



# State of the Environment Report 2007/08



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# Introduction

The State of Environment Report (SoE) is an important document that Council is required to develop each financial year in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*. State of the Environment Reporting is utilised by Council to measure its progress towards the effective integration of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) principles and practices into its regulatory and service functions. These principles, as applied within the Local Government context, advocate the integration of ecological considerations into all Council decision-making processes, policies and operational documents including Council's Management Plan.

This report provides a snapshot of the current state of four key environmental areas within the Campbelltown Local Government Area (LGA) being Our Land, Our Water, Our Community and Our Heritage. It also outlines the main threats to these key areas, Council's response to these threats as well as Council's achievements within each of these key areas during the 2007/2008 financial year. The review and analysis of such information on an annual basis as part of SoE reporting helps guide the future strategic direction of Council activities and assists in the identification of future required actions to address threats to Campbelltown's environment.

For the first time this year Council is proud to report on its efforts to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions within the Our Community section of this SoE report.



## TERRESTRIAL BIODIVERSITY

### MAJOR ISSUES

The Campbelltown LGA is situated on the southeastern edge of the Cumberland bioregion. It contains significant areas of protected bushland, boasting high levels of biodiversity and a significant number of threatened species. The largest areas of bushland are located on steeper terrain towards the east and southeast of the LGA adjacent to the Georges River, however there are also significant remnants in the west and central sections of the LGA, where a higher level of urban development has occurred. These areas contain Endangered Ecological Communities listed under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.



As identified in previous SoE reports, major threats to biodiversity include impacts associated with noxious and environmental weeds, predation by and competition with feral animals, stormwater runoff, illegal dumping, inappropriate fire regimes, inappropriate use of open space (such as trail bike riding), and habitat loss/fragmentation associated with urban development.

To address threats to biodiversity Council has continued to play a leading role in the development and implementation of strategies, educational programs and on-ground works in association with the community and other key stakeholders during the reporting period. These include the development of policy documents such as Plans of Management and Stage 2 of the Campbelltown Biodiversity Study, educational programs such as community composting and energy efficiency workshops and on-ground works such as bush regeneration and weed control. A summary of the major activities conducted during the reporting period is outlined below.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

#### **Campbelltown Local Planning Strategy (LPS) and Campbelltown Residential Strategy Review (RSR)**

- Draft versions of the Campbelltown Local Planning Strategy (LPS) and Campbelltown Residential Strategy Review (RSR) were completed during the reporting period. The draft LPS aims to ensure that as part of Campbelltown City's future growth, sustainable outcomes



based on the consideration of physical, social, cultural, economic and environmental factors are delivered. The draft LPS also interprets the NSW Government's Metropolitan Strategy, as well as the (draft) South West Subregional Strategy and analyses how these documents will influence future development, land use, and environmental outcomes in the Campbelltown LGA and the Macarthur region in general.

The draft Campbelltown RSR supplements the draft Campbelltown LPS by providing a review of the residential growth targets set by the NSW Government for the South West subregion, which includes the Campbelltown, Liverpool, Camden and Wollondilly LGA's. Both the draft LPS and the draft RSR, when finalised, will provide recommendations relating to future planning controls and land use zones to inform the preparation of a comprehensive Local Environmental Plan (LEP) for the Campbelltown LGA.

Together, these draft Strategies will advocate a broad direction for Council to pursue in regard to the management of urban growth, in an environmentally sustainable manner.

### ***Biodiversity Study***

- Stage 2 of the Campbelltown Biodiversity Study was completed and endorsed by Council during the reporting period. This Study, which will be used as baseline data regarding the state of biodiversity within the Campbelltown LGA, identified areas of high, medium and low biodiversity value, as well as important local and regional habitat corridors. The Study proposes a range of recommendations in relation to strategic planning documents, (such as Council's forthcoming comprehensive LEP and the draft LPS), land management practices, on-ground works, bushfire management, noxious weed and feral animal control, environmental education, stakeholder and community engagement/partnerships, funding, as well as the Biobanking Scheme recently introduced by the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC).



