

**Minutes of the Flood Risk Management Advisory Committee
Meeting – 26 February 2025**

Directorate Name	Infrastructure		
Date / Time	26 February 2025 - 3:00 PM		
Venue	Microsoft Teams		
Chairperson	Councillor Mat Howard		
Voting Attendees	Clr Mat Howard	Clr Olivia Barlow	Michael Carney (SES)
Community Representatives			
Non – Voting Technical Advisory Attendees	Ryann Midei (IWC)	David Paton (IWC)	James Ogg (IWC)
	Rafaah Georges (IWC)	Sadeq Zaman (DCCEEW)	
	Claire Wheeler (CRA)	Michael Rosenthal (Rhelm Consulting)	
Observers	Simon Myall	Tim Harnett	Jaan Ranniko
	Matthew Murphy	Bowen Hicks	Emily McGrath
	Pilar Lorenzo	Tiffanie Ong	
Apologies	David Grasby (Sydney Water)	Lachlan Broadbent	Liam Hogan

2. Acknowledgement Of Country – Clr Howard

I acknowledge that we are meeting on the land of the Gadigal and Wangal people of the Eora Nation and pay my respects to the elders past and present and I extend that respect and acknowledgement to any Aboriginal people who are here with us today.

3. Disclosures of Interest

Nil.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

That the Minutes of the Flood Risk Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 24 July 2024 be confirmed.

The minutes were confirmed by Councillor Matt Howard and seconded by Michael Carney

5. Staff Reports

5.1- FMAACC0724(1) Item 1 Outstanding Actions Register

SUMMARY

The following table provides the status of outstanding actions from previous Flood Management Advisory Committee meetings.

Meeting	Item	Actions	Comments	Status
29/2/24	4.1	That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the updated Terms of Reference subject to replacing Transport for NSW Roads with Transport for NSW.	The Terms of Reference were adopted by Council at its meeting on 9 April 2024	Completed
29/2/24	5.1	That the Flood Management Advisory Committee support the schedule of actions to be taken to facilitate flood education within Inner West Council.	Noted	No action required
29/2/24	5.2	That Council develop communications regarding flooding and relevant services in the local area including the SES that can be made available through customer service centres, libraries and be made available to local real estate or rental agencies for new residents to the local community	An update will be provided at the next Committee meeting	In Progress
29/2/24	5.3	That Council better support and promote the activities of the SES, including in our local newsletter.	An update will be provided at the next Committee meeting	In Progress
29/2/24	5.4	That in the development of the Flood Information Hub, Council work to make emergency information for accessible and visible, that Council investigates the reporting of local road closure information.	An update will be provided at the next Committee meeting	In Progress
29/2/24	5.5	That the proposed information sessions undertaken with the Alexandra Canal Flood Risk Management Study and Plan and Johnstons Creek Whites Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan be undertaken with SES Officers.	SES Officers participated in the four information sessions during the exhibition period.	Completed
29/2/24	5.6	That Council investigate the publication of evacuation routes among consideration of public signage.	An update will be provided at the next Committee meeting	In Progress
29/2/24	5.7	That Council engage directly with community groups on the foreshore impacted by flooding.	An update will be provided at the next Committee meeting	In Progress
29/2/24	7.1	That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the public exhibition of the Alexandra Canal Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.	Council resolved to exhibit the Study and Plan at its meeting on 9 April 2024. Exhibition is now complete, with its outcomes being tabled at July committee meeting	Completed
29/2/24	7.2	That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the public exhibition of the Johnstons Creek and Whites Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan	Council resolved to exhibit the Study and Plan at its meeting on 9 April 2024. Exhibition is now complete, with its outcomes being tabled at	Completed

			July committee meeting	
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OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

That Flood Management Advisory Committee receive and note the report.

DISCUSSION

Item 5.2. and 5.3 actions are still in progress. Item 5.4 has been deferred in its development as council undergoes a website review. Item 5.7 is in progress within the LGA and item 17.2 as per the outstanding actions register for 26 February 2025 regarding flooding in Despointes Street is still being investigated and in progress with further update to be provided in the next meeting.

