

8.3 Shaws Bay Management Plan - Update

11.11 Shaws Bay Management Plan - Update

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File Reference	Shaws Bay Estuary Management Plan
Sustainability Plan	A healthy natural environment
Management Plan	Engineering Works
Objective	This report updates Council regarding the Shaws Bay Management Plan and responds to a Council resolution from the Ordinary Meeting of 23 August 2007.

Background

In 2000 Council completed an assessment process of Shaws Bay in accordance with the NSW State Government Estuary Management guidelines.

The work comprised an Estuary Processes Study Report (Volume 1) and an Estuary Management Study and Plan Report (Volume 2).

The Estuary Management Study and Plan Report identified broad objectives to meet the overall goal of the plan, the goal being:

"To improve the recreational amenity of Shaws Bay and to ensure that the habitat and ecological values of the Bay are maintained within an acceptable range."

The broad objectives of the plan were ranked in order of priority as follows:

1. Reduction of organic litter input
2. Minimise nutrients and bacteria input
3. Provide access through seagrasses
4. Protect aquatic environment
5. Protect terrestrial environment
6. Appreciate biodiversity and ecology
7. Reduce rubbish and improve aesthetics
8. Monitor siltation
9. Stop foreshore erosion
10. Enhance public facilities
11. Enhance public access
12. Reduce weed growth

The plan was further developed to identify some specific action tasks that would support the objectives. Some 30 tasks were listed in the plan and these are shown in the attachments to this report.

Key Issues

- Review the implementation status of activities / tasks associated with the Shaws Bay Estuary Management Plan.

Information

A review of the attached task list shows that a number of activities associated with the high priority objectives have commenced and are being implemented and now rely on on-going maintenance.

Furthermore, comments can be made on specific tasks as follows:

Task A Litter / Debris Collection Devices

Stormwater pollution baskets, approximately 100 in number, have been installed in the inlet pits of Shaws Bay and two end-of-line pollution control units have also been installed.

Task C Garden Refuse Collection

This issue is to be considered as part of the development of the Council's waste management plan.

Task D Gravel Aprons, Task K Create Stable Beach East Arm, Task L Remediate Gully Erosion

A development application is being prepared for this work.

Task G Install More Rubbish Bins

Assessed and being implemented by maintenance teams.

Task H Improve Aesthetics of Foreshore

Progressive implementation by maintenance teams.

Task M Maintain Seagrass Free Access to Water

Development Application refused by DPI (Fisheries). This is particularly disappointing given the participation of NSW Fisheries (now DPI) during the Estuary Management process.

Task N Cycleway / Pedestrian Way Along Western Foreshore

Included in PAMP works program. Currently classified as a low priority within the PAMP.

Task O Disabled Access

Ramp installed on the western side.

Task P Picnic Facilities, Task Q Shade Trees, Task S Bench Seating

Existing facilities and park areas maintained and upgraded progressively within existing budgets.

Task R Install Shower Western Side

Completed.

Ongoing Studies

Study on stingers being carried out by Southern Cross University.

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In summary, the following could be said of the implementation of the plan to date:

- A major initiative, being the installation of stormwater pollution control devices has been undertaken.
- A development application is currently being prepared for the remaining, more major, infrastructure type works.
- The proposed seagrass project was not able to gain regulatory approval.
- A range of initiatives is progressively being implemented as existing Council budget allocations allow.

Sustainability Considerations

- **Environment**
The EMP aims to maintain the habitat and ecological values of Shaws Bay.
- **Social**
The EMP aims to maintain and / or improve the recreational amenity of Shaws Bay.
- **Economic**
The maintenance of Shaws Bay to a standard that supports it as a local, regional and tourism destination assists economic development.

Legal / Resource / Financial Implications

There are no specific legal, resource or financial implications associated with the maintenance of the current status quo in regard to the implementation of the EMP.

Consultation

The preparation of the EMP in 2000 included community consultation. No specific consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report.

