Robert Dinero (WCC Floodplain Management Engineer).

### 1.4 Disclosures of Interests

Petar Milevski – property interests within the Wollongong City catchment which are flood affected.

### 1.5 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 September 2021 were accepted. S Milling (moved), Cr J Dorahy (seconded).

## 2 FLOOD MANAGEMENT UPDATE

### 2.1 Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review

The approach and driver for the update is guided by updated methodologies under Australian Rainfall and Run-off (ARR) 2019, which has resulted in a minor reduction of estimated flood levels compared to previous methodology under ARR 1987. Progress has continued under the supervision of the technical working group (Council officers, DPE and the Consultant).

We have undertaken a review of the Flood Study with ARR 2019, floor level survey and flood damage assessment. We are currently looking at flood risk and what risk management measures we can do (flood, property and response modification measures). We will prepare a draft Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (FRMSP) and come up with list of measures, present these to the committee with draft documentation to then take to community exhibition, then finalise and adopt at Council.

As modelling techniques have improved, overland flow paths have been identified more accurately. We are also considering risk associated with overland flow paths compared to main stream flooding to determine appropriate management measures. Fences and minor structures within the catchment are typically not modelled in this scale of study. If this is causing an issue locally, it can be investigated through customer requests.

Consistent rainfall over the last 12 months has resulted in saturated soils and groundwater issues for residents that they may not have experienced previously. This is not a specific consideration as part of a Floodplain Risk Management Study, however absorption/losses of rainfall during modelled flood events are considered.

## 2.2 SMART Waterways project

The previous stage of the project included installation of a range of water level and other sensors to monitor water levels and likely blockages of culverts to help manage planning of flash flood risk in the catchment.

Stage 2 is underway to progress this project using those sensors to allow us to estimate the risk of the live water level in a mapping system. Additionally this will allow us to assess traffic hazards across roads during a flood. We are also looking at how to get live information for Council/SES to update our systems during an event. This is looking at being completed shortly and we will provide an update at the next meeting.

## 2.3 Allans Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review

We are undertaking the same process across ten catchments, to ensure a consistent approach. The change in behaviour to previous guidelines have identified some areas with larger reductions in estimated flood levels. The flood extents have not significantly changed due to the topography. It is important we understand and are comfortable with this, which is why we are undertaking the Floodplain Risk Management Study before adoption of the Flood Study. This will allow us to understand and manage the risk to the community. We are currently considering risk management options to identify proposed options and prepare draft documentation for review of the committee prior to exhibition and council adoption.

The approach and driver for the update is guided by updated methodologies under Australian Rainfall and Run-off (ARR) 2019, which has resulted in a reduction of estimated flood levels compared to the previous methodology under ARR 1987. Progress has continued under the supervision of the technical working group (Council officers, DPE and the Consultant).

## 2.4 Wollongong City Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review

A presentation was given by GRC Hydro. The approach and driver for the update is guided by updated methodologies under Australian Rainfall and Run-off (ARR) 2019, which has resulted in a reduction of estimated flood levels compared to the previous methodology under ARR 1987. Progress has continued under the supervision of the technical working group (Council officers, DPE and the Consultant). Council with DPE has undertaken a lot of investigation regarding the implementation of ARR 2019 and ensuring the factors used are relevant for the Wollongong LGA. This included updating the rainfall losses and temporal patterns as applied by ARR 2019. This approach is being used for our current reviews across ten catchments.

The catchment and key flooding locations including Swan Street and upstream of the rail corridor were discussed. The lower catchment at the southern end of Wollongong down to Port Kembla is very flat and influences flooding through this area.

The description given of current flood terminology ie 1% AEP equals a 1 percent chance of this size flood each year. Flooding around the J J Kelly Park area happens in more frequent events than extreme floods as floods water do not rapidly move away from the area.

There is a well established history of flooding in the area, which has been considered and investigated as part of the Flood Study. Details were provided regarding size (AEP) of recent historical events.

Concern was raised regarding the flatness, vegetation and sedimentation in the channel from Swan Street to Port Kembla. Options considered as part of the previous Study indicated that this did not significantly influence flood levels. Lowering of Gurungaty causeway at Port Kembla as recommended by the previous Study has been undertaken, which is expected to provide some benefit. Options looking at the vegetation, sedimentation and channel shape will be considered as part of the current Study.

## 2.5 Recent Floodplain Risk Management Plan Implementation

These projects are part of the implementation of the previous Floodplain Risk Management Plan:

### 2.5.1 Fairy & Cabbage Tree Creek – McMahon Street Basin Detailed Design

### 2.5.2 Allans Creek – Debris Control Structure at The Avenue (Figtree Oval)

McMahon Street detention basin is currently under design. A detention basin is an empty dam that fills up, but releases water at a slower rate and reduces the flooding impact on properties downstream. The concept design is complete and the detailed design is underway. Once the design is complete, the construction is programmed.

The Avenue debris control structure is currently under design at the downstream end of Figtree oval. A debris control structure is designed to capture debris to stop it blocking culverts or similar drainage structures. The concept design is complete and the detailed design is underway. Once the design is complete, the construction is programmed.

## 2.6 Brief Update on LGA wide progress

### 2.6.1 Exhibition of Mullet Creek and Towradgi Creek Floodplain Risk Management Studies & Plans

We are progressing studies/plans for ten catchment, which are at a range of stages.

The Mullet Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan has been exhibited and we are reviewing submissions to finalise the documentation.

The Towradgi Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan is under exhibition. The public information session was well attended by residents. Once the exhibition closes, we will review the submissions to finalise the documentation.

## 3 GENERAL BUSINESS

### 3.1 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Nil.

### 3.2 What are your observations and takeaways of the waterway/creek flows during the first and second flooding and possible flooding events over the past year (Cr J Dorahy)

Councillor Dorahy noted that there has been some clearing of vegetation/sediment in some of the waterways. Some of this was done by Council and other by natural flood flows pushing this downstream.

It was noted creeks are dynamic environments which are prone to erosion/sedimentation etc and we base our modelling on what is existing at the time of the Study. This erosion/sedimentation is a natural process and the decision to interrupt this process needs to be carefully considered. Typically areas that experience sedimentation in some storm events will have that material eroded during future storm events. There are environmental and ecological benefits to this process.

A review of our draft Studies has generally found that flooding earlier this year was consistent with the identified flow paths.

### 3.3 Appreciation expressed

Jean Groves expressed her appreciation for work that has been scheduled to remove a fallen poplar in Lang Street.

#### **4 NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is to be confirmed. It is likely to be held when draft documentation for Allens Creek is proposed for public exhibition.

#### **5 CLOSE MEETING**

The meeting closed at 5:30pm.

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