Michael Carney raised an issue regarding letting SES attend council events, SES is not receiving any information on events happening in the area.

Request for Michael Carney to receive the contact details of who to speak to, to pass along email address of the units.

James Ogg to action and speak to the events team and Michael Daley.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Councillor Barlow moves the action register and seconded by Michael Carney.

For Motion: Unanimous.

5.2 – FMACC0225(i) Item 2 Update on adopted Flood Risk Management Plan Options

SUMMARY

To date, Council has completed and adopted nine Flood Studies and six Flood Risk Management Studies & Plans (FRMSP) across 90% of the Local Government Area including:

- Eastern Channel Subcatchment Management Plan (Golder Associates, 2011)
- Leichhardt Flood Risk Management Study & Plan (Cardno, 2017)
- Marrickville Valley Flood Risk Management Study and Plan (Cardno,2017)
- Dobroyd Canal & Hawthorne Canal Flood Risk Management Study and Plan (WMA, 2019)
- Whites Creek & Johnstons Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan (Stantec, 2024)
- Alexandra Canal Flood Risk Management Study and Plan (Stantec, 2024)

Marrickville South is the only catchment of the Inner West LGA without a contemporary flood study or flood risk management plan. Council has been successful in securing two-thirds grant funding from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to support the delivery of this Flood Study. Council will be issuing a request for quotation to engage specialist flood consultants in early March.

The completed Flood Risk Management Studies and Plans propose a total package of structural mitigation measures valued at approximately \$300 million across assets owned by Council and other utilities, with 26 options considered high priority totalling approximately \$105 million.

Council currently budgets \$1.5 million to stormwater upgrade projects addressing local catchment issues as well as some of the smaller mitigation investigations and design. Council seeks additional funds through state and federal grants to supplement this work, however due to the limited funding available through these grants, or the increasing level of detailed design required to support such a grant, this is generally beyond the financial capacity of Council to deliver in the short to medium term without significant impact on other Council services.

Currently the primary management actions to manage and mitigate the impact of flooding are therefore primarily dependent on non-structural measures such as planning controls, emergency response planning and reactive maintenance including undertaking CCTV and cleaning of stormwater assets.

OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

DISCUSSION

Council Officer advised the report outlines what the flood risk management process is, the process is guided by the Department of climate change, energy, environment and water. Council through its floodplain risk management and its officers look after flood risk management within the local government area which is carried out across different stages. A flood study is carried out, which has been done for ~90% of the LGA, before moving to a flood risk management study and flood risk management plan. The study indicates where hazards are, where evacuations may need to be thought through and what measures to reduce or plan for risk. The study reviews all potential options, impacts the options may have and makes a cost benefit analysis and multi criteria analysis to come up with a list of prioritisation within the study for council to pursue and determine which plans are implemented.

Council Officer advises the works are undertaken by Council and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water provide 2/3 grant funding for these activities, in 2024 there was approximately 10 millions in grants on offer for the state, this is a competitive grants process and must be applied for each year. Stormwater fund is separate, council has funds committed, approximately 1.5 million for stormwater renewal for all stormwater assets and about 1 million for stormwater upgrades.

Community member Simon Mya raised concerns regarding extreme flooding in Hearn Street Leichhardt on February 10th, and noticed the area was not covered by the study from last year in, and despite flood study carried out in 1990 around the Whites Creek catchment area included severe observations around flooding in the area which is still recurrent now, and enquires why it is still not covered in the new 2024 report.

Council Officer advises the Hearn Street was part of a previous study started by Leichhardt Council at the time, to which Hearn Street in particular is within the Leichhardt flood risk management study and plan. The 2024 Whites Creek and Johnston Street flood risk management plan focused on areas south of Parramatta Road.

Simon Mya questioned if there were no actions proposed for the Whites Creek catchment area as part of the earlier study.

Council Officer advises no actions were listed specifically within the previous study plan. Hearn Street backs on to Whites Creek, which is part of what causing flooding, the Sydney water channel runs at a particular capacity and how swiftly water can drain into the channel once it is full. There were options in and around Whites Creek, contingent around upgrades around the channel itself to relive pressure downstream.