Options

The options available are to maintain existing approach to the implementation of the EMP through the use of existing budget allocations where they are able to support such activities or accelerate the program through the identification of a funding source. As no funds are available the recommendation that follows endorses option one.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council notes the contents of the report regarding the status of the Shaws Bay Management Plan.

Attachment(s)

1. Task List for Shaws Bay

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Table 6.1 Implementation Program for Shaws Bay Estuary Management Tasks

Task Identifier	Description of Task	Performance Measure	Indicative cost of Task Implementation	Possible Funding Sources	Agencies to be Consulted
A	Install litter / organic debris collection devices	Reduced organic material entering the Bay	~\$30,000 - \$50,000 per minor GPT, plus ongoing maintenance and cleaning costs, say \$1,000pa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHT funding Environmental levy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stormwater Management Plan Committee
B	Encouragement of native gardens	Reduced organic material generated from households	Costs incorporated in Task E	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richmond CMC
C	Garden refuse collection service	Reduced organic material entering stormwater system	~\$50/household/year plus the cost of bins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental levy State of mulch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local waste authority
D	Placement of gravel aprons at stormwater outlets	Reduced pools of stagnant water around foreshore	~\$2,000 per outlet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHT funding DLWC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DLWC/NSW EPA NSW Fisheries
E	Community education on pollution	Reduced pollution entering Shaws Bay	~\$10,000 - \$20,000 initially, plus \$2,000 - \$5,000 pa for follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHT funding NSW EPA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richmond CMC DLWC
F	Regular water quality monitoring	Development of database of water quality information	~\$500 per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DLWC Environmental levy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW EPA DLWC
G	Install more rubbish bins	Reduced rubbish around foreshores	~\$50 - \$100 per bin plus cost of regular collection, say \$50pa	nil	nil
H	Improve aesthetics of Bay foreshores	Improved aesthetics	~\$5,000 - \$20,000 depending on scope of works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental levy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Fisheries DLWC
I	Routine hydro surveys of Shaws Bay	Data on accumulation of sediments in Bay	~\$2,000 per survey	nil	DLWC
J	Remove accumulated sediment, as required	Improved tidal flushing of northern bay	~\$10 per m ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental levy DLWC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Fisheries DLWC
K	Create stable sandy beach in East Arm	Reduced foreshore erosion	~\$50,000 - \$100,000 depending on extent and end treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DLWC Environmental levy NHT funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW EPA DLWC NSW Fisheries
L	Remediate gully erosion	Reduced gully erosion	~\$5,000 - \$10,000 per gully, depending on size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DLWC Environmental levy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DLWC Richmond CMC
M	Maintain seagrass-free access into water	Reduced damage to seagrasses and improved access	minimal - especially if works are carried out by local schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHT funding n/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lakeside Holiday Park NSW Fisheries DLWC Swimming clubs
N	Cycleway / pedestrianway along western foreshore	Improved pedestrian and cycle mobility	~\$50 - \$100 / metre depending on width and quality of foundation, plus land cost for easement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DLWC/Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ballina High School DLWC DUAP