### ***Noxious Weeds and Feral Animal Management Strategy***

- In order to address the impacts of noxious weeds and feral animals, Council commenced work on a Comprehensive Noxious Weed and Feral Animal Strategy during the reporting period. Council's existing Noxious Weed Strategy will be reviewed and expanded during the development of the revised strategy. Once completed this Strategy will guide Council's future response in regard to weed and feral animal management through the configuration of resources, priority planning, and the setting of relevant objectives.



### ***Upgrading of walking tracks at Simmos Beach Reserve***



A project to upgrade a 500 metre section of walking track at Simmos Beach Reserve, Macquarie Fields, commenced. This project forms part of the implementation of Council's adopted Plan of Management for the Reserve, as well as part of its Priority Walking Track Program. Prior to the preparation of a detailed design for the track upgrade, a targeted flora survey was conducted to identify threatened species within close proximity to the track. As a result of this survey, one threatened species was identified on site. Subsequently, protective measures will be incorporated into walking track design and construction to avoid impacts on this threatened species.

### ***Bushland Restoration Works***

- A Bushland Restoration Plan for Noorumba Reserve at Rosemeadow, was prepared to guide the restoration of bushland within the Reserve. The preparation of the Plan forms part of the implementation of Council's Plan of Management (PoM) for the Reserve and as such, prescribes actions addressing bushland and habitat restoration works, threat identification and mitigation measures, and the ongoing involvement of Council's Community Streamcare/Bushcare Group. The implementation of the Restoration Plan is scheduled to commence during the next reporting period.
- Council continued on-ground bush restoration works at several key project sites within the LGA during the reporting period. The Upper Georges River Koala Habitat Restoration Program and the Redfern Creek Rehabilitation and Community Education Program are both jointly funded by Council and the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority. Significant quantities of endemic tubestock are currently being grown in preparation for planting and habitat restoration works at these sites during the next reporting period. Professional bush restoration contractors, qualified seed collectors and Campbelltown's Probation and Parole Community Service Order (CSO) working group were all involved in on-ground work contributions at these sites.

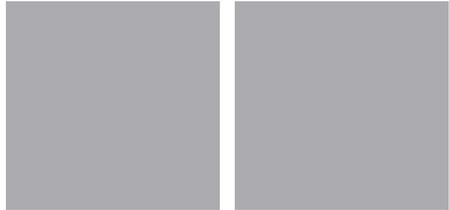
### ***Control of Noxious Weeds***

- Council coordinates a number of programs to control the distribution of noxious weeds in the Campbelltown LGA. Extensive weed control works were again carried out at various parks, reserves and bushland sites including: Milton Park (Macquarie Fields), Redfern Creek (Ingleburn), Noorumba Reserve (Rosemeadow), Botany Place and Georges River Road (Kentlyn), Spring Creek (St Helens Park) and Menangle Creek (Menangle). Council has engaged Campbelltown's Probation and Parole Community Service Orders (CSO) working group to assist in



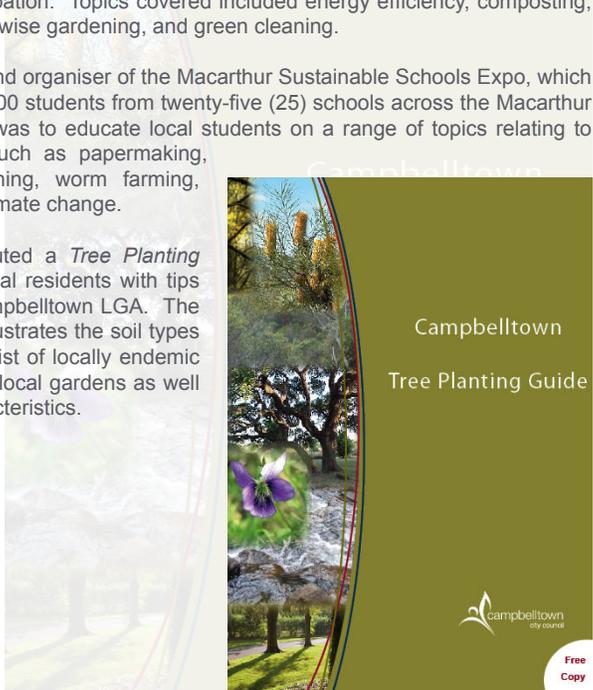
the removal of rubbish and weed materials at several of these sites.

