

# *Northern Beaches Council*

## VISION AND BLUEPRINT

### *Appendix 2.1*





*“Collectively, it is the most beautiful and comfortable place to live in that I know of.”*

Don, March 2015

# HELLO NORTHERN BEACHES

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# CONTENTS

<i>Page No.</i>	<i>Section</i>
05	Fit for the Future Northern Beaches Council Vision and Blueprint
06	Introduction
08	How it Benefits the Community
20	Working with the NSW Government and Organisations
24	Operational Blueprint



# FIT FOR THE FUTURE NORTHERN BEACHES COUNCIL VISION AND BLUEPRINT

## A new Northern Beaches Council

Warringah Council and the Warringah community strongly agree with the recommendation of the NSW Government's Independent Local Government Review Panel that one new Northern Beaches Council, made from the best parts of Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Councils, would create the best scale and capacity for local government in the region.

The new Council will be more effective and deliver savings of over \$200 million over 10 years for the community.

Warringah has sought to reach an agreement with Pittwater and Manly to merge via Council resolutions (16 Dec 2014, 24 Mar 2015 and 23 Jun 2015), letters, public statements, regional workshops and personal approaches.

The Northern Beaches Council model received widespread support from the community. Over 4,200 respondents from across the northern beaches provided feedback stating their preference for local government reform. There is very strong support for a single northern beaches council, with 69% of submissions and 49% of telephone respondents in favour of the united model.

This Northern Beaches Council Vision and Blueprint identifies priorities and how it will tackle critical issues for the community that require a regional approach and address local needs at the same time.

Already with an extremely strong community identity across NSW the Northern Beaches is one community of interest. Celebrating local village character, and voices servicing unique local requirements and achieving widespread democracy can all be achieved with the right governance model.

The Vision and Blueprint demonstrates how the new Northern Beaches Council will work closely with the NSW Government to effectively plan for this region, the community and the future of Sydney.

Uniting the Northern Beaches to create a new Council... just makes sense.





*"It's so naturally beautiful."\**

Blair, March 2015

## Facts on 'Splitting the Northern Beaches'

- The boundary is unknown and will be costly to draw up
- It will cost up to \$179m over 10 years – the highest of all merger options (SGS, KPMG)
- There is no option for a rates freeze
- Services to residents will be disrupted
- Pittwater ratepayers will be gifted income-generating assets such as Kimbriki while Manly will inherit costly infrastructure such as Brookvale Oval and Warringah Aquatic Centre – creating 'have' and 'have nots'.
- Warringah ratepayers will likely pay higher rates



# Introduction

## Uniting the Northern Beaches community to create a new, professional and sustainable local government organisation is needed.

Sydney's Northern Beaches is a distinct community with similar values, interests and needs.

A love of the beaches and bush, an enjoyment of a relaxed and balanced lifestyle are things that bring us together on the Northern Beaches as expressed by the members of the public throughout this Vision piece.

One new, effective and efficient Northern Beaches Council would bring together the best of Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Councils and could offer a rate freeze in the first three years from the \$200 million in savings.

It would also surpass all the Fit for the Future benchmarks by 2019/20.

With the focus on the future, a new Northern Beaches Council could help achieve things that smaller organisations could only dream of...

Dee Why to Chatswood Bus Rapid Transport  
Northern Beaches University Campus  
Brookvale Oval Stadium  
Northern Beaches Business and Tourism Development Centre  
Holistic environmental planning

*"No change is not an option"*

*"... look beyond today into the future"*

The Hon. Paul Toole  
Minister for Local Government 2014 and 2015

The Independent Local Government Review Panel (ILGRP) was right when it said one Northern Beaches Council is the best and only option for structural reform. Two independent studies have shown this would yield the most savings and benefits for the northern beaches community.

Citing its geographic, economic and social ties, the ILGRP found amalgamating three Councils would improve finances and strategic capacity as well as provide an important regional context for creating jobs, transport, housing and recreational facilities.

This is in stark contrast with the idea of splitting Warringah Council into Pittwater and Manly Councils. This could cost up to \$179 million over 10 years and would create two Councils smaller than Warringah's current size.

Splitting the Northern Beaches goes against the very heart of the Fit for the Future reform program.

