

ITEM 4. ALEXANDRA CANAL CATCHMENT FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY AND FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN**FILE NO: S091319****SUMMARY**

In March 2012, Council approved a tender for the engagement of a contractor to prepare the Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Study and Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Plan. The draft editions of both the Alexandra Canal Risk Management Study and Risk Management Plan have now been completed and endorsed by the Floodplain Risk Management Committee. This report recommends that the following three documents be placed on public exhibition for community comment:

- Alexandra Canal Flood Study (Draft Report);
- Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Study (Draft Report); and
- Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Plan (Draft Report).

It should be noted that the draft Alexandra Canal Flood Study was completed in 2011 as a precursor to the risk management study and preparation of the risk management plan. The draft study has been available on the City's website since early 2011 and will now be placed on formal public exhibition alongside the other two documents.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council place the draft Alexandra Canal Flood Study, draft Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Study and draft Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Plan, as shown in Attachments B, C and D to the subject report, on public exhibition for a minimum period of 28 days; and
- (B) a further report on the draft Alexandra Canal Flood Study, draft Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Study and draft Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Plan be presented to Council following the public exhibition process with any proposed changes.

ATTACHMENTS

(Note – Attachments B and C will be circulated separately from the agenda paper and to Councillors and relevant senior staff only. A copy will be available for viewing on Council's website and at the One Stop Shop and Neighbourhood Service Centres.)

Attachment A: Catchment Plan

Attachment B: Alexandra Canal Flood Study (Draft Report)

Attachment C: Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Study (Draft Report)

Attachment D: Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Plan (Draft Report)

BACKGROUND

1. The development of Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans for all the stormwater catchments within the City's Local Government Area is required by legislation. The Long Term Financial Plan has allocated \$59.5M for drainage capacity upgrade works arising from these studies over the next 10 years.
2. The City has also developed and adopted a Decentralised Water Master Plan which focuses on water re-use and water quality measures. A further \$24M of initiatives relating to this Master Plan may be required to be allocated within the Long Term Financial Plan over the next 10 years. A request for this funding, if necessary, following the detailed scoping of individual projects, will be brought to Council as part of the preparation of future Corporate Plans.
3. The NSW Government has developed a Flood Prone Land Policy to determine if development on floodplains is appropriate and sustainable. The Policy promotes a merit based approach to balance social, economic, environmental and flood risk parameters.
4. The Policy states that individual councils have the primary responsibility for floodplain risk management and the NSW Government will, if required, provide technical and, in some cases, financial support.
5. The Floodplain Development Manual 2005, developed by the NSW Government, sets out a four stage approach as follows:
 - (a) preparation of a Flood Study to identify the nature and extent of flooding;
 - (b) preparation of a Floodplain Risk Management Study to investigate all available flood mitigation solutions or options, in consideration of social, ecological and economic factors relating to flood risk;
 - (c) formulation of a Floodplain Risk Management Plan, including preferred solutions and/or options and formal adoption by the council; and
 - (d) implementation of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan.
6. The preparation and implementation of the various Floodplain Management Plans are critical components in improving the way the City plans and manages flood risks, including infrastructure requirements.
7. In August 2008, Council resolved to establish a Floodplain Risk Management Committee to assist the City in the development and implementation of Floodplain Risk Management Plans.
8. The Floodplain Risk Management Committee is comprised of representatives from:
 - (a) the community;
 - (b) NSW Office of Environment and Heritage;
 - (c) NSW State Emergency Services;
 - (d) NSW Fisheries;
 - (e) Sydney Water; and

- (f) Waterways Authority of NSW.
9. There are eight drainage catchment areas (see Attachment A) in the City's Local Government Area which are:

Catchment Name	Area (Hectares)	Proportion of the City's Local Government Area (%)
Alexandra Canal	1,141	43
Blackwattle Bay	315	12
Centennial Park	153	6
City Area	199	7
Darling Harbour	307	12
Johnstons Creek	224	8
Rushcutters Bay	64	2
Woolloomooloo	265	10
Total	2,668	100

10. The Alexandra Canal, the largest of the City's catchment areas, comprises 43 per cent of the City's Local Government Area and, in October 2008, was given the highest priority for the development of a Floodplain Risk Management Plan, as the area is mostly low lying and has a high incidence of flooding.
11. The draft Alexandra Canal Flood Study was reported to the Environment Committee on 28 February 2011.
12. In March 2012, Council approved the tender to prepare the Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Study and the Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Plan.
13. The draft reports are now complete. These reports have been prepared in accordance with the Floodplain Development Manual.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

14. The Alexandra Canal Flood Study has identified a number of flooding problems including ponding areas, trapped low points, flood corridors and regions of high hazard.
15. The Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Study has assessed a variety of potential measures to address the flooding problems identified by the Flood Study. Measures were assessed in accordance with floodplain risk management guidelines set out in the Floodplain Development Manual.
16. The Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Plan recommends a comprehensive suite of flood management measures for further consideration and implementation.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

17. The cost of implementing the Flood Risk Management Plan will be funded by allocations made within the City's Long Term Financial Plan, State and Federal Government Grants and contributions from developers.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

18. Section 733 of Local Government Act 1993 – “Exemption from flood liability-flood liable land and land in coastal zone” applies if the City follows the Floodplain Risk Management process.
19. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 – land use planning and management of flood prone lands through Local Environment Plan provisions rests with councils.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

20. The City's Floodplain Risk Management Committee steers the preparation of the Flood Studies. During the study period, the Committee:
 - (a) received several progress reports regarding the development of the study and plan;
 - (b) was invited to participate in a workshop regarding risks within the catchment;
 - (c) received several presentations regarding the preparation of the study and plan; and
 - (d) was provided an opportunity to review and comment on an initial draft edition of both the study and plan.
21. A community brochure and survey was distributed to over 7,000 properties as part of the Flood Study in 2009. The survey was also advertised in local newspapers and on-line through the City's website. The Flood Study survey targeted residents in or near areas that may have experienced flooding at some time in the past and sought information on past flooding experience. A total of 219 responses were received. As requested, residents reported experiencing flood damage, difficulty with property access and in six instances reported that their safety had been threatened.
22. Following completion of the Draft Flood Study in 2011, the Floodplain Risk Management Committee determined that the public exhibition of this document should coincide with the public exhibition of the subsequent Flood Risk Management Study and Plan. The Flood Study was made available to the public on the City's website in February 2011.
23. An additional community brochure and survey was distributed to 5,893 properties in 2013 as part of the Floodplain Risk Management Study. An on-line version of the survey was also included on the City's website. The Floodplain Risk Management Study survey targeted all property owners and residents at risk of flooding. This survey built on the previous consultation and sought additional community input on preferred management approaches. A total of 461 responses were received. The responses largely supported a preference for drainage network upgrades, improved flood flow paths, strategic planning and flood related development controls. The actions proposed within the Floodplain Risk Management Plan were then formulated in keeping with these preferences.

24. This report recommends that the draft Alexandra Canal Flood Study, draft Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Study and draft Alexandra Canal Floodplain Risk Management Plan be placed on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days.
25. A community engagement plan will be prepared prior to the public exhibition of the three reports.

GARRY HARDING

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