Task Identifier	Description of Task	Performance Measure	Indicative cost of Task Implementation	Possible Funding Sources	Agencies to be Consulted
O	Disabled access to Bay foreshore	Improved disabled mobility	~\$20 - \$50 / metre, plus ongoing maintenance costs, say \$1/m/yr	• DOCS	• Council Access Committee
P	Install more picnic facilities in Pop Denison Park	Increased usage of Pop Denison Park and use of facilities	~\$5,000 - \$20,000 depending on scope of works, plus ongoing maintenance costs, say \$500pa	nil	nil
Q	Plant more shade trees in Pop Denison Park and around foreshores	Increased usage of Pop Denison Park	~\$20 - \$50 / tree depending on size, plus re-planting costs, if required, and maintenance	Council	• Council Parks and Gardens Section
R	Install wash-down shower on western foreshore	Regular use of shower	~\$1,000 - \$2,000 depending on water connection costs	Council	• DLWC
S	Install bench seating around Bay	Regular use of seating	~\$1,000 each	nil	nil
T	Remove weeds from around foreshore	Reduced incidence of weeds	n/a - as required by Parks and Gardens Staff	n/a	• Council Parks and Gardens Section
U	Selective removal of mangrove seedlings	Reduced incidence of conflicts between mangroves and other Bay amenities	minimal - especially if works are carried out by local schools	n/a	• NSW Fisheries • DLWC
V	Monitor the spread of Ulva in Shaws Bay	Data on the development of Ulva	minimal - especially if works are carried out by local schools	n/a	• Ballina High School • NSW Fisheries
W	Plant vegetation corridor between Bay & rainforest	Use of corridor by birds and terrestrial fauna	~\$20 - \$50 / tree depending on site, plus re-planting costs, if required, and maintenance	• NHT funding • DLWC	• Ballina High School • NPWS • DLWC
X	Erect Osprey pole	Use of pole by Osprey for nesting	in general order of ~ \$5,000	• Environmental levy • NHT funding	• NPWS
Y	Remove weeds from rainforest	Reduced weeds in rainforest	variable, depending on availability of 'work for the dole' programs and local bushcare groups	• Environmental levy • DLWC	• DLWC • Richmond CMC • NPWS
Z	Mangrove boardwalk and rainforest walking trails	Use of facilities by public, school groups etc	Boardwalk: ~ \$500 / m Walking trails: ~ \$10 - \$20/m plus maintenance, say \$1/m/yr	• Environmental levy • NHT funding	• DLWC • Richmond CMC
AA	Interpretive eco-educational signage	Increased community awareness of Shaws Bay environment	~\$1,000 - \$2,000 per sign including design, and depending on material, plus maintenance costs, say \$50/yr	• NHT funding • Environmental levy	• DLWC • NSW Fisheries
BB	Development of school project kits and tours	Use of kits and tours by schools and the public	~\$2,000 - \$5,000 per kit	• NSW Dept of Education	• NPWS • NSW Dept of Education
CC	Community participation in management works	Participation by community members	n/a	n/a	nil

Table 6.1 Implementation Program for Shaws Bay Estuary Management Tasks cont'd./



NSW Fisheries

RECORDS
SCANNED

15 JUN 2007

Doc No:

Batch No:

The General Manager
Ballina Shire Council
PO Box 450
BALLINA NSW 2478

9 June 2004

Attention: Mr James Brideson

Dear James

**Re: Application to harm marine vegetation, and undertake dredging works
at Shaws Bay, Ballina**

Thank you for your letter and application of 25 March 2004 seeking a permit from NSW Fisheries to undertake dredge and reclamation works and harm marine vegetation, specifically seagrass and mangroves at Shaws Bay under sections 198-202 and 205 of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

As you are aware NSW Fisheries is responsible for managing fish (including aquatic invertebrates), and fish habitat throughout NSW. The Department's goals encompass protecting wetlands, mangroves and seagrasses, and promoting rehabilitation of degraded aquatic environments. This includes protecting rare and threatened species and maintaining aquatic biodiversity. NSW Fisheries also aims to provide quality recreational and sustainable and viable commercial fishing opportunities.

Losses of seagrass are significant for commercial and recreational fisheries and therefore regional economies. Years of research in NSW, nationally and worldwide demonstrate very clearly that areas of estuaries covered by seagrass beds and even those near (within 50 metres) of seagrass have higher diversity and biomass of fish. Bryzoans attached to healthy seagrass provide a valuable role in improving water quality within estuaries. Locally, NSW Fisheries is

RICHMOND FISHERIES OFFICE

5 Regatta Avenue ~ PO Box 154 BALLINA NSW 2478
Telephone: (02) 6686 2018 Facsimile: (02) 6686 8907

ABN 56 287 047 871

mapping the historic distribution of seagrass, mangrove and saltmarsh areas in the Richmond estuary. NSW Fisheries work identifies that less than 1% of the estuary area (downstream of Woodburn) supports seagrass beds. This is very likely to represent a significant loss of seagrass over the last 50 years. This work has highlighted the value of remaining seagrass beds in the Richmond River estuary.