*"The... areas are comparable in all respects – physical, social, cultural, economic and administrative. The strong natural boundaries make it an ideal geographic unit for integrated planning, development, administration and community of interest"*

Local Government Boundaries Commission 1977  
(recommending one Northern Beaches Council)

*"Dividing this Council makes little sense...it is fundamentally flawed."*

*"The Panel obviously saw no need for boundary changes on the northern beaches and that the Manly/Pittwater proposal clearly would go against the Panel's approach."*

Professor Graham Sansom, Independent Local Government Review Panel 2014 and 2015

\*All community comments from  
Warringah Council Community Consultation, 2015



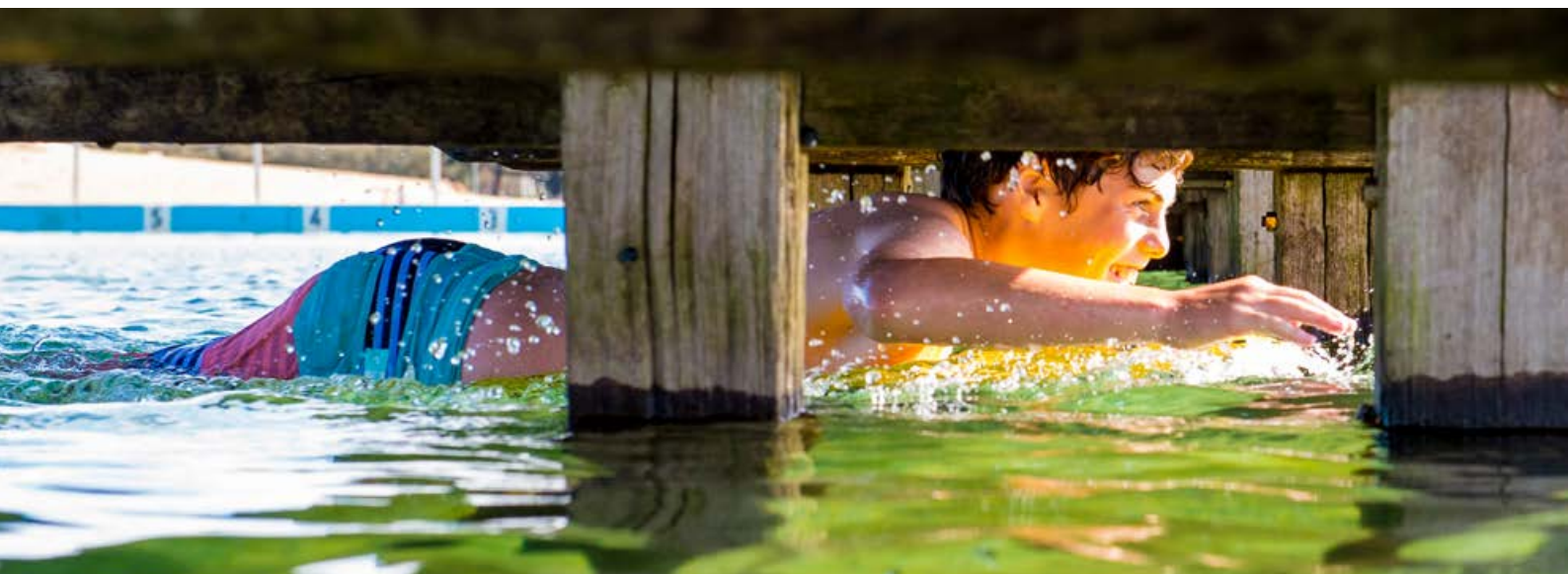
## Common Community Visions Across the Northern Beaches



Australian Open of Surfing, Manly Beach



Lifestyle and recreation at Narrabeen Lagoon Multi-Use Trail



Vibrant beaches and waterways in Pittwater



# How it Benefits the Community

## Local Voices

While the people of the Northern Beaches are unified by many things, the communities of Manly, Dee Why and Palm Beach have celebrated differences.


Our local voices would be strengthened under a new system of governance which supports active neighbourhood committees and community boards.

Concerns about losing local identity will soon be forgotten when local communities are more empowered to make decisions about their own destiny – especially when these actions are put into place with the help of a full-time Mayor and a well-resourced Council organisation.


- Existing Customer Service Centres maintained at Avalon, Mona Vale, Dee Why and Manly.
- Expanded 24/7 online services, shortening response times.
- An independent ombudsman managing complaints and ensuring transparency.
- Monthly online updates on the progress of Council projects and finances.
- Elected representatives with strong links to the community and abilities in strategic and business management.
- Strategic Committees on areas such as the environment, transport and community services.
- Local community bodies to set service levels and allocate resources.
- Greater promotion of key tourism destinations, such as Manly, and stronger economic development.



Manly – *'Where natural environment and heritage sustain and complement a vibrant cosmopolitan and community lifestyle.'*



Warringah – *'A vibrant, caring community, thriving in a unique beach and bush environment, supporting a balance of lifestyle, business and recreation.'*



Pittwater – *'To be a vibrant sustainable community of connected villages inspired by bush, beach and water.'*





Active Seniors



Economic development and employment growth in partnerships (Northern Beaches Career Expo, Northern Beaches Business Education Network)



Greater collaboration with State Government to drive transport improvement and access to the Northern Beaches

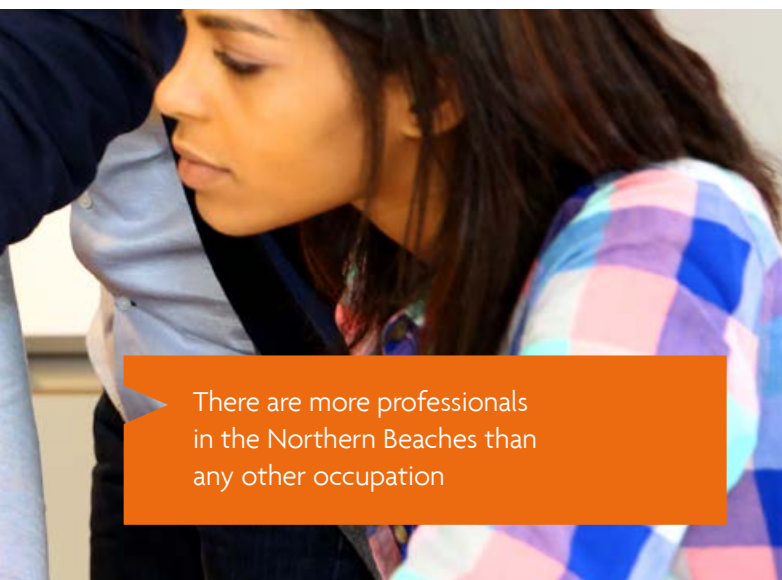
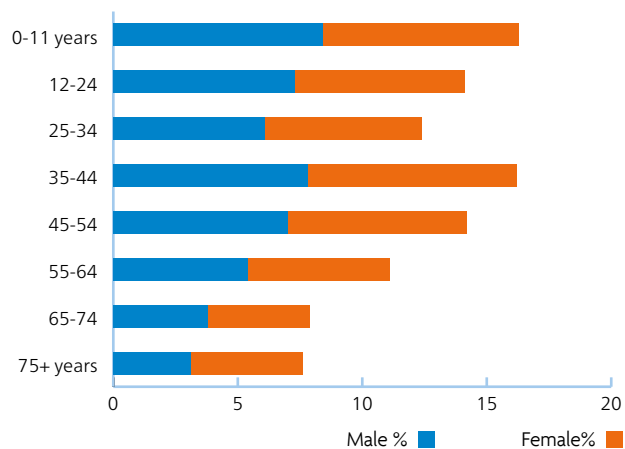




We have a similar proportion of pre-schoolers and a higher proportion of persons at post retirement age than greater Sydney

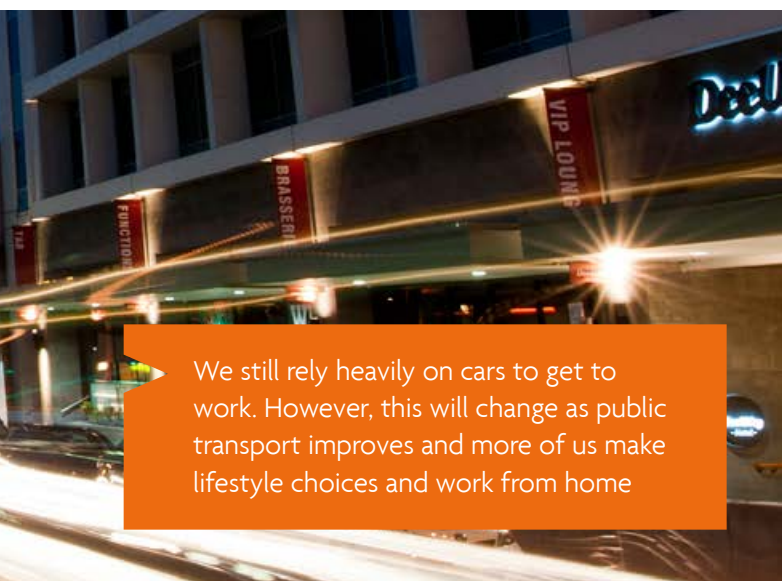
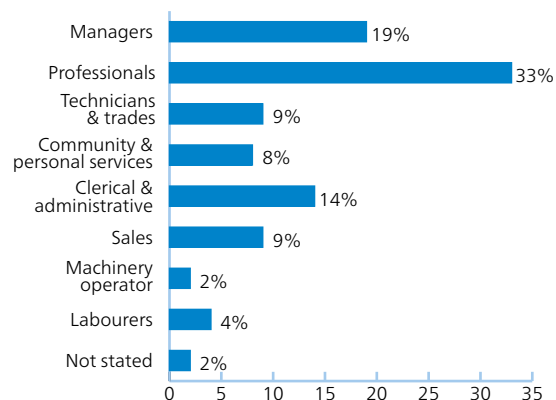
## Who We Are

