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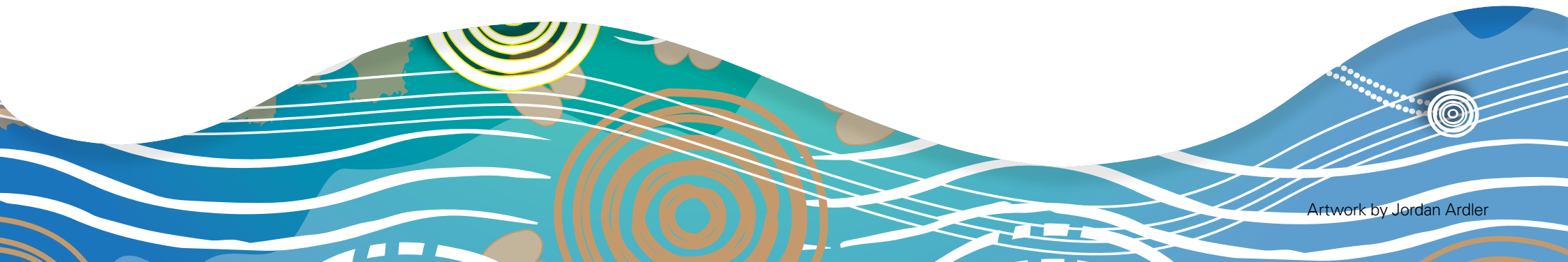
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2023 – 2028



October 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

Woollahra Council acknowledges the
Gadigal and Birrabirragal people who are the
Traditional Custodians of this land and we pay our
respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



Artwork by Jordan Ardler

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Vacluse Sailing Club solar

Message from the Mayor



Woollahra Council has long been committed to protecting our environment, operating as sustainably as possible, and taking action on climate change.

In 2019 Woollahra Council became the third council in NSW to declare a climate emergency. Since that time, we have taken a number of major steps to reduce the emissions generated by Council as an organisation, including switching to 100% renewable electricity.

We've also been focussed on providing assistance to our community to reduce their emissions. Acknowledging that Council can have an influence on emissions generated by our community, but not directly control them, we adopted an aspirational target for our community to reach net zero emissions by 2030.

Woollahra is fortunate to be located on the shores of Sydney Harbour, where we have a diverse marine environment and throughout our area we have highly valued pockets of bushland, such as Cooper Park, Trumper Park, and Parsley Bay.

As a community, we all have a role to play in protecting, conserving and enhancing our local environment. By working together we can improve the quality of life for all members of our community in ways that are sustainable into the future.

This action plan will help us to:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and water use, and adapt to the impacts of climate change
- Protect and enhance biodiversity
- Improve the quality and health of our waterways

- Reduce the amount of waste generated and sent to landfill
- Support our community to live more sustainably.

Council is committed to improving sustainability performance, and is working towards meeting a set of environmental sustainability targets.

These targets are based on the goals set out in *Woollahra 2032 – Community Strategic Plan*.

In addition, we are developing a new urban forest strategy and target, which will see our tree canopy increase, providing important biodiversity corridors, air quality benefits and cooling for our suburbs.

Our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan details the Priority Action Areas and commitments that will enable Council to create a more sustainable Woollahra, in partnership with our local community.

Councillor Richard Shields

Mayor of Woollahra

October 2023

Taking Action

Since the development of Council's first Environmental Sustainability Action Plan in 2013:



Between 2013–14 and 2021–22:

- Council's carbon emissions decreased by **25%**.
- Woollahra community emissions decreased by **7.5%**.



Council operations are Climate Active certified – **carbon neutral since 2018–19**.



Council uses **100%** renewable electricity.
Council has installed **175kW** of rooftop solar on its buildings.
Council has assisted local schools to install **288kW** of rooftop solar.



Council has installed **21** rainwater tanks on its buildings.



Between 2018–19 and 2021–22:

- Council's water use decreased by **20%**
- Community water use decreased by **11%**.



Council's Kitchen to Compost program has reduced waste to landfill by over **4400 tonnes** per year.



Council introduced an on-call collection of **electronic waste**.



Distributed **1494** compost bins and worm farms to the community.
Diverting 2113 tonnes of organic waste from landfill.



