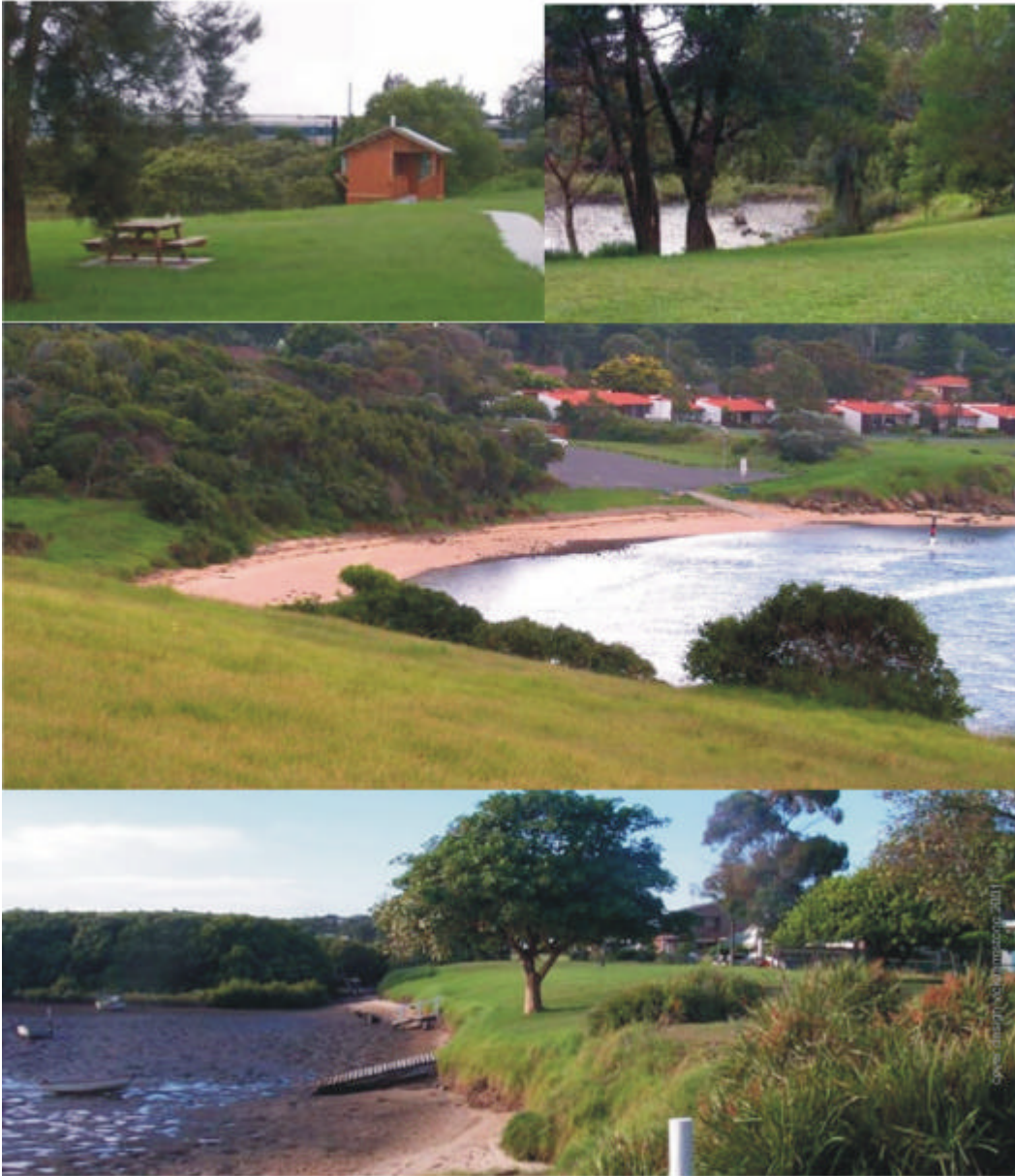


# minnamurra river reserves community land



P l a n o f m a n a g e m e n t



kiama municipal council

adopted 19 june 2001

# Plan of Management

## Minnamurra River Reserves

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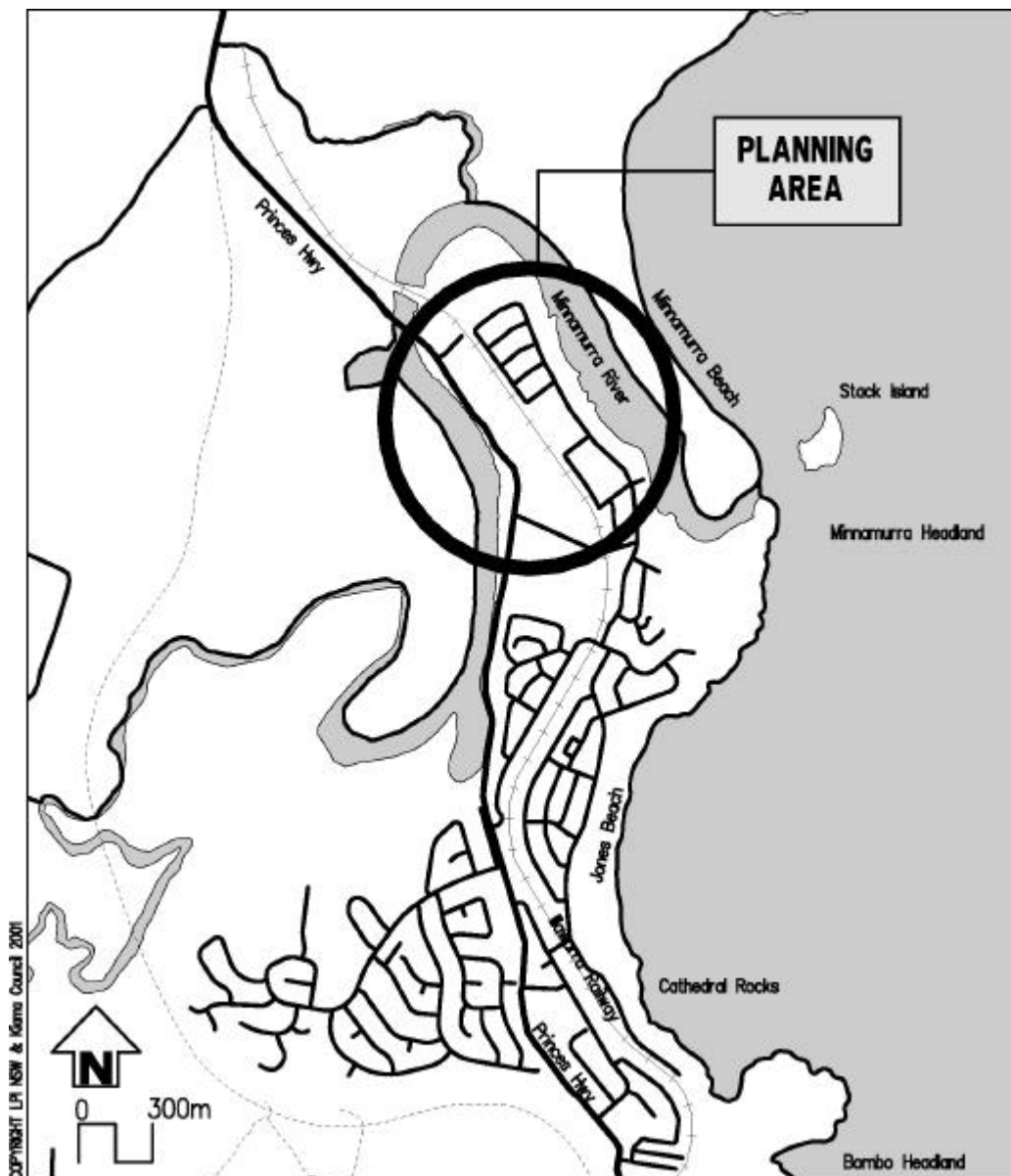
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The land covered by this plan adjoins the Minnamurra River estuary. It is public land owned by the Kiama Municipal Council and has been classified “Community” land under the provision of the Local Government Act 1993. It is located along the estuary between the Princes Highway downstream to the Minnamurra Headland. (*Figure 1*)



*Figure 1*

The Local Government Act also requires that Council prepare a Plan of Management in conjunction with the community to identify the important features of the land, clarify how Council will manage the land and how the land may be used or developed.