- The joint funded project between Council and the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority for Serrated Tussock control, continued during the reporting period. The level of infestation on the site has been significantly reduced as a result of the project. A five year Council maintenance period, involving site surveys and annual spraying of weed regrowth will commence in the next reporting period.



### **Education Programs**

- Council was a major sponsor and project partner for the *Macarthur Our Earth Our Stories* nature photography competition. The competition featured nature photography 'walk and talks' for the community at a number of locations within the Macarthur region, including Noorumba Reserve (Rosemeadow),
- Council held more than 20 environmentally focussed community workshops as part of the Sustainability Blitz Program. The workshops, which were provided free of charge attracted a high level of community participation. Topics covered included energy efficiency, composting, worm farming, native and waterwise gardening, and green cleaning.
- Council was a major sponsor and organiser of the Macarthur Sustainable Schools Expo, which was attended by in excess of 200 students from twenty-five (25) schools across the Macarthur region. The aim of the Expo was to educate local students on a range of topics relating to environmental sustainability, such as papermaking, composting, vegetable gardening, worm farming, sustainable architecture and climate change.
- Council published and distributed a *Tree Planting Guide*, designed to provide local residents with tips on native gardening in the Campbelltown LGA. The guide includes a map, which illustrates the soil types found within Campbelltown, a list of locally endemic species suitable for planting in local gardens as well as their key features and characteristics.





## WASTE AND RECYCLING

### MAJOR ISSUES

Council's domestic waste management strategy has two key objectives:

1. to minimise the amount of waste generated per household
2. to achieve the highest possible ratio of recyclables-to-waste produced per household.

To assist residents to meet these objectives, Council continues to offer a waste and recycling collection system consisting of:

- a 140 litre garbage bin collected weekly
- a 240 litre recycling bin collected fortnightly
- a 240 litre garden organics bin collected fortnightly.

The year 2007/08 saw a two (2) percent improvement in the ratio of recyclables to waste compared to the 2006/07 period as illustrated in the figures below:

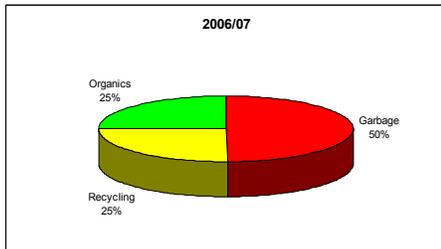


Fig 1 Recycling Ratio 2006/07

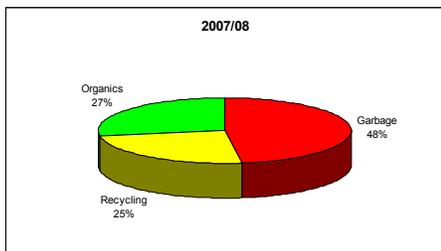


Fig 2 Recycling Ratio 2007/08

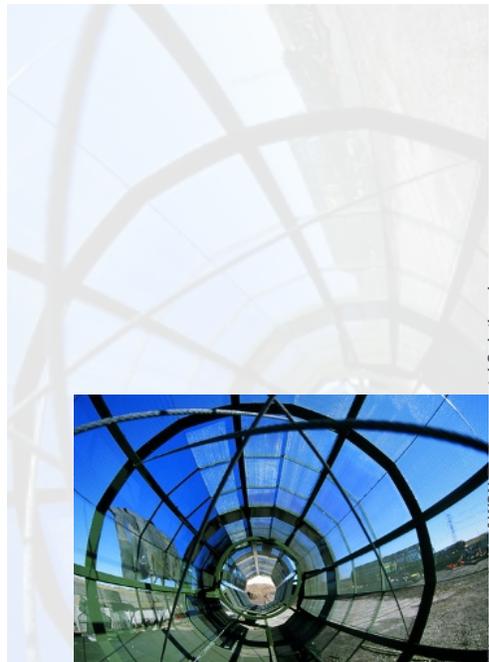


Photo courtesy of WSN Environmental Solutions'

According to the latest statistics from the NSW Department of Local Government, Campbelltown residents are among the best recyclers in NSW, with 220kg of domestic waste generated per capita per annum (58kg less than the State average) and 185kg recycled per capita per annum (11kgs more than the State average).