Age and Gender\*



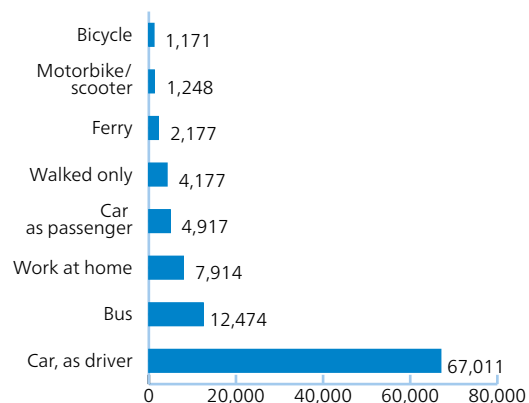
There are more professionals in the Northern Beaches than any other occupation

Occupations\*



We still rely heavily on cars to get to work. However, this will change as public transport improves and more of us make lifestyle choices and work from home

How we get to Work\*



\*Source: ABS 2011 Census

## For All Ages

Usage of mobile devices is increasing across all age groups\* allowing for service improvements and geo-targeting services along the Northern Beaches.

## Mobile Users



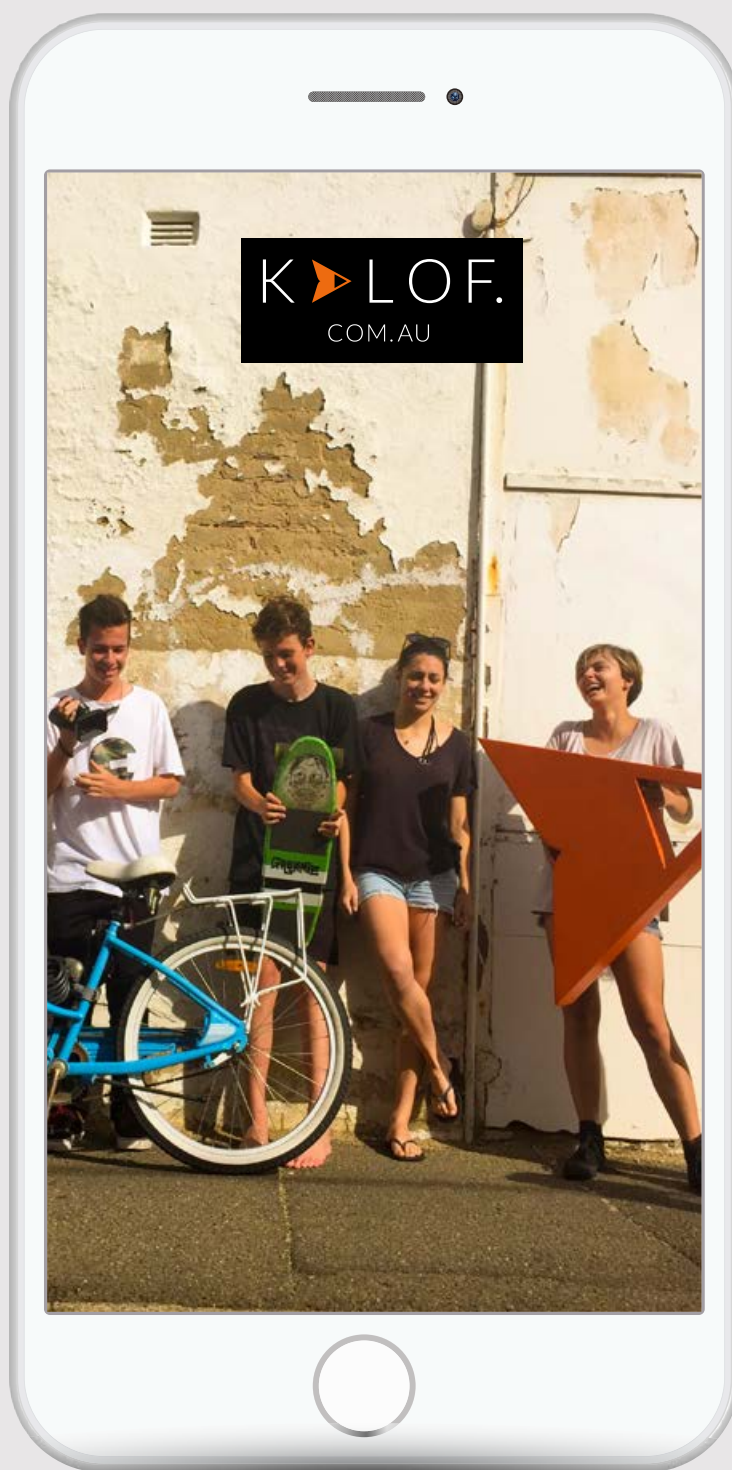
both  
up 8% in last  
12 months



There is an opportunity for traditional service areas such as libraries to increase the customer service offering with approximately a third of service still being done over the counter\*\*

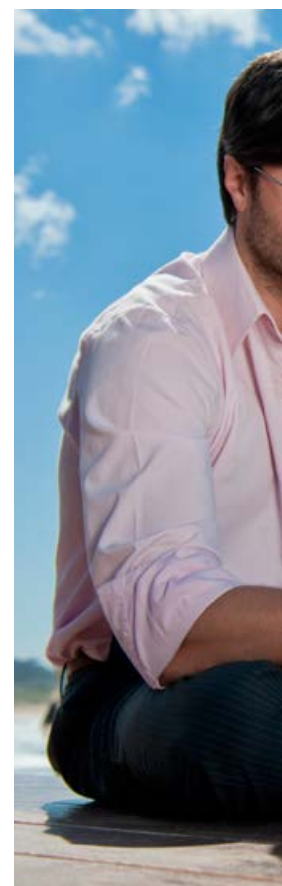
ACMA 2013/14\*

Warringah Council 2013/14\*\*



## Access Council Anytime Anywhere

A 24/7 online service centre would be available via web, tablet and mobile device.



The KALOF Youth app. A northern beaches initiative

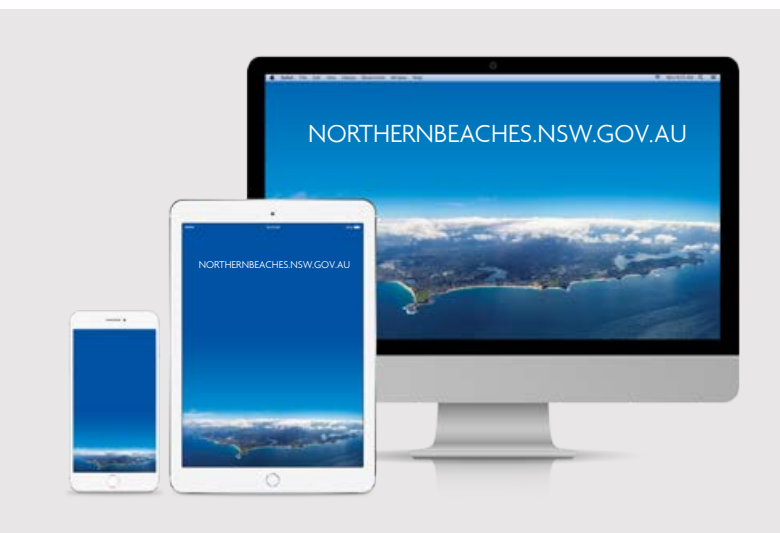


57% of 55-66 year olds are downloading more



Celebrating the northern beaches





www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

## A New Model of Connectivity northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

Access to a new Northern Beaches Council will be unprecedented. The landscape has changed. The Local Government Act was developed about 80 years before the birth of the internet. 92% of Australians now use the internet.\* Northern Beaches residents have above average internet connectivity.\*\*\*

ACMA 2013/14\* (see Fig B) ABS\*\*\*

## Social Connectivity and Engagement

On the northern beaches, our community has a growing preference for digital communications, including social media. Already the combined social media footprint of the northern beaches councils is the same size as Manly's population of 45,000.

All ages are downloading more apps\*

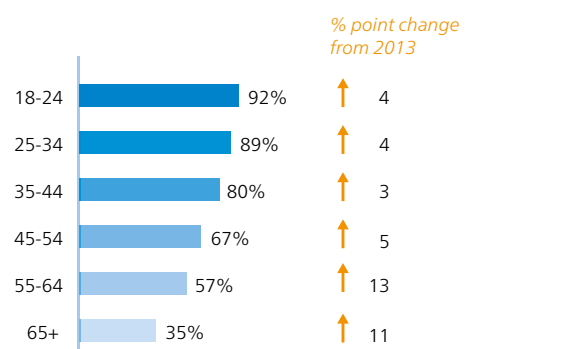


Fig A ACMA 2013/14\*



Growing social media and free Wi-Fi locations across the northern beaches



Social messaging, connecting with more local residents each day

## kalof.com.au - For Youth by Youth

KALOF Youth Team, representative of ages 12-24 years - a Northern Beaches initiative to engage youth via iOS and Android Apps.

## Wi-Fi - Where We Connect

86% At home

45% At work

19% Wi-Fi hotspots

18% At friend's place

Council Wi-Fi hotspots could be increased under a new Northern Beaches Council.

Key Wi-Fi points could be added, to the portfolio of connected community centres, libraries and villages across the Northern Beaches.





*"Having lived here over 45 years, although I certainly don't know everyone, we still feel like family."*

Patricia, March 2015





## Recreation and Wellbeing

With a strong focus on recreation, the Northern Beaches has more than 150 sportsfields, 70 sporting groups and over 60 schools. A single booking system and fee structure would reduce duplication and make planning easier for users.

- Cultural events to attract more sponsorship and have stronger purchasing power.
- Arts and culture supported with coordination between theatres, galleries and libraries.
- The Manly Boy Charlton Swim Centre and Warringah Aquatic Centre providing complementary and cost-effective facilities and programs.
- Bike paths, walking trails and bush tracks linked across the Northern Beaches.
- Major events growing across current Council boundaries and celebrating multiple destinations.
- One library card and a larger home library service accessed by all residents.
- One beach parking sticker to give ratepayers free parking at all beaches.
- Youth, aged, multicultural and disability services expanded with a larger voice for advocacy.
- Council child care services, already shared between Manly and Warringah, strengthened and expanded.



A young man and woman are sitting on a thick, horizontal tree branch in a park. The man, on the left, is wearing a white tank top and red shorts, and is holding a yellow spiral notebook. The woman, on the right, is wearing a white dress and is holding a blue book. They are both smiling and appear to be enjoying their time outdoors. The background is a lush green landscape with trees and a bright blue sky with some clouds. The sun is shining brightly, creating a warm and pleasant atmosphere.

*“It is such a great area for bringing up a family -  
good shops, sports facilities and parks...”*

Christine, May 2015





## Environment and Waste

The environment will benefit thanks to unified and smarter management of beaches, stormwater, bushland, our four lagoons and catchments.

- Investment in wildlife corridors and linking reserves; more capacity to purchase land of high conservation value, and reduce weeds and feral animals.
- Integrated approach to protecting and maintaining our natural assets and a better chance for our indigenous heritage and threatened species.
- Implementation of one regional waste solution and alternative waste treatment at Kimbriki, increasing recycling and making the region self-sufficient in waste management.
- Single point of contact for State agencies, emergency services and the community on environmental hazards and incidents.
- Better resources to tackle the big risks of natural disasters, coastal erosion and climate change.
- Complementary programs from award-winning Environment Centres at Manly, Narrabeen and Kimbriki and coordinated sustainability events and education.
- Greater procurement power to reduce utility costs and resource use.



*"I love visiting Manly, Freshwater, Avalon and Palm Beach for the day. There is always something to do. I never need to leave the Northern Beaches. We have everything on our doorstep."*

Emma, March 2015







## Business and Community Groups

Businesses and community organisations would immediately benefit by only having to deal with one Council administration, with one set of rules and fees.

- Creation of a dedicated, one-stop-shop to support business and tourism development across the region.
- More than 50% of the Northern Beaches workforce works locally. This figure could be maintained or strengthened with the development of diversified economic hubs such as Brookvale, Dee Why, Frenchs Forest, Manly and Mona Vale.
- Economic growth could be increased with public transport that is directly linked to the Global Economic Corridor centres of North Sydney, Chatswood and Macquarie Park.
- Establishment of a Northern Beaches university campus to improve training and keep young people in the area.
- One set of development approvals and planning rules.
- Streamlined community grant process.
- Eliminating need for extra levels of bureaucracy with SHOROC.
- Strong partnerships with local and regional groups.

*'The positive and proactive stand taken by Warringah Council will be applauded by business who has long argued that 41 councils across Sydney creates unnecessary red tape and duplication of effort.'*

Patricia Forsythe, Executive Director, Sydney Business Chamber.



*“It is a clean and very beautiful environment to be enjoyed and respected by all. The diversity of cultures is growing across the Northern Beaches which brings a wonderful sense of sharing and living in harmony with each other.”*

Margo, March 2015







# *Working with the NSW Government and Organisations*

A single partner to help the State deliver improvements to our economy, wellbeing, safety, infrastructure and environment.

## Health

- Ensure the precinct around the new Northern Beaches Hospital is a success with the appropriate roads, public transport and room for commercial growth.
- One partner with State agencies in the delivery of local and community health.

## Transport

- One partner for the successful construction of the North-South Bus Rapid Transport system.
- Stronger links to the Global Economic Corridor with East-West Bus Rapid Transport and other solutions.
- Roads, parking, footpaths and cycleways positioned to best accommodate regional plans and funding.
- A joint regional approach to active transport.

## Housing and Development

- Greater ability to implement housing targets and introduce an appropriate mix of housing options including affordable housing.
- Delivering services and facilities for new developments, along with transport, traffic and parking needs.
- Streamlined, faster development approval process.
- More resourcing to ensure building activities comply with approvals and safety standards.

## Environment

- Better coordinated management of fire, floods, storms and coastal erosion hazards.



## Northern Beaches Organisations

A new Northern Beaches Council will be aligned with existing community groups and Government agency services across the Northern Beaches including:

- Surf Life Saving Northern Beaches
- Police Local Area Command
- Area Health District
- Headspace
- Police Citizens Youth Club
- Marine Rescue
- Forest Coach Lines
- Community Transport
- Youth Reach
- Northern Sydney Institute TAFE
- Sea Eagles
- Manly Daily





Image: Surf Life rescue boats on the Northern Beaches (Dee Why),  
Courtesy of William J Hall collection 1890-1930's



*“The Manly, Warringah and Pittwater communities are very closely linked in culture and character and therefore there is no need for three separate councils.”*

Jill, April 2015



# Operational Blueprint

## Scale and Capacity

The Northern Beaches Council has scale and capacity for its region and wider Sydney and would surpass all Fit for the Future benchmarks by 2019/20.

The Northern Beaches is an island in metropolitan Sydney with a population of 238,000 which is expected to grow to 307,400 by 2031.

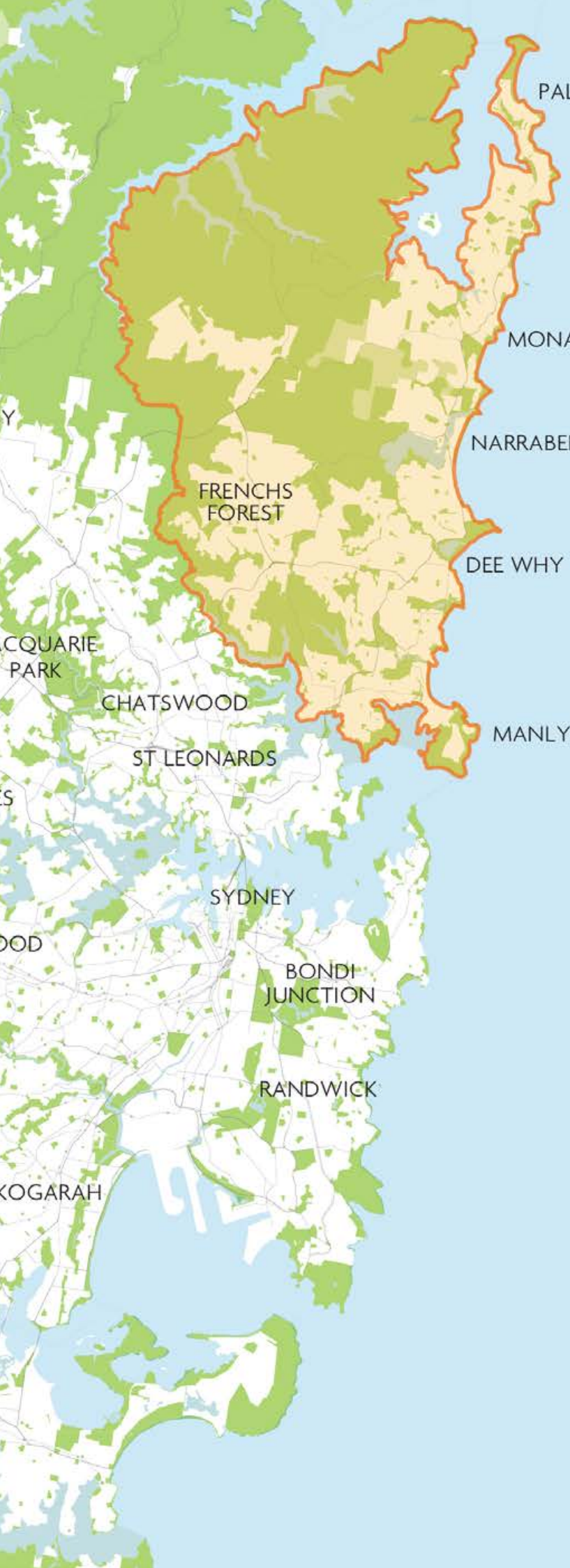
One Council can build on the best elements and expertise of Manly, Pittwater and Warringah Councils; leveraging the individual strengths of systems, processes and people in developing a high performing organisation.

*“We’ve been asked by the State Government to create a stronger local government sector; a combined northern beaches council taking in all three could be very strong. It could play a very important role in Sydney”.*

Professor Graham Sansom, Independent  
Local Government Review Panel 2014







## Greater Capacity to Address Regional Challenges

Challenge/ Priority	More Capacity
Regional infrastructure	✓
Integrated transport, sustainable, with cross-regional links	✓
Housing growth and affordability	✓
Economic growth, strategic centres and links	✓
Growing local jobs and skilled workforce	✓
Stronger partnership with Government to address priorities in Metro Strategy and Subregional plan	✓
Meets growing needs for diverse community services and infrastructure	✓
Health services and facilities for the growing population	✓
Sustainable waste and energy management	✓
Protecting our environment, catchments and biodiversity	✓
Managing environmental risks	✓



## Financial and Non-Financial Benefits of one Northern Beaches Council

SGS Economics and Planning examined options for local government on the Northern Beaches in 2013 and 2015. It examined financial aspects as well as strategic capacity, efficiencies, communities of interest, service provision and local representation.

The key findings were:

- one Northern Beaches Council was the preferred option, with a score weighted significantly higher than the status quo
- a Northern Beaches Council could save over \$200m over 10 years
- one Northern Beaches Council would retain the identity and community of interest associated with the Northern Beaches
- splitting Warringah was the worst outcome financially, potentially costing \$179m over 10 years.

## Costs of Forming a New Organisation

SGS Economics and Planning assumed costs of:

- 1.4% of the operating budget of the combining councils for changes to systems and processes
- staff redundancies of an additional 1.0-1.4% will be offset by natural staff attrition and savings.
  - \$10.5m transition funding from NSW Government
  - savings within the first 3 years
  - system and process improvements
  - natural staff attrition
  - robust planning and management of the transition.

## Community Support

In submissions, the Northern Beaches community told Warringah Council their preferred scenarios were:

- 69% Northern Beaches Council
- 20% (Status Quo)
- 6% Manly and Warringah
- 2% Pittwater and Warringah
- 3% Split Warringah

## Community's Top Five Benefits

More efficient and better use of resources  
Reduced costs  
Reduced bureaucracy  
Unify the Northern Beaches  
Better regional facilities and services

## Community's Top Five Concerns

Local issues overlooked and loss of local identity  
None/can't think of any  
Resource shifting with rates spent elsewhere  
Loss of representation or local voice  
Too bureaucratic and less efficient

## Transition Committee

A representative Transition Committee will be established to define the governance model to:

- ensure geographical and equitable representation
- provide conduits for local representation
- provide transparency in budget allocation
- deliver robust social and financial planning

The Transition Committee will be responsible for:

- continuity of services to the community
- implementation of change management processes
- integration of systems, data and processes
- minimisation of transition costs

They will also be responsible for addressing the key concerns of the community, as seen above. An operational framework will be defined to deliver and report performance against the Benchmarks.



## Achieving Benchmarks

A Northern Beaches Council would surpass all the Fit for the Future benchmarks by 2019/20. Transition costs affect 2015/16 operating performance results, however by 2020 strong operating performance results are achieved.

Ratio	Benchmark	Period				
		15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20
Operating Performance	>0%	-1.2%	4.2%	4.0%	5.9%	6.4%
Own Source Revenue	>60%	90%	89%	90%	92%	93%
Building & Infrastructure Asset Renewal	>100%	138%	101%	106%	103%	104%
Infrastructure Backlog	<2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Asset Maintenance	>100%	111%	111%	111%	111%	112%
Debt Service	<20%	4.7%	4.7%	4.7%	4.6%	4.4%
Real Operating Expenditure per capita	Declining	1,183	1,129	1,148	1,133	1,124

Source: KPMG (2015) Independent review of structural options for Manly Council and Pittwater Council – Part B (page 63).



*“Nobody ever wants to move from the Northern Beaches. It is beautiful with access to many different waterways, lots of natural bushland, good services, a great place to bring up kids. I never want to leave here and could not imagine living anywhere else.”*

Lynette, March 2015







## Transition

The transition has been scoped with a staged approach to create the new Council.

A Transition Committee would oversee teams to prepare and implement the merge.

### 2016

- Agreement on structure and governance.
- Appointment of a new executive.
- Elections for new Councillors and Mayor.
- A change management plan with related resourcing and communications.
- Creation of framework for community and staff engagement.

### 2017

- Development of a vision, culture and Community Strategic Plan with the community, staff and key stakeholders.
- Beginning of staged integration of finances, systems, staff and assets.
- Coordinated strategic and operational planning for services.
- New operational model in place.



# IMAGINE THIS...

One beach parking sticker for all the northern beaches

Improved waste management and more recycling

Improved playgrounds, sportsfields and parks

One voice to more effectively lobby for better roads and public transport (about time!)

Extra love for Brookvale Oval

Less red tape for businesses and organisations dealing with Council

Full-time Mayor to meet your needs

NORTH HEAD





One Council (not three)  
to manage lagoons  
and waterways

One set of planning rules  
and faster DA processing

Coordinated  
coastal  
management and  
beach services

One voice to work better  
with State health bodies

Protection of the lifestyle  
for your children

Environment improved with  
coordinated management  
and greater resources

BARRENJOEY HEAD

40km



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