Until a Plan of Management for community land is adopted, the nature and use of the land cannot be changed and Council cannot carry out new development or improvements to the land.

This Plan of Management has been prepared in order to achieve a balanced, responsible and ecologically sustainable use of the land and to ensure that it addresses the needs of both local neighbourhood groups and the broader community. It identifies appropriate outcomes for the reserve and provides a way for achieving these outcomes through a series of clear strategies and detailed actions.

## 1.2 Community Land Covered by the Plan

The community land covered by this plan is shown in *Figure 2*. It consists of a number of parcels of land as follows:

- Lot 124, DP 805186
- Part Lot 141 DP 29245
- Lot 14, DP 225638

The area covered by this plan covers approximately 3.64 hectares.

Part of North Street, between the river and Charles Avenue, joins onto the reserve and has been managed as part of the recreation area for at least 25 years. It is intended that this land be managed in sympathy with the Community land in this plan

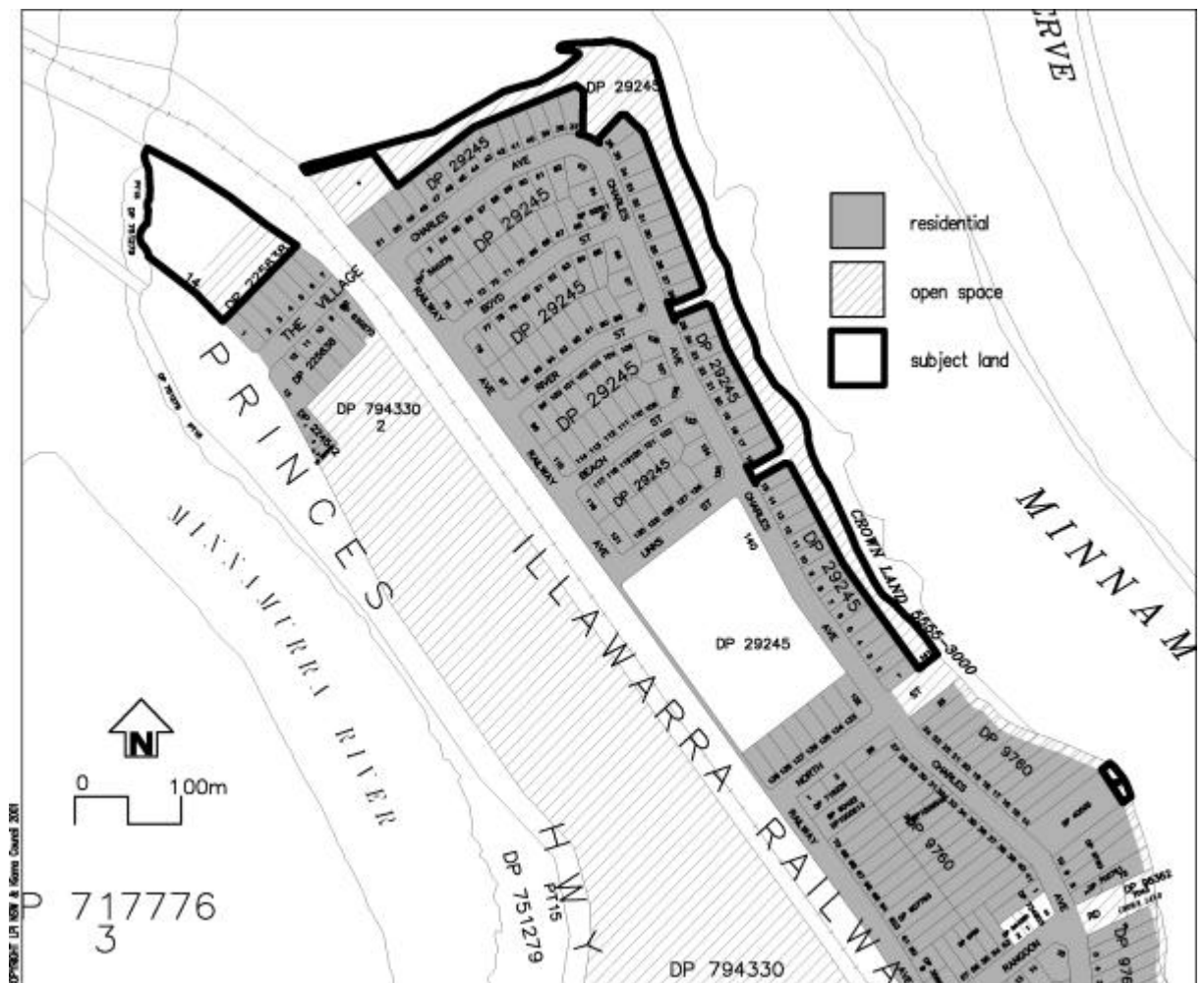


Figure 2

The land is zoned as Open Space Existing Recreation 6(a) and Rural Environmental Protection 7(b) under the Kiama Council's Local Environmental Plan 1996. The reserve is surrounded by housing zoned Residential 2(a) and adjoins Minnamurra Headland Reserve to the south zoned 6(a) Recreation.

### **1.3 Category and Class of Land**

As noted earlier, all the land included in this plan is classified as Community Land under the Local Government Amendment Act 1998.

Under Sec. 36(4) of the Local Government Amendment Act 1998, all community land must be categorised as one following categories:

- Natural Area
- Sportsground
- Park
- Area Of Cultural Significance
- General Community Use

In accordance with the guidelines set out in the Local Government (General) Regulation 1999, the reserves included in this plan are categorised for general community use.

### **1.4 Function and Value**

The land acts as a buffer between the residential land and the river and provides public access to the estuary for various forms of recreation including walking, picnicking, swimming and fishing.

The reserves have significant aesthetic and recreational value and are of regional significance as they form a natural characteristic of the Council area catering for local residents and tourist interests. They provide recreational facilities including two boat launching ramps, toilet blocks and picnic facilities. Open space reserves also have a purely intrinsic value - worth derived simply from the existence of natural features and open space to be enjoyed by the community.

The adoption of the draft plan will form an integral component of efforts to protect and conserve these reserves and the shoreline.

### **1.5 Preparation of a Plan of Management**

The process undertaken in the preparation of a Plan of Management for Council owned community land must follow the steps and requirements set down under the Local Government Act 1993. These steps are:

- Prepare the draft plan.
- Council must give public notice of the existence of the draft plan.
- The draft plan is to be exhibited for at least twenty-eight (28) days and a submission period of at least 42 days during which submissions may be made to Council.
- Hold a public hearing in respect of the plan if the proposed plan categorises community land under Section 36(4) or (5) of the Local Government Amendment Act 1998.

- Consider all submissions made to the public hearing and any written submissions made to Council on the draft plan during the period of public exhibition. Council may then decide to amend the draft plan or to adopt the plan without amendment.
- Should the draft plan require amendment then the public consultation process (exhibition and submission period) must be re-held. Another public hearing is not required.
- Subject to no further amendments being required, the Plan of Management is then formally adopted by Council.

## **1.6 Community Participation**

Community consultation is a fundamental source of information necessary to provide the most efficient and effective Plan of Management for community land.

Such participation creates the opportunity for interested parties to become actively involved in the development of a plan which reflects the needs, opinions and priorities of the people most affected by the plan itself.

Community participation will also result in an increased general awareness of Council's responsibilities, activities, policies and plans for land management.



## 2.0 PHYSICAL FEATURES AND CONDITION OF THE LAND AND STRUCTURES

The land comprised in this plan is generally a narrow strip of variable width extending back from the high water mark of the river. At the northern end from the railway line eastwards to the James Holt Reserve there is a scattered cover of *Eucalyptus botryoides* and *Casuarina glauca* bordering on the adjoining wetland and intertidal area of the river covered by mangroves..

