

8.1. MM01: LED street lights – warmer white light

Recently a resident contacted me in relation to the issue of LED streetlights and the brightness of the cool blue-white light used. The resident advocated for a change to streetlights from blue-white to a warmer white and has started a change.org petition to support the change on the basis that warmer lights:

- are less disruptive to human sleep patterns;
- create less glare which is safer for driving at night;
- better for nocturnal wildlife as they are less impact on the environment;
- create a more pleasing ambiance at night; and
- create a less glow to the light pollution.

Council's Director Open Space and Infrastructure advised that Ausgrid undertook a LED lighting upgrade within the North Sydney LGA between 2021/22 and 2024/25 and there are currently no further works proposed.

Ausgrid advise that cool white LED streetlights:

1. provide higher visibility and contrast, cognition, which can improve safety and surveillance, particularly on roads.
2. have greater energy efficiency as they typically are more efficient and brighter per watt; and
3. are more cost-effective as fewer fixtures are required due to higher lumen output.

The opposing view is that cool white LED streetlights:

1. project a harsher light that can cause discomfort or glare;
2. disrupt circadian rhythms, as higher blue light content can interfere with sleep and melatonin production; and
3. can be more disruptive to wildlife and contributes more to light pollution.

Council's 2025/2026 Operational Plan adopted on 30 June 2025 does not budget to undertake changing the LED to warmer white lights.

I therefore recommend:

1. **THAT** Council consider the use of warm LED luminaries in future lighting replacement programs across Council owned properties and when future replacement of street lighting is proposed.
2. **THAT** Council explore grant funding from the NSW Government to undertake a program to install warm LED streetlighting in place of the existing cool street lighting.

COUNCILLOR ZOË BAKER
MAYOR