

10 October 2018

[REDACTED]

IPART

Re Review of Central Coast Council pricing structure

To whom it may concern,

I request that Central Coast Council's application to IPART be rejected in total and that Council be required to start the entire process again with mandatory, proper and full consultation with the entire community and not just selected sections of the community.

I object to the potential \$5,427.81 annual stormwater charge on my 17ha Yarramalong Valley turf farm property as proposed by Central Coast Council in their IPART submission.

Stakeholders questions answered

Has the Council's expenditure over the current determination period delivered appropriate levels of service?

We receive no water, sewer or stormwater services from Council and do not utilise any of these services in our day to day lives.

Is the Council's proposed expenditure for the next determination period reasonable?

No. The stormwater levy proposed is most unreasonable, in particular the proposed \$5,427.81 annual stormwater charge for farmland rated properties over 45,000sqm, which is totally without merit.

Over charging for services

I see no rational or justifiable reason for Central Coast stormwater charges to be higher than those in the Hunter and Sydney Water areas can be seen in the attached Sydney (1) and Hunter (2) Water fee structures. The Central Coast Council's intended stormwater charges are a standout divergence from the benchmark Hunter and Sydney fees and coverage. While currently and erroneously most of the Central Coast is defined as a drainage area in the case of Sydney and the Hunter only a small percentage of urban areas are deemed stormwater drainage areas.

Are the Council's proposed price changes reasonable? Would they have any undue impact on any customer groups?

Council proposal inconsistent with Hunter and Sydney Water Storm water charges

In the interests of consistency with Sydney and Hunter Water and using those systems as a model, Central Coast Council charges should be reduced in all categories as per the attached pricing policies.

Sydney Water levies no charge on farmland. Our namesake in Sydney, [REDACTED], about 2km from the township has the notation on the Sydney Water interactive map (3) "You're not in one of our stormwater catchments" as is the case with my farm, it is not in a stormwater catchment and should never be. As shown in the attached maps the stormwater drainage area in Sydney (4) is small and only in urban areas. Hunter Water levy no

charge on farms and again the stormwater drainage area only in two urban areas as shown in the attached map (5).

Central Coast Council's intended \$5,427.81 stormwater charge on very large properties west of the M1 is in fact only \$4,432.60 in the Hunter, 18% lower than the proposed Central Coast Council levy. I believe the Central Coast charges in all areas of stormwater should not exceed those in the Hunter.

Farming is a difficult business at the best of times and many local farmers, some like myself nearing or beyond retirement age, struggle with the impact of drought on top of normal costs. I believe the proposed \$5,427.81 levy will harm farming and farmers on the Central Coast.

Should stormwater drainage prices be aligned across the Council area?

Council misusing Drainage designation

The misapplied stormwater drainage definition used in the former Gosford LGA should not be imposed on the former Wyong LGA. The Central Coast is not a drainage area as defined by Hunter and Sydney Water, the very systems the Central Coast application is said to be modelled after.

Cost Equalisation

Price consistency across the Central Coast was our top priority for our community and we have listened to this feed back. This is Council's statement in relation to price consistency.

The answer to price consistency is to remove any charge to farms in the old Gosford LGA to be consistent with the current case in the old Wyong LGA.

Equalisation can cut both ways and there is no reason why the stormwater fees can not be equalised down instead of up. Based on the Hunter and Sydney Water precedents. I believe that as there is no justification for farmland to be designated as a drainage area in either the old Gosford LGA or Wyong LGA and that there is no justification for a fee of any description on any farmland.

The farms of the Central Coast are not using stormwater infrastructure nor contributing to stormwater flows.

Should the Council's stormwater prices be based on the area of a customer's property?

No. I believe the stormwater levy should be based on the hard areas on a customer's property and then only in areas actually serviced by the stormwater system. Apart from the soft area's ability to absorb water, it is only the hard areas that generate excessive and rapid stormwater run off and it is this rapid run off that is difficult to deal with.

In the case of farms and farmland, most farms would have no more and often less hard area than an urban dwelling and associated development on the block.

Should there be a low impact category for stormwater drainage prices?

Yes there should be a low impact category and as is the case in the Sydney Water system the low impact category should be made available to urban, commercial and farmland, should farmland eventually be subject to a stormwater levy.

If Council's aim is to provide infrastructure for stormwater and not simply raise revenue on a pretext, then they should embrace a low impact category like that available in Sydney.

Low Impact definition and assessment

The "low impact" category is not defined in Council's application but should be. The exact definition, range of fees and point by point detailed method and measures of assessment must be legislated so in future Council can not arbitrarily redefine "low impact" and what constitutes it in order to increase charges. Without strict definitions and standards a low impact assessment could be open to corruption.