93% of Council's bushland is under regeneration, and **69% is fully regenerated**.



Council plants over **10,000** trees, shrubs and groundcovers each year.
Bushcare has grown to 10 different sites with over **80** volunteers.



In addition to the Paddington Community Garden, Council has supported the establishment of **2 more community gardens** at Rose Bay and Cooper Park.



Pollution traps and **raingardens** have been installed to reduce water pollution.

Introduction

The natural environment of Woollahra is diverse and highly valued by our local community. Woollahra is well known for its spectacular harbour environment and its leafy green canopy. Our local area has pockets of high quality bushland, which provide a home for threatened species of plants and animals. Our community is committed to protecting our local environment and living more sustainably.

Our local area includes 18 kilometres of harbour foreshore, consisting of rocky headlands, coastal cliffs and beaches. The area is rich in biodiversity with approximately 88 hectares of bushland. Recent monitoring identified 214 plant species in Council's bushland areas, including three threatened species. 56 native fauna species were recorded, including six threatened fauna species. Two more threatened fauna species are known to occur in the area but were not observed in this survey (SMEC, 2022).

Council's vision is to have a *thriving, inclusive, sustainable and resilient community that will benefit future generations*. The *Woollahra Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2023–2028* supports Council's vision by documenting Council's



Gap Park, Watsons Bay

commitment to protecting, conserving and enhancing our environment. This Plan outlines the goals, strategies and actions for implementation over the coming years. It is a supporting document of *Woollahra 2032 – Community Strategic Plan*, providing more detail on our environment and sustainability goals.

Our Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (ESAP) focusses on the following Priority Action Areas:

1. Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
2. Water Quality Improvement
3. Biodiversity Conservation
4. Waste Reduction

This plan details Council's targets and commitments related to each priority.

Crucial to each of these Priority Action Areas is the engagement of our local community, including residents, schools, businesses and community groups. Community engagement and education actions have been identified to support the achievement of Council's targets and encourage local action.

Strategic Context

Council's approach to environmental management and sustainability is influenced by global, national, state and regional strategies. These important strategic links are outlined below.

Global – UN Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out a framework of 17 goals to tackle environmental, social, and economic challenges. The SDGs arose from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted by all United Nations Member States, including Australia, in 2015. These goals were developed by the United Nations to provide a global roadmap for all countries to work toward a better world for current and future generations. Woollahra's Environmental Sustainability Action Plan aligns with the SDGs.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Strategic Context

National

At a National level, we are guided by:

- Climate Change Act 2022, which outlines Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets of a 43% reduction from 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

State

At a State level, this Plan aligns with the following NSW Government target and plans:

- 70% emissions reduction from 2005 levels by 2035 and achieving net zero emissions by 2050 under the NSW Climate Change Policy Framework.
- *Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020 – 2030*, which is the foundation for NSW Government action.
- *NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 Stage 1 Plan: 2021-2027*.

Regional

From a regional perspective, the following plans provide guidance:

- *A Metropolis of Three Cities – the Greater Sydney Region Plan*.
- *Our Greater Sydney 2056 – Eastern City District Plan*.

- *Resilient Sydney – A Strategy for City Resilience 2018*.

Local

Key local plans that provide strategic guidance include:

- *Woollahra 2032 – Community Strategic Plan*
- *Woollahra Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020*.

The NSW Government requires local councils to deliver their community vision and goals through long, medium and short-term plans, known as the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R). This promotes best-practice strategic planning across NSW councils to ensure a more sustainable local government sector. Woollahra Council's IP&R Framework includes our Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program and Operational Plan, which are supported by our Resourcing Strategy.

The Community Strategic Plan demonstrates the importance Council places on environment and sustainability, with Council's mission being:

'To lead climate action and promote respectful connections between people and place, so we can enhance, protect and celebrate Woollahra's beauty, heritage and quality of life, for the enjoyment of all. We will do this by prioritising carbon neutrality, environmental sustainability and community resilience to meet the challenges of climate change and social and economic well-being'.

The Community Strategic Plan includes two specific goals relating to the environment:

- Goal 7: Protecting our environment
- Goal 8: Sustainable use of resources.

Beneath each goal sits a series of strategies to address environmental opportunities and challenges. The ESAP provