

## 10.7. Contamination of Long Bay, Cammeray - response to Council resolution

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<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	Nil
<b>CSP LINK</b>	1. Our Living Environment 1.1 Protected, enhanced and biodiverse natural environment

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to respond to a resolution of Council at its meeting of 10 February 2025, regarding the source of contamination of Long Bay, Cammeray.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), in conjunction with NSW Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH), have investigated the polyethylene pipe at the head of Long Bay, which was the subject of Council resolution of 10 February 2025. The results of these investigations identified that the pipe was not connected to anything that could be causing the discharge and discolouration of the Long Bay waters.
- The remaining polyethylene pipe has now been removed from the Bay by the Land and Marine Group and disposed of by Council.
- On 3 April 2025, Council resumed its Acid Sulphate Soil testing investigations. Soil sampling is now complete, and the findings of these investigations will be reported to Council once the samples have been analysed.
- The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, & Water (DCCEEW) has installed a number of ground water monitoring wells across Tunks Park, which will be monitored monthly to map the ground water and infiltration of seawater.
- Sydney Water has confirmed they do not pump out of the North Side Storage Tunnel and has advised that the purpose of the tunnel is overflow storage.
- There are no Environment Protection Licenses that would discharge into Flat Rock Creek/Long Bay.

### RECOMMENDATION:

**1. THAT** Council notes the contents of this report in response to the Resolution of Council regarding water contamination issues raised in relation to Long Bay.

**2. THAT Council** continues to work with the Environmental Protection Authority and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment & Water in relation to potential sources of pollution in Long Bay.

**3. THAT Council** notes that a further report will be brought back to Council once the results of soil tests taken from Tunks Park have been analysed.

## Background

At its meeting on 10 February 2025, Council resolved:

- 1. THAT a report be submitted to Council regarding the source of contamination in Long Bay Cammeray focusing on:*
  - a. the discharge of milky slurry sediment from a 200mm polyethylene pipe located at the head of Long Bay Cammeray;*
  - b. the identification of the asset owner and the discharge material; and*
  - c. the identification of the licensing agreement (if any) under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997. Council Meeting 10 February 2025 Minutes Page 10 of 16*
- 2. THAT Council defer any investigation into “Acid Sulphate Soil” as the cause of the issue until item 1 above has been investigated by Council as follows:*
  - a. the collation of information about the discharge from:*
    - i. Sydney Water Corporation, regarding pumped outflows from the Northside Storage Tunnel – particularly the “Decline Tunnel” from the Tunks Park access portal;*
    - ii. Sydney Water, regarding works at the western end of Tunks park during 2024; and*
    - iii. the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), regarding water quality testing in the bay.*
- 3. THAT Council assess the impact of the contamination.*
- 4. THAT Council consider repairing or removing the 200mm polyethylene pipe and terminating its discharge.*
- 5. THAT a report in relation to the contamination be presented to Council within three months of this Notice of Motion, detailing findings and recommendations to improve the water quality in Long Bay Cammeray.*
- 6. THAT Council ensure compliance with State Government legislation to ensure all waste is disposed of in accordance with the relevant state laws.*

This report responds to the above Resolution.

## Report

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), in conjunction with NSW Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH), investigated the polyethylene pipe at the head of Long Bay. The results of these investigations identified that the pipe was not connected to anything that could be causing the discharge and discolouration of the Long Bay waters.

Through the course of their investigations, the EPA was not able to identify an asset owner, nor any licensing agreement associated with the pipe. Council confirmed the removal of all sections of polyethylene pipe on 28 February 2025.

Council has been advised that the EPA has communicated the above information to the Land and Marine Group who initially raised the issue with Council.

On 17 February 2025, a coastal and marine scientist from the EPA wrote to Land & Marine Group, explaining the rationale for believing the discoloured water discharges to Long Bay was from acid sulphate soils in Tunks Park, and not from a pipe outflow into the bay.

On 20 February 2025, the Land & Marine Group wrote to the EPA acknowledging the information received. The Land & Marine Group advised that it was no longer convinced that the pollution problem rested with the pipeline. Land & Marine Group further advised that they had dived on the remaining pipeline that morning and recorded video footage showing the location, and a termination point for the subject pipe. Land & Marine Group advised that they would remove the remaining polyethylene pipe from the bay, provided Council would collect and dispose of the pipeline, which was agreed to. Land & Marine Group stated that this would finalise any issue with the pipe.

On 27 February 2025, the subject section of pipe was removed from the seabed of Long Bay and disposed of by Council.

On 6 March 2025, Council wrote to the EPA confirming that the required geotechnical work to sample for acid sulphate soils in Tunks Park will take place from 1 April 2025, noting that the sampling had been postponed pending the outcome of investigations into the pipe within Long Bay.

Geotechnical investigation at Tunks Park were completed on 3 April 2025. Council is awaiting testing results from the soil samples. Findings of these investigations will be reported to Council once analysis of the samples has been completed.

The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, & Water (DCCEEW) has installed a number of ground water monitoring wells across Tunks Park, which will be monitored monthly to map the ground water and infiltration of seawater.

DCCEEW has advised that the data from these wells will be examined regularly for an initial period of three months. The duration of monitoring will be dependent upon the weather, if any abnormal discharges are observed within the data.

Sydney Water has confirmed they do not pump out of the North Side Storage Tunnel and advised that the purpose of the tunnel is overflow storage.

There are no Environment Protection Licenses that would discharge into Flat Rock Creek/Long Bay.

### **Consultation requirements**

There is no community engagement required by Council in adopting the recommendations of this report.

**Financial/Resource Implications**

There are no financial implications for Council in adopting the recommendations of this report.

**Legislation**

NSW Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997