Exempt Farms and Farmland

I see no reason why farms should be included in the stormwater charges at all. By definition farms have large areas of bush and grassland on them, soft absorbent areas that accept and store stormwater.

I request that farms are exempted from the stormwater charges.

NO Consultation

The valleys do not receive the Central Coast Express Advocate or Wyong Regional Chronicle newspapers. Our local news and community information comes from the "Rural Grapevine", Council advertisement in October issue attached (6) and the "Mangrove Mountain and Districts Community News", both of which are delivered to our letter boxes. Rather than alert the valley community to their stormwater levy intentions on their paid Rural Grapevine page, Council advertised "The Lakes Festival" and "The nations biggest weekend garage sale..." Council has failed to advertise the stormwater levy at all despite their one page advertisement in each issue of the Rural Grapevine.

I found out about Council's intention to bill me \$5,427.81 for stormwater by word of mouth, following Council's presentation at Alison homestead on 29.9.18, the September long weekend when many residents are on holiday. I am told Council's advice to the valley and mountain communities amounted to just a single A3 advice placed in the Yarramalong store. Luckily a community member saw the A3 advice and posted a warning of Council's proposed information presentation on the valley facebook page. Had this advice not reached me, my first knowledge of Council's stormwater charge would have been a bill for \$5,427.81 in the mail box.

This is Not consultation but advising. Advising of what Central Coast Council are going to do is Not consultation. Council's submission to IPART had been made on 7 September 2018, three weeks prior to the Alison Homestead presentation and yet I only found out about the proposal on 29 September 2018, less than two weeks before submissions were to close and some five months after the community consultation began.

I believe Council deliberately denied residents west of the M1 any knowledge of the consultation process as we are to pay the price for the proposed \$18 reduction in stormwater charges for urban properties. My belief is confirmed by the belated notification to the affected properties on Tuesday October 9, 2018, provided only after an outcry from affected residents with direct appeals to the Mayor and CEO. The October 9 mail out, just three days prior to the original close of IPART submissions, proves that Council knew who was affected all along. Farmland rated farms are of course on the Council computer system, yet despite this knowledge, between April 2018 and October 9, 2018 Council failed to notify farmers of their intention to charge us \$5,427.81 per year by any of the many means available to them.

Central Coast Regional Plan 2036

Proposed stormwater fee on farmland rated farms is contrary to the goals laid out for agricultural lands in the 2036 Central Coast Regional Plan. Goal 2 of the Plan outlines the importance of agriculture to the Central Coast economy. These important agricultural operations could do without Council imposing an unjustified and excessive \$5,427.81 storm water charge, adding to already tight agricultural operations.

Far from supporting and encouraging agricultural production, the proposed stormwater fees discourage investment in this \$150m sector of the economy by imposing yet another direct cost on

what are in some cases struggling enterprises, with some particularly hard hit by the current drought.

Goal 2 – Protect the natural environment and manage the use of agricultural and resource lands

..... Productive lands in the west of the region provide a strong foundation for investment and will underpin growth in the economy.

The region's agricultural production is valued in excess of \$150 million a year. It supports ancillary industries such as irrigation, important food processing industries and retail trade. These industries also underpin the region's rural communities. Growth in the Asian economy will result in demand for higher-value products and services. There are opportunities to leverage proximity to Asia and the region's growing agricultural and tourism sectors, to supply developing Asian economies with resources and products.

Agribusiness is changing and trends suggest that productive lands will be used more intensively in the future. ...

Direction 9 - Protect and enhance productive agricultural land

Agricultural lands are important to the Central Coast's cultural and regional identity, the economy and tourism. They are concentrated west of the M1 Pacific Motorway, within the Central Coast plateaus and Yarramalong and Dooralong Valleys (see Figure 8). The region has to maintain a critical mass of agricultural industries and related supply chain, including ancillary services, infrastructure, markets, processing facilities and related industries.

A review of agricultural lands in planning instruments is necessary to manage land use impacts on agricultural productivity and to secure the longer term future of this sector. This will be supported by regional mapping of Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land, important agricultural land, infrastructure and key socio-economic indicators.

The NSW Government has mapped Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land which contains high quality soil and water resources. The NSW Government has also worked with councils and industry to develop methodologies for Important Agricultural Lands mapping. Mapping of agricultural industries will support their sustainable growth.

Biosecurity will continue to be an important consideration for these areas as it contributes to the wellbeing and prosperity of the region and, more broadly, the nation.

The NSW Government supports the development of rural areas that can adapt to changing agricultural trends and practices, while also accommodating agritourism and processing, packaging and associated retail services.

Actions

9.1 Identify important agricultural land that is suitable for agricultural enterprises and protect it from incompatible development.

9.2 Manage Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land and other important agricultural land as locations for agricultural activities and complementary uses.

9.3 Facilitate the supply chain, including infrastructure, distribution, processing facilities, and research and development.

9.4 Protect the region's wellbeing and prosperity through increased biosecurity measures.

Stormwater accepted from neighbours with no choice

My property at [REDACTED] processes the storm water from four other properties including [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Our dams and swales handle the stormwater from these properties, storing millions of litres of water before releasing it slowly into Deep Creek.

Far from being charged by Council for our stormwater, I believe Council should be paying us for the stormwater storage service we have been providing for 26 years at no cost.

Our stormwater flows under Old Maitland Road and the M1 then to the Pacific Ocean. No Council storm water structures are present between [REDACTED] and the sea.

I object to the discrimination in the proposed farmland stormwater levy. My neighbours generate more stormwater than I do in some cases off larger properties and yet if they are not farmland rated they would pay no fee under Council's proposal. This is inequitable.

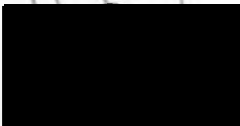
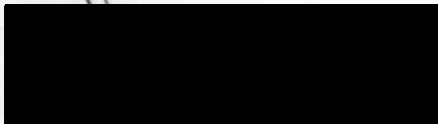
IPART approval prior to drainage area declaration puts undue pressure on Minister.

I believe the drainage area declared should be dramatically reduced to include only those urban, industrial and commercial areas that are served by the stormwater system and nothing else as per the Sydney and Hunter Water systems.

I believe that IPART should not accept Council's submission until the Minister declares the drainage area, as an approval from IPART would I believe be used by Council to pressure the Minister into the declaration. Such a declaration I believe to be unjust and unjustified and I will oppose it.

Again I request that IPART reject Central Coast Council's submission in its entirety and insist the entire pricing and consultation process be started again.

Yours sincerely

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Prices for your business

These prices are for commercial and industrial properties and strata units.

Water service charge

Wastewater service charge

Stormwater service charge

You pay this charge if you're in one of our stormwater drainage areas. This is to manage the large trunk drains (Councils maintain the stormwater pipes that transfer rainwater from your property to our large culverts and channels.) in our stormwater system.
If you're in a unit, you'll pay the 200 m² or less charge.

Property size	2017-18 charge	2018-19 charge
200 m ² or less	\$5.98 a quarter	\$6.09 a quarter
201 m ² to 1,000 m ² or low impact	\$19.10 a quarter	\$19.46 a quarter
1,001 m ² to 10,000 m ²	\$111.23 a quarter	\$113.40 a quarter
10,001 m ² to 45,000 m ²	\$494.32 a quarter	\$503.98 a quarter
45,001 m ² or more	\$1,235.77 a quarter	\$1,259.96 a quarter

You may be able to get a discount if you collect and re-use stormwater on your property. To apply, you must:

- fill out the [claim a low impact discount for your business form](#)

- send us proof of your on-site water initiatives with your completed form.

To find out where our stormwater areas are look at our [stormwater catchments map](#).

Water usage charges

Only properties located in the catchments of Hunter Water's stormwater drains pay drainage charges. For non-residential customers, this charge is based on the area of your property or whether it is a predetermined 'low impact' property.

Residential	Residential Stormwater Service Charges (per annum)
House, Vacant Land	\$77.90
Units and Flats	\$28.83
Non-Residential Property Area	Non-Residential Stormwater Service Charges (per annum)
Small $\leq 1,000\text{M}^2$ OR Low Impact*	\$77.90
Medium $\geq 1,001 - 10,000\text{M}^2$	\$219.36
Large $\geq 10,001 - 45,000\text{M}^2$	\$1,395.11
Very Large $\geq 45,000\text{M}^2$	\$4,432.60

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Stormwater catchment map

Are you in one of our stormwater catchments?

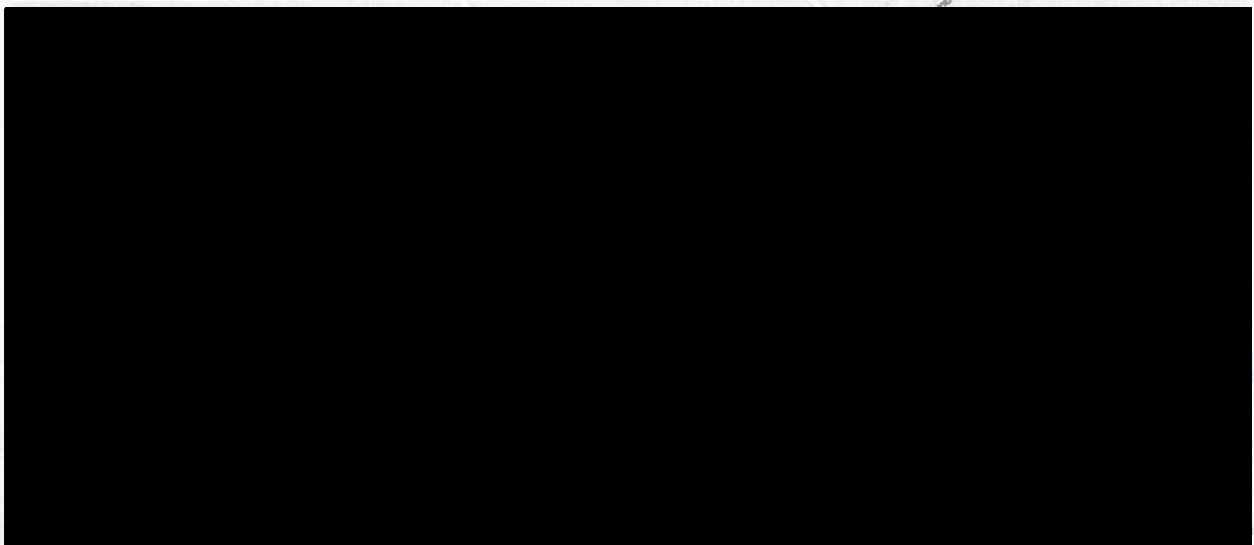
Our stormwater catchments are the areas that drain to our stormwater assets.

If you're in one of our catchments, the run-off from your property will reach one of our pipes, channels, creeks or wetlands.

Enter an address to see if you're in one of our catchment areas



You're not in one of our stormwater catchments.



Discount on your stormwater charges

Do you **stop** most of the stormwater leaving your property?

If you store and re-use most of the stormwater around your home, and your property is in one of our stormwater catchments, you might get a discount on your stormwater charges.

Printed on: 7/10/18 19:37

URL: <http://www.sydneywater.com.au/SW/water-the-environment/how-we-manage-sydney-s-water/stormwater-catchment-map/index.htm>

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Stormwater catchment map

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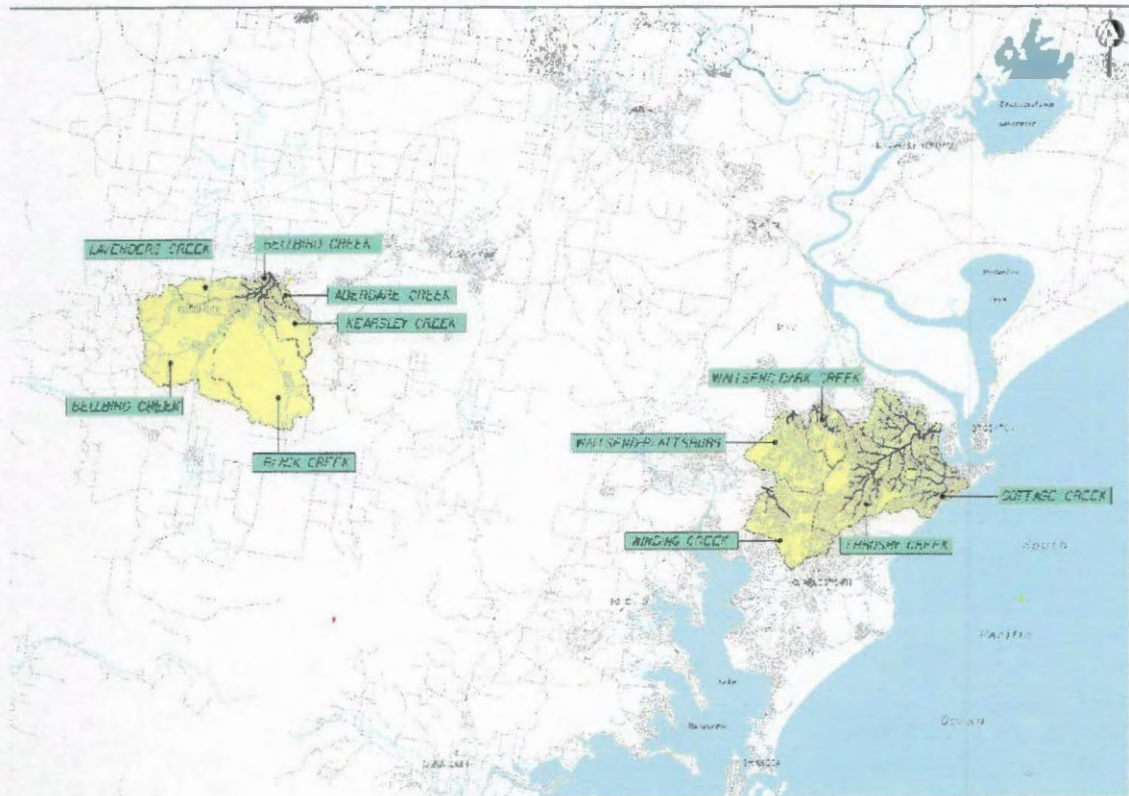
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Coast Connect

Central Coast Council's news and community information

Central
Coast
Council

The nation's biggest weekend of garage sales is coming to the Coast!

Are you a thrift shopper searching for a great bargain? Or maybe you are looking to declutter your home, recycle some unwanted goods and turn your old into gold.

Mark your calendars for our nation's biggest reuse, recycle and environmentally sustainable event - Garage Sale Trail, to be held on Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 October 2018.

This innovative event allows Central Coast households, local organisations, schools, community groups and charities to join thousands of Australians across the country in holding simultaneous garage sales and be part of the rapidly growing interest in sustainability.

Now in its eighth year nationally, the program has grown from a grass roots idea in Bondi Beach where it started in 2010. Garage Sale Trail is powered by over 140 councils nationally.

Last year Central Coast Council had 6,861 people in the community participate in Garage Sale Trail as either a shopper or a seller with over 21,850 items listed for sale.

Central Coast residents held a total of 112 individual sales and 15 group sales with each household sale making an average of \$364 which was higher than the national average.

Not only does this fantastic event help connect our community and provide a great way to meet your neighbours but it also brings attention to the positive impact it has on our environment, reducing the amount of waste ending up in landfill.



We have already had 75 sellers put their sale on the Trail. Want yours on there too?

There's still time to register, just head to centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/garagesaletrail. Shoppers can visit the website to track what sales are happening near them.

Remember, your trash could be someone else's treasure so if you have something around the house that you are thinking of getting rid of, be a part of this incredible community movement and help protect our environment by reusing and recycling rather than disposing.

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PRESENTED BY

Central
Coast
Council

Council Offices 2 Hely St Wyong / 49 Mann St Gosford | 8.30am - 5.00pm, Monday to Friday
T 4350 5555 / 4325 8222 | Mayor Jane Smith | Chief Executive Officer Gary Murphy

18 October 2018

[REDACTED]
N [REDACTED]

Anthony Rush
IPART
Level 15
15-24 Rawson Place
Sydney 2000

Re Review of Central Coast Council pricing structure-addendum

Dear Mr Rush,

Further to my recent submission on the IPART review of Central Coast Council's water, sewer and drainage pricing, I ask that IPART consider the following.

Flooding of MacDonalds, Hungry Jack's and Ace Crescent

For the 26 years I have lived on the Central Coast, Anzac Road and Ace Crescent in Tuggerah have regularly flooded, resulting in considerable financial losses for MacDonalds, Hungry Jack's and other businesses in the area (photos of flooding attached). Despite the fact that Council has developed a flood management plan for this area, it has not been put on exhibition or implemented. I believe this failure to act in the interests of these businesses, despite charging for water related services is inexcusable and an indication that Council are misspending the water system revenue and relates to the stakeholder question ***Has the Council's expenditure over the current determination period delivered appropriate levels of service?*** The answer is clearly NO.

Mangrove Creek Dam safety upgrade and increased storage capacity.

Gosford City Council's application to the 2012 IPART price review, attached, along with Regional Development Australia, brochure, attached, promoted *a major upgrade of the Mangrove Creek Dam Spillway to meet the latest requirements of the Dam Safety Committee (\$8 million)*. In the intervening six years, this crucial work has not been started let alone completed. Billions of litres of flood water have flowed past the Wyong River weir and pumping station, not being able to be harvested to fill the Mangrove Dam due to the inaction of Council and an effective cap of 75% on the dam level. Dam levels have now fallen below 60%, but could have been at 80% had the spillway been upgraded and the dam made safe. Incredibly over \$120 million was spent on the Mardi Mangrove pipeline to allow the 190,000 ML dam to be filled, but without ensuring the full value of the \$120 million could be realised by upgrading the spillway and making the dam safe. What a waste of public funds! Again the answer to the stakeholder question ***Has the Council's expenditure over the current determination period delivered appropriate levels of service?*** is NO.

Capital to burn on pet projects

Council has money to burn on pet projects and yet nothing for Mangrove Dam safety and capacity utilisation and apparently nothing for flood mitigation projects around Mardi and Tuggerah.

In mid 2014, a year into the current pricing agreement with IPART, Wyong Shire Council paid \$17 million for land to build a Regional Airport. In November 2015 this project was dropped with Council deciding to develop Warnervale Airport instead. The \$17 million worth of airport land now sits vacant, unused and unsold.

Since August 2015, Wyong Shire and then Central Coast Council have wasted about \$10 million on developing Warnervale Airport. This airport is heavily regulated through the *Warnervale Airport Restrictions Act 1996*, an *Act* that renders the bulk of the \$10m spent a total waste.

A few years ago, IPART granted Wyong Shire Council a special rate variation to upgrade infrastructure. Again this money appears to have been spent on various airports rather than essential infrastructure including the Mangrove Creek Dam and flood mitigation at Tuggerah.

Central Coast Council Stormwater fees up to 288% higher than Hunter Water....why?

Central Coast Council's proposed stormwater charges are significantly higher than those of Hunter Water. The question is why, particularly when the revenue from the artificially bloated Central Coast stormwater drainage area must be multiples higher than for the Hunter Water system.

The Central Coast Council fees are:

Houses and vacant land 42% higher than Hunter Water.

Units and flats 288% higher than Hunter Water

Medium non residential 26% higher than Hunter Water

Large non residential 23% higher than Hunter Water


Very large non residential 22% higher than Hunter Water.

I believe there is no excuse for these higher charges and that Central Coast Council's stormwater charges should be no higher than those in the Hunter Water system. Further I believe the artificial stormwater drainage area on the Central Coast should be reduced in area to the same standards applied in Sydney and Hunter Water, that is, areas actually serviced by a stormwater system. Currently it appears Central Coast Council is charging Central Coast customers for a non existent service.

The charging of customers for a service they do not receive has just been revealed in the Banking Royal Commission and found to be illegal!

I suggest that the only way to address the multitude of issues I have raised in this and my previous submission is to have Central Coast Council re evaluate their proposals, re submit them to the community in a revised, fair and equitable form and restart the consultation process, with a view to providing a totally new submission to IPART at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely





Constant Flooding of Anzac Rd MacDonalds
& Hungry Jack's



Constant Flooding of Ace Crescent.

Review of Water, Sewerage and Stormwater Drainage prices

Gosford City Council's Pricing Submission to IPART 2012



IPART is currently reviewing Gosford City Council's prices for water, sewerage and stormwater drainage services. This review will set new prices to come into effect from 1 July 2013. Council has proposed prices will be set for a four year period.

Council has completed a detailed submission covering its future costs and price proposals in response to IPART's Issues Paper - *Review of prices for water, sewerage and stormwater services for Gosford City and Wyong Shire Councils*.

Council's submission is publicly available on IPART's website.

All monetary values in this fact sheet are presented in real 2012/13 dollars (i.e. they do not include inflation).

Providing quality services

The funds raised by water, sewerage and stormwater drainage charges allow Council to:

- maintain, operate and improve the community's water, sewerage and stormwater drainage systems
- harvest, treat and deliver safe drinking water to over 68,000 properties through 1,000 kilometres of water mains
- transport and treat sewage from over 66,000 properties through 1,300 kilometres of sewerage mains and 185 sewage pump stations to protect public health and the environment
- collect, transport and dispose of stormwater, across an area of 1,020 square kilometres, in a safe and environmentally sound manner to reduce risk to life and damage to property

Investing for the future

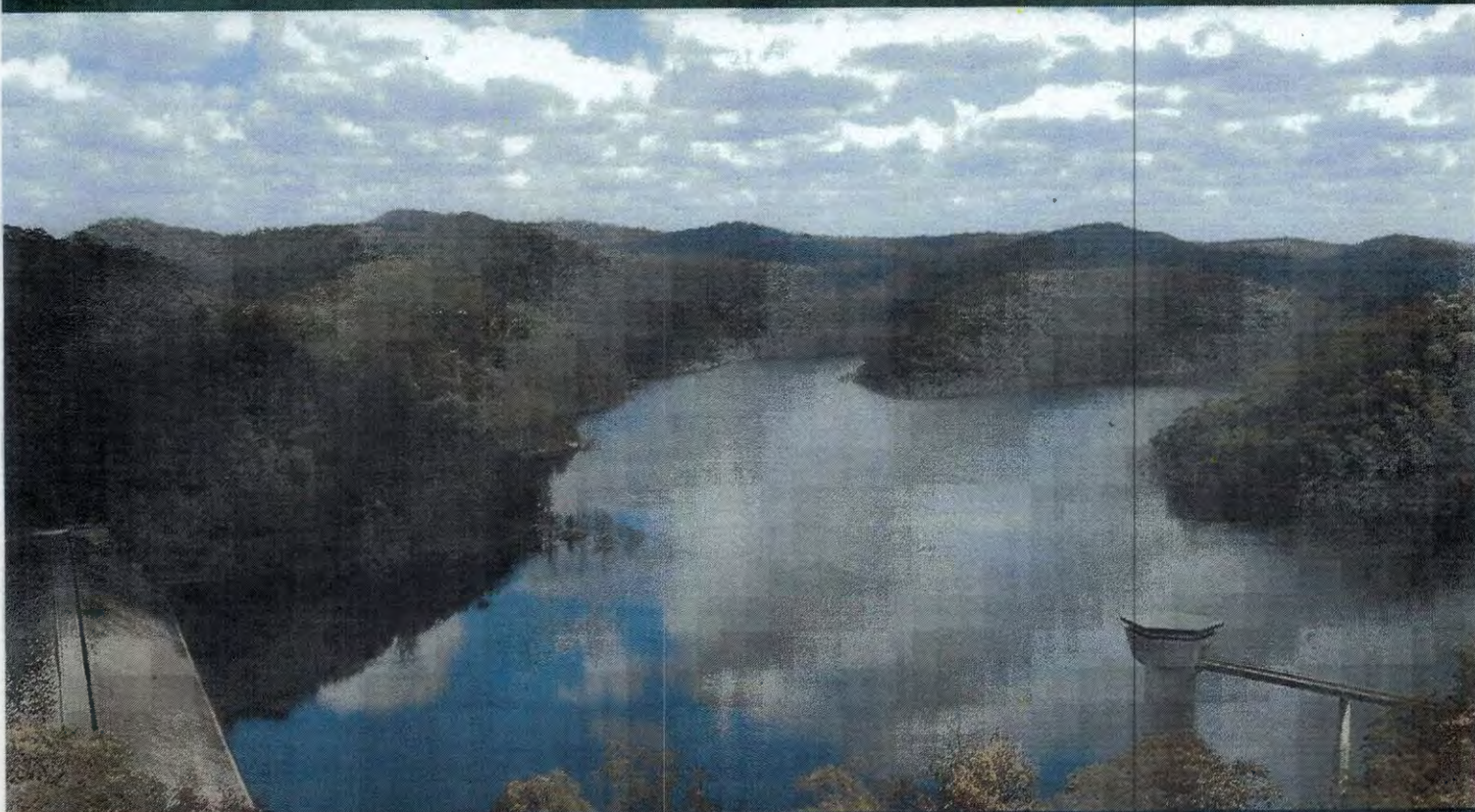
A number of major projects will be undertaken during the next price determination period to allow us to maintain and improve water, sewerage and stormwater drainage services. These projects include:

Water projects

- a major upgrade of the Mangrove Creek Dam Spillway to meet the latest requirements of the Dam Safety Committee (\$8.0 million)
- delivery of the Somersby Water Treatment Plant capital works plan including more than 70 projects over 5 years. Involves replacement and renewal of assets to improve reliability, efficiency, safety, asset performance and improve the treatment process (\$7.9 million)
- a Water Main Renewal Program to reduce the risk of water main failures (\$5.1 million)
- a Major Water Pump Station Renewal Program, to replace critical source water supply infrastructure (\$3.1 million).



**Regional
Development**
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CENTRAL COAST NSW



REGIONAL WATER SECURITY & SEWER UPGRADES

MANGROVE CREEK DAM PROBABLE MAXIMUM FLOOD UPGRADE

What's needed?

State Government:

- Funding of \$6m for the project.
- Central Coast Council will undertake the management of the project.

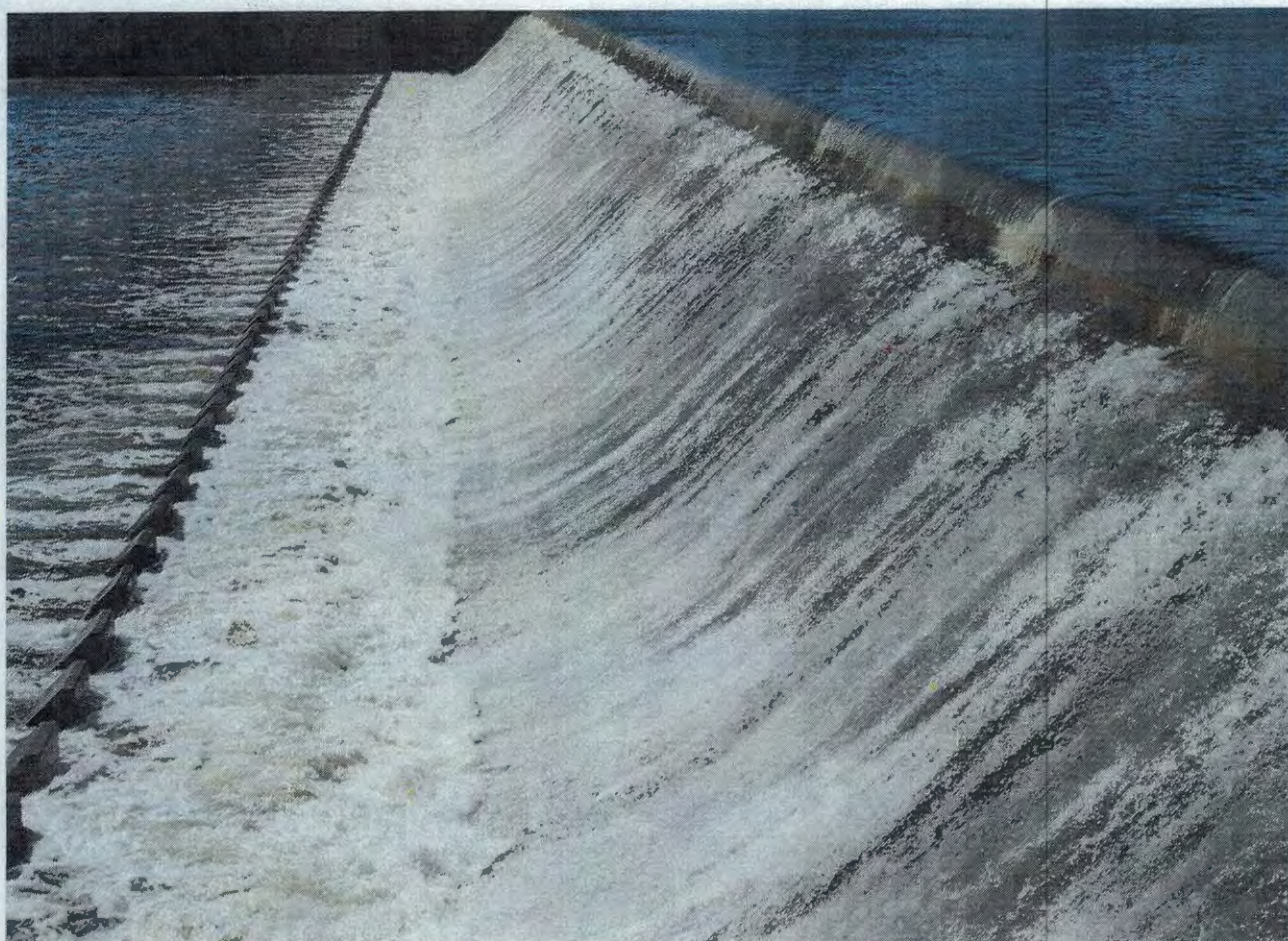
What's been done?

A preliminary concept design has been developed by Council for the construction of a parapet wall and spillway.

Description

Construction of an upgraded spillway and parapet wall at the Mangrove Creek Dam (MCD) will increase water storage by 38,000ml and ensure dam safety.

Mangrove Creek Dam (MCD) is the key water storage for the Central Coast and with a capacity of 190,000ml, represents approximately 94% of the total storage capacity for the Central Coast. Revised flood analysis has identified that the dam cannot meet the current NSW Dam Safety Committee flood requirements for the Probable Maximum Flood (PMF). The dam is currently not permitted to be filled beyond 80% of capacity, as this allows a flood to be buffered in the airspace of the unfilled portion of the dam to an extent that the PMF can safely pass through the existing spillway.



Description (cont.)

Construction of a parapet wall and spillway improvements will allow the PMF to pass and increase capability storage to 100%. This will ensure the safety of the dam and the downstream community and provide an additional 38,000ml of storage, the equivalent of 15 months water supply.

Design and procurement will take 18 months with construction a further 9 months.

Benefits

- Increase water storage capacity of the Central Coast (15 months additional supply at current demand).
- Increase the ability to supply water to the Hunter under the Hunter Central Coast Pipeline agreement which is a key element of the State Government's Lower Hunter Water Plan.
- Greater utilisation of existing infrastructure and investments.
- Increased potential for enhanced environmental flows (enhanced environmental flow rules apply when total Central Coast storage levels exceed 60%).

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