NSW Fisheries acknowledges the Shaws Bay Estuary Management Plan recommends the maintenance of seagrass free, amenable access at designated access points. Interpretation of recent aerial photographs and a site inspection undertaken early this year show designated areas on the eastern side of the Bay to be clear of seagrass. On the western edge of the Bay the two middle access points are clear. The northern most (25 metres adjacent to the picnic tables) and the southern most (10 metres adjacent to the Shaws Bay Hotel) access points have a minor amount of seagrass recovery in the 'seagrass free zones'.

Regrowth of seagrass at access points is influenced by a number of factors including the frequency with which an access point is used. Cognisant of this NSW Fisheries will not support Council adopting a management regime of harming and removing marine vegetation to maintain infrequently used access points. Rather, NSW Fisheries recommend that Council reconsider the number of designated access areas and scale down those points where seagrass has re-established (principally the 25 metres section near the picnic tables on the north western side of the Bay).

To further demonstrate NSW Fisheries position I have enclosed some recently completed research that interprets changes in aquatic habitats in Shaws Bay (Attachment 1). The attachment, a decadal sequence of aerial photos dating from the 1960s to 2000 illustrate that the area of seagrass in Shaws Bay has not increased or changed dramatically. Furthermore, the photographs highlight that the spit at the south eastern edge of the Bay has moved very slightly but not grown to any great degree for the last 45 years. NSW Fisheries highlighted this matter when Council sought to construct a small groyne to restrict the 'growth' of the spit.

These two issues highlight that planning documents like the Shaws Bay Estuary Management Plan need to be 'living' documents, able to be refined as further information becomes available. NSW Fisheries would be encouraged if Council, DIPNR and stakeholders considered this information and revise various recommendations which seek to harm aquatic habitats for limited, if any benefit.

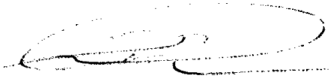
In summary, NSW Fisheries position to refuse Council's application to harm marine vegetation and undertake dredging works is support by the:

- existence of at least five seagrass free access points and one partially seagrass free access points. The Shaws Bay Estuary Management Plan recommended seven access areas totalling 174 m. Presently over 80% of that area is seagrass free (139 m seagrass free and 25 m partially free of the 174 m);
- aerial photographs that indicate that the area of seagrass in Shaws Bay while changing in location, has not expanded over the last 45 years;
- a number of recreational values are associated with seagrass in the Bay such as recreational fishing, observing fish such as the manta ray that resides in the Bay and snorkelling over seagrass meadows at high tide; and
- benefits provided by seagrass beds and attendant assemblages in improving water quality.


Considering the above NSW Fisheries is not yet satisfied with Council's justification for wanting to dredge and harm marine vegetation. Accordingly a permit will not be issued.

If you have any further enquiries please contact me on (02) 6686 2018.

Yours sincerely



Patrick Dwyer
Conservation Manager (Far North Coast and Border Rivers)

	NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT	Form C78A	D 493579			
Received by *	<i>Cheque</i>	on	<i>5/04/2004</i>			
	<small>(* State whether cheque, money order, cash, etc.)</small>					
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			<p>\$ 300.00</p> <p>For use on amounts up to \$50 only including the GST component</p> <p><small>If payment has been made by cheque, this receipt is issued subject only to the cheque, on account of which it is given, being duly cleared.</small></p> <p>GST INCLUDED IN TOTAL</p>			
			<p>NSW FISHERIES ABN 56 287 047 871</p>			

ATTACHMENT 1