Simon Mya raised concerns that in the 2024 study, many of the proposed actions were upstream of the Whites Creek area which could potentially exacerbate flooding issues in Hearn Street and downstream north of Parramatta road, and this issue has not be addressed.

Council Officer notes, any option upstream has to demonstrate that works will not impact downstream. This excludes many options, for much of Whites Creek there is only one options in the Whites Creek management plan that was adopted in 2024 as there is only a small portion that sits below Parramatta Road, all the items within Whites Creek are within the Leichhardt flood risk management study and plan as Hearn Street areas above Parramatta Road were part of the former Leichhardt Council who commenced the Leichhardt flood risk management study ahead of Marrickville and Ashfield.

Councillor Howard recommend James Ogg and Simon Mya discuss this after the meeting regarding further queries.

Simon Mya requested for clarification regarding if the action plan was still open and under review, James notes that the table within item 2 in the report speaks to the different flood risk management plans, and the Leichhardt management plan includes parts of Hawthorne Canal, Whites Creek and Johnstons Creek and areas around Hearn Street and above Parramatta Road was included. 8 flood risks management plans have been carried out to date, Marrickville South, and the areas around Dulwich Hill, the flood study is set to commence this year. The last two catchments being William Street and Cooks River are small contributors to other catchments and other councils, a small portion of land in Croydon that drains into Canada Bay and portion of Ashfield that drains into Canterbury Bankstown, but these are minor contributor catchments and will not be looking into details for those. Each of the 8 flood risk management plans proposed certain options, there is about \$80-90 projects for all those with a projected cost of ~300 million, and the high priority options with a projected cost of ~\$100-105 million. Part of prioritising that is working out where council can deliver most impact fastest, or, the larger multi million dollar projects in Leichhardt involves correspondence and engagement with Sydney Water as the larger dollar value projects are on Sydney Water Assets. Each of the 8 plans has a ranking and prioritisation within the plan itself, moving forward the outcome is to rank all the projects against each other on the same scale to formally prioritise them. From the current plans, Council this year has completed and upgraded Centennial Road, inlet upgrade in Northcote Marrickville, works in Fitzroy Street, stormwater replacement and upgrade in Wardley Street Balmain. There are project scheduled to happen this year in Haberfield and Enmore, and Victoria Road and Railway Parade in Marrickville. Council is also progressing designs this year for Illawarra Road, Addison Road and Edgeware Road, the three designs came from the Marrickville and Eastern Channel flood risk management plan. Council as advises in response to the stormwater and flooding from last year, there is another 6 upgrade designs progressing for construction next year. The flood mitigation options are done with the stormwater upgrades.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Council Howard declares a non-significant and no pecuniary interest in this item as he does not reside within the area of concern. The report is just being notes, no funding decisions are being made,

Councillor Barlow moved the report and Michael Carney seconded.

For Motion:

Unanimous

5.3 FMACC0724(1) Item 3 LOCAL INCIDENTS OF FLOODING ON 10 FEBURARY 2025**SUMMARY**

This report supports the following strategic directions contained within Council's Community Strategic Plan: 1: An ecologically sustainable Inner West 2: Liveable, connected neighbourhoods and transport

At approximately 12pm on Monday 10 February Sydney experienced widespread thunderstorms affecting homes and flooding roads, including areas of Inner West Council. Rainfall data from nearby rain gauges at Sydney Olympic Park, Canterbury Racecourse and Sydney Observatory indicates that approximately 25mm water fell over the Inner West over the course of 30 minutes. This dispersion of rain is approximately equivalent to a 20% AEP event. Council has received 133 requests related to stormwater and flooding since this event. 46 of these requests have since been completed, with a further 54 in progress at the time of this report. The remaining requests require further investigation to determine possible civil works in the short and medium term. These requests primarily came from Leichhardt, Marrickville, Annandale and Ashfield.