South of the James Holt Reserve extending downstream to the North Street Reserve, the area is almost devoid of native vegetation except for some isolated plantings and generally the vegetation cover consists of introduced grasses. There are a number of pockets of mangroves along this section which are the only remnants of a continuous line of mangroves which once existed on this part of the river. Whilst these are on the Crown reserve, it is the aim of the plan that this area be managed in sympathy with the Crown reserve land.

There is active erosion of the bank of the river in this area. In places adjoining landowners have constructed rough steps to gain access down the bank and made attempts to prevent erosion of the bank. At the North Street Reserve a number of methods have been employed to control the erosion to the bank including a masonry wall, concrete matting and the construction of timber groins. The groins were constructed in 1998 as a pilot study after recommendations in the Minnamurra River Estuary Management Plan for the construction of rock groins were modified by the Estuary Management Committee. In places the old masonry walls are in poor condition and will require replacement or repair.



*Photo 1 - Erosion on river bank near Charles Avenue Minnamurra*

There are two public toilet facilities within the area and these are located at Trevethan Reserve and at North Street. The former is a new composting toilet system timber structure built in 2000 The other is a brick structure possibly 40 years old and in reasonable condition.

Other built structures include the two boat ramps. The ramp and carparking areas at Trevethan Reserve were reconstructed in 2000 and are in good condition Because of its location on the inside bank of the bend in the river, the ramp at James Holt Reserve extends onto a substantial mud flat which is exposed at low tide making the ramp unsuitable for use except at high tides. This ramp is in only fair condition.



### **3.0 COUNCIL'S OVERALL PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

Council has defined a number of fundamental or corporate goals that are to be addressed in any future development of their parks and recreation areas. These goals form an overarching framework for all the more detailed objectives and strategies in this plan.

#### **3.1 Aim of this Plan of Management**

- To develop a Plan of Management for the site to comply with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Amendment Act 1998 and which is consistent with Council's corporate goals and policies. The plan should also achieve a balanced, responsible and ecologically sustainable use of the land and ensure that it addresses the needs of both the local community groups and the broader community.

#### **3.2 Corporate Goals**

##### **Parks and Recreation:**

- To provide and maintain an open space system which meets the diverse needs of the community and enhances the quality of the natural environment and the quality of life.

##### **Other:**

- To provide an efficient and effective delivery of services which is responsive to the community's needs.
- To promote the principle of ecological sustainability in environmental planning through implementation of Council's environmental goals.
- To develop an organised culture which encourages innovation and flexibility and which strives for continual improvement.
- To exercise the regulatory functions of Council consistently and without bias.
- To encourage community participation in the processes of Council by consulting widely on its activities and policies.

## **4.0 COUNCIL POLICIES**

Council has developed a number of general policies in the planning, management and maintenance of community land and Council reserves. Any proposed strategies and actions proposed in this plan must be consistent with these policies.

### **4.1 Planning**

Council will:

- Consider and attempt to balance the need for community recreation facilities with the impact development of such sites will have on local residents;
- Attempt to balance the provision of active and passive recreational facilities;
- Consider access to recreational facilities for young families and disabled users;
- Integrate access for disabled users in plans for future developments;
- Limit facilities on the site to those facilities which are compatible with the objectives of the Plan of Management;
- Attempt to provide safe pedestrian links and corridors between components of the open space network; and
- Have regard to Council's Environmental Goals and Biodiversity Policy when approving works on the site.

### **4.2 Management**

Council will:

- Reserve the right to control the use of, and access to, community land;
- Create opportunities for community consultation and participation in the planning and development of community land; and
- Facilitate a system whereby enquires and complaints from the public can be efficiently and promptly dealt with.

### **4.3 Development of New, and Improvement of Existing, Facilities**

Council approval is required prior to any development or improvement made to community land.

All major developments and improvements to be funded (solely or partially) by Council will be approved through inclusion in Council's Capital Works Schedule.

Works included in Council's Capital Works Program will be funded from income generated from Council's entrepreneurial activities, general revenue, Section 94 contributions and external funds in the form of Government grants. If the anticipated yields from these sources are not achieved it will result in the proposed works being delayed to later dates.

Council will encourage community assistance in the development of new facilities, as well as maintenance of existing facilities, through the co-operation and assistance of local groups.

#### **4.4 Weed Control**

The control of noxious weeds in general shall remain with the Illawarra Noxious Weed Authority. Council will carry out the control of nuisance weeds or environmental weeds. This will involve the use of herbicides or mechanical methods as well as minimum disturbance methods where appropriate.

#### **4.5 Maintenance**

Council will:

- Carry out maintenance and inspection as detailed in the Strategic Asset Maintenance Program for Parks and Reserves, Recreational Facilities, Foreshores, Boat Ramps, Disused Quarries and Cemeteries.
- Review maintenance service levels outlined in the Strategic Asset Maintenance Program for Parks and Reserves to ensure that facilities are maintained efficiently and within budget constraints.
- Encourage community groups to assist with maintenance;
- Ensure the efficient and conservative use of water, pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers on Council ground; and
- Carry out bush regeneration in accordance with standard accepted practices for bush regeneration.

#### **4.6 Fees**

Council applies fees for the use of Council reserves. An application must be lodged with Council prior to the event. All applicable fees must be paid prior to the hire/use of the reserve.

The fees associated with the hiring of Council reserves for major events, concerts, functions etc, are detailed in Council's Fees and Charges Schedule. Council's fee structure is reviewed on an annual basis.

#### **4.7 Uses and Activities Requiring Council Approval**

- All activities defined in Part D Section 68 of the Local Government Act 1993;
- Fetes/cultural activities;
- Exhibition/displays;
- Commercial photographic/film shoots;
- Concerts/performances;
- Large, formal gatherings; and
- Recreational and environmental facilities under the care, control or management of Council, rehabilitation of wetland systems, essential public works.

#### **4.8 Prohibited Activities**

Activities in the view of Council which may be damaging, disruptive and/or may represent a danger to either users of the reserve, neighbouring properties or the site, or which are not consistent with the 6(a) zoning.

## **4.9 Sale of Alcohol**

Council must approve the sale of alcohol on Council property. Before approval is sought, a Functions Licence must be obtained from the NSW Police Department. This licence must be produced in every instance where an application involving the sale of alcohol on Council property is sought.

Applications must meet the requirements set down by the Licensing Board, Courts of NSW and Council.

## **4.10 Signage**

Council uses signs to regulate the activities carried out on community land and to provide educational information so as to provide a safe and enjoyable place for passive and active recreational pursuits.

Whilst signs are a crucial source of information, they have a significant impact on the aesthetics of a reserve. All signs must meet a design standard and be approved by the Manager of Environment. All signs must be sympathetic to their environment in their design, construction and location.

All Council signs erected under Section 632 of the Local Government Act and as part of the Strategic Asset Management Program (SAMP), plus reserve name signs and traffic and safety signs, are permissible. Council must approve all other signs before erection.

## **4.11 Easements**

Council reserves the right to grant easements as required for utilities and access, bearing in mind the impact of such easements on the site.

## **4.12 Leases, Licenses and Other Estates**

Council does not propose to grant any leases, licences or other estates (apart from easements as earlier noted) in respect of the community land except for those leases, licences and other estates permitted by Clause 25 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 1999.

## **4.13 Animals on Reserves**

Existing Acts and Regulations regarding the prohibition of animals such as dogs and horses on community land including a public place or part thereof, without prior Council approval, must be enforced to keep these areas free of animals and excrement.

Council will enforce the Companion Animals Act 1998 and Regulations or equivalent which states that the owner of a dog found in a prohibited place is in breach of the law. In general, without prior approval of Council a dog is not permitted in the following places (whether or not they are leashed or otherwise controlled):

- Within 10 metres of any playing apparatus provided or part for the use of children;

- Within 10 metres of any apparatus provided for the preparation or consumption of food by humans;
- Public bathing areas including a beach that Council has ordered that dogs are prohibited and upon which there are signs notifying the Council order of prohibition;
- Any areas provided or set apart for public recreation or the playing of games that Council has ordered that dogs are prohibited and upon which there are signs notifying the Council order of prohibition.

#### **4.14 Public Safety**

As recommended by the LOGOV Risk Management Services report, Council has developed a Strategic Asset Maintenance Program (SAMP) for all its assets. SAMP has been developed to create and maintain all assets under the care, custody, control and management of Council to a safe standard and in a safe condition which is in fact the highest standard and condition that Council can reasonably afford in all of its circumstances and having regard to financial economic, environmental, aesthetic, social or political factors or constraints.

## 5.0 MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES, ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

### 5.1 Management Objectives

- (i) The core objectives of this Plan of Management are defined in Section 36 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

*The core objectives for management of community land categorised as general community use are to promote, encourage and provide for the use of the land, and to provide facilities on the land, to meet the current and future needs of the local community and of the wider public:*

- (a) in relation to public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public;*
- (b) in relation to purpose for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land (other than the provision of public utilities and works associated with or ancillary to public utilities).*

Council's corporate goals, which are set out under Section 3.2 of this document, are also key management objectives that must be addressed under the Plan of Management.

- (ii) Specific Management Objectives

Specific management objectives have been set for this site. These are as follows:

- (a) To mitigate impact on the reserve and adjoining crown reserve by community use.
- (b) To protect and enhance all functions associated with the reserves role as a buffer between the residential development and the estuary.
- (c) To manage the reserve so as to protect the estuarine environment, particularly in relation to riparian vegetation and habitats and bank stability.
- (d) To provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes.
- (e) To facilitate the implementation of the Minnamurra Estuary Management Plan.

### 5.2 Management Issues

The management issues involved with the reserve and its objectives are discussed together with possible options and solutions. Then strategies or performance targets have been established to achieve the desired outcomes.

#### 5.2.1 Regeneration and Conservation of Native Plant Species

Most of the indigenous vegetation on the reserves has been removed and replaced largely by introduced grasses and other exotic plant species. Therefore it is important to ensure pockets of remnant native vegetation between the railway line and James Holt Reserve are preserved.

The removal of mangroves along the river or Crown reserve between the James Holt Reserve and the North Street Reserve has contributed to the present erosion occurring in that part of the estuary. Although outside the area covered by this plan, the regeneration of the mangroves in accordance with the plan approved by the Minnamurra Estuary Management Committee is important in not only stabilising the river bank but in improving the riparian habitat. Revegetation of the bank with suitable native species is proposed as part of the bank stabilisation works.



*Photo 2 - Remnant vegetation adjoining wetlands north of Charles Avenue Minnamurra*

#### **5.2.2 Riverbank Erosion**

This issue was identified in the Minnamurra River Estuary Management Plan as one of the key management issues affecting the estuary. In particular, the erosion along the Charles Avenue Reserve was specifically identified for attention. Following a series of public meetings the original recommendation from the Estuary Management Plan for construction of a series of rock groins was modified. The Minnamurra River Estuary Management Committee decided to provide three timber groins in the intertidal area adjacent to the North Street Reserve as a pilot study and to encourage the regeneration of clumps of mangroves in that area. This was done in response to community opposition to the rock groins and the community's desire to see a softer environmental approach to control the bank erosion and improve the riparian environment. The groins were installed in 1998. Since their installation there has been a slight build-up of sand between the two upstream groins and a number of seedling mangroves have established in the area. These need to be supplemented with additional direct planting of mangrove seedlings. The continuation of the bank stabilisation works upstream, as proposed in the plan approved by the Estuary Management Committee, has been identified in Council's Management Plan for the period 2001 to 2004. The work includes construction of a low rock wall along the toe of the eroding bank and reshaping and revegetation of the bank. Properly constructed defined access points are to be provided. As discussed previously, the old masonry walls near the North Street Reserve are in poor condition. These will require either rebuilding or replacement with a low stone wall to protect the toe of the bank as proposed for the bank upstream.



### **5.2.3 Provision of Recreational Facilities**

The Estuary Management Plan also identified the provision of these facilities as a key issue and recommended upgrading of the picnic areas and landscaping of the reserves. Because of the physical and environmental constraints the area is suitable for passive recreation only. This would include walking, fishing, general sightseeing and picnicking. Therefore facilities should be provided for those uses only.

### **5.2.4 Stormwater Treatment**

There are four stormwater drains which collect runoff from the surrounding streets and discharge stormwater into the estuary via the community land. Because they collect water from the surrounding urban catchment this discharge would include pollutants, the composition and concentration of which is not known. Investigation should be undertaken to determine the extent of the problem and the type of treatment if required.

The collection of litter at these sites is recommended in Council's Stormwater Plan. This could be achieved by either installation of appropriate trash tacks or by regular programmed collection of material caught in vegetation at the outlets. The method adopted should be based on an individual assessment of each drain taking into account the outlet conditions and the expected volume of litter caught in each drain.

### **5.2.5 Encroachments on Reserve**

Much of the reserve immediately behind the houses in Charles Avenue is mown by the adjoining property owners. This practice has occurred for many years which has advantages to Council and the property owners in that the grass is generally maintained in a neat and tidy state. However, in a number of places there are minor structures including barbecues, swings and tables and materials erected or stored on the reserve. These have occurred without Council approval and present a potential public liability risk to Council. Therefore they must be removed.



*Photo 3 - Illegal construction adjoining wetlands*

## 6.0 ACTION PLAN

The following table sets out a number of actions required to implement the identified Management Strategies and Performance Targets for the Minnamurra River Reserve. These actions are the means of achieving the objectives of the Plan of Management. The actions will be developed and reviewed annually.

Unless otherwise noted the responsibility for the implementation of these actions is with the Director of Engineering and Works.

A clear indication of how the completion of the aims will be assessed is also provided in the tables under Performance Evaluation.

Because of the longer-term nature of the Objectives and the supporting Performance Targets as set out in the plan, these will need to be reviewed less frequently, approximately every five (5) years.

<b>Management Objectives</b>	<b>Management Strategies Performance Targets</b>	<b>Actions (means of achieving targets)</b>	<b>Performance Evaluation (how they will be assessed)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigate impact on the reserve by community use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit vehicle access to the reserve</li> <li>Control pedestrian access down the river bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide suitable car barriers at all at all entry points</li> <li>Carry out Council Ranger patrols of the reserves</li> <li>Provide defined access points at convenient locations along the river bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authorised vehicles only in reserve</li> <li>Authorised vehicles only in reserve</li> <li>Construction of properly designed and constructed access</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate the implementation of the Estuary Management Plan as it applies to this reserve</li> <li>Protect and enhance functions of the site as a buffer to the estuary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that works carried out on the reserve are in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Estuary Management Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek funding for implementation of recommendations</li> <li>Carry out works identified in the plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receipt of funding</li> <li>Completion of works</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect the estuarine environment particularly in relation to riparian vegetation, habitat and riverbank stability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage community participation in revegetation works.</li> <li>Ensure the conservation and regeneration of indigenous native plants on the site and on the adjoining river bed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide financial and logistic assistance to appropriate local conservation groups.</li> <li>Undertake planting in selected areas in consultation with the Estuary Management Committee and adjoining property owners</li> <li>Provide defined pedestrian access to riverbed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formation of groups and implementation of on ground works</li> <li>Establishment of native species.</li> <li>Construction of accessways.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide for passive recreation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide facilities suitable for passive recreation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the area in accordance with Council's Strategic Asset Management Policy (SAMP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with the SAMP</li> </ul>

## 7.0 REFERENCES

Kiama Municipal Council. Kiama Council Draft Management Plan 2001/2004

NSW Government Coastline Management Manual September 1990

Kiama Municipal Council. Stormwater Management Plan July 2000

NSW Coastal Council NSW Coastal Policy 1997