Many of these requests related to blocked stormwater pits and inlets resulting from heavy leaf drop due to strong winds in late January, which consequently limited the speed at which water could be drained away from the roadway.

OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

Council Officer advises that the increase flooding on Illawarra Road between Hill Street and Wharf Street has been noted and this will be investigated, and continue to raise issue on Railway Terrace with TfNSW through the local emergency management committee. Information was provided to TfNSW around the catchment around that space and they are investigating ways to improve the inlets and this will also be reviewed before committing to work.

DISCUSSION

The table within the report provides a breakdown of the suburbs that were mainly affected, a big concentration within the Leichhardt, Marrickville, with Annandale and Ashfield being with the impacted areas.

Council Officer notes one of the factors seen was high number of report of leaf litter or blocked pits that resulted from strong winds in January. The report lists multiple areas where resident reported the same flooding area, this included Darley Road and Elswick Street, Leichhardt, Station Street Petersham, Queen Street / Pymont Street, Holden Street / Palace Street, Ashfield, Probert Street Camperdown, Camden Street Enmore and Newington Road Marrickville. Some of these locations where already known to Council through the flood risk management study of previous events. Council is in progress of designing and delivering upgrades in four of these location. Camden Street Enmore is expecting a stormwater upgrade in April, Pymont and Queen Street, council has commenced community consult on the proposed design that has happened within the last week and the design is expected to be completed later this year for construction late 2025. Elswick Street, Council expects to construct early 2026, similar to Holden and Palace Street. The remaining three streets, Station Street Petersham, Probert Street Camperdown and Newington Road, more assessment is be undertaken and this will be included in future capital works programs. Darley Road, which is a state road and Council has informed TFNSW regarding on going risks and the request Council has received.

Michael Carney raised concerns of increased flooding at Illawarra Road Marrickville between Hill Street and Wharf Street over the last 18 months which previously did not occur. Requesting for investigation if the pits need cleaning or another issue. In regard to TFNSW, Michael has raised a discussion point about Railway Terrace at Petersham, and an increase in flooding and there will be shared infrastructure at that location and is waiting to hear back.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

For Motion:

Michael Carney moves the report and seconded by Councillor Barlow

Unanimous

5.3 FMACC0225(1) Item 3 Local Incidents of Flooding on 10 February 2025
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SUMMARY

Presentation from Cooks River Alliance by Michael Rosenthal from Rhelm Consulting.

OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

DISCUSSION

A recent study was undertaken as part of the coast management program for the Cooks River looking at inundation from the coastal side.

The coastal management programme is led by the state government and developed over 5 stages, the inundation hazard assessment sits in stage 2 of the programme, the study is currently moving from stage 2 to 3, and identifying and evaluating options for inclusion in the coastal management programme. The CMP will be publicly exhibited and certified by the Minister to allow councils to access grant fundings. The coastal management programme is being built around 9 values which were identified through community and stakeholder

consultation, flood resilience is one of the 9 value themes of which is specifically relevant to the Flood management advisory committee.

The CMP study area for the Cooks River spans 6 councils and cover the entire catchment of the Cooks River. As part of stage 2, the inundation hazard assessment was carried out with the purpose of talking to all the councils involved with the CMP to determine a fit for purpose methodology that works for everyone and identifying appropriate sea level rise scenarios to consider within the study and mapping coast and tidal inundation. The maps were then used to do a first pass on assets and infrastructure exposure assessment under the different types of flooding. The CMP looked at different scenarios, for tidal inundation a focus on high water of spring, looking at present day sea level 0.2m, 0.5m and 0.9m, for costal inundation for event based flooding, looking at present day, 5, 10 and 100 year storm.

The map shown provides an overview of present day coastal inundation, note, many of these areas that would be impacted by a coastal storm are much more impacted by catchment flooding, and some of these areas are already known problem areas when it rains.

Tidal inundation (sunny day flooding) was another area of flooding that was looked at. Haberfield is not within the study area for the Cooks River, but a known location where high high tides are can come up through the stormwater system and impact the roads. The study looked at where in the Cooks River area is the to happen more and more frequently. Tidal inundation become more frequent over time with sea level rise and is there to stay. It starts by coming up through the stormwater system and eventually peaking into the low points of road and eventually overtopping the bank and surpassing the stormwater system entirely.

The study look at different areas that would be impacted by overbank flooding and backwater flooding, differentiate between areas that management at the stormwater system could be used to mitigate flooding and areas where more topographical changes are needed to limit the flooding. Another idea explored was the drainage window concept, where the invert and overt of the stormwater outlet when submerged in low tide, the water in the catchment cannot drain out and over time the drainage capacity of the systems is reduced, and to look at further investigation and adaptation would need to occur.

When looking at the pits and pipe system to determine areas that might be exposed to back water flooding, a caveat to the assessment was that they were unaware of floodgates or assume any losses to the system. Key areas around the study area were looked at, the study looked at asset exposure to get a picture of the risk for each of the areas. The study also looked at days inundated, the map indicated areas that are frequently inundated and areas that are not frequently impacted. The map of Marrickville shows with 0.9m of sea level rise, the drainage window concept means the stormwater drainage efficiency with the boundary conditions in the channel would mean the draining is diminished and drainage capacity diminished.

Rhelm Consulting has spoken to all the councils affected by this issue and for this information to be brought to the flood committee. This study will need to be released to the public domain but before doing so are seeking councils guidance on the best way to do this, and what is council's longer term response to this issue and be part of the stage 2 of the CMP. The CMP development is expected to take another 9 -12 month before it is out for public exhibition.

The main points brought to the committee, is that the notification of the study and the stage 2 study and the maps need to be released to the public and cooks river alliance will facilitate that. The approach being to prepare and circulate public facing fact sheet/web copy to support release of the study to help guide the community. Once the Councils who are affected by the issue have the information and comfortable with the fact sheet to then upload their reports to the CMP website.

Council Officer clarifies where council sits with this study. Council received the information within the last couple of weeks and have carried out preliminary looks in terms of the areas affected, and there are properties already in the area that have been tagged for known inundation. At this stage the study does not speak to planning changes, this is a risk identification study and not a response study. There are features that don't take into account existing infrastructure to such as flood gates or flood valves to stop tidal flows around the Marrickville space.

Council Barlow requests a copy of the presentation.

Ryann Midei advises this is just early consultation for information purposes, there is still discussion and approval processes from a council perspective before this is shared.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

For Motion:

Councillor Howard notes the report and seconded by Councillor Barlow.

Unanimous

6. General Business

Jaan Ranniko raised query regarding the flooding issue at Illawarra Road, and the drains at Cahill Place appear to have minor damages and request for that to be looked at.

Raised enquiry regarding tidal inundation, and will backfill and cause more floods and where more information could be found regarding this.

Council Officer advises that Marrickville was a former swamp land and there is a low lying area that cannot drain by gravity itself, and drainage from Marrickville is pumped out to the Sydney Basin. There are no invert levels in the pipe, as such the pipe is higher than the river and does not have the same impact as the report may show.

Councillor Barlow notes that as per the forum held in Ashfield, there are a few places notes for overland flooding that had not flooded before or to the extend that it was. The streets mentioned include Arthur Street, Abergeldie Street and Holden Street which are both known overland risk areas.

Ryann Midei advised that a register of enquiries that were made and officer already making calls.

Tim Harnett raised the issue regarding fallen trees on the road at the bottom of Hearn Street which is blocking the drainage channel which is exacerbating the flood risk at the junction of Albion Road and

Hearn Street and the clearing of leaves appears to be on an 8 week rotation that does not appear to be enough to clear the drainage channels.

Councillor Howard request for Ryann and team to action to look at the frequency to which the works are being carried out. Ryann has advised that there is a scheduled run of sweeping footpath and cleaning roads in areas which there is a larger amount of leaf matter, and this can be looked at to be done more frequently.

Tim Harnett also notes Wardell Road Petersham that the flooding is becoming more pronounced and the frequency of clearing of leaves may be a factor to this.

Meeting Closed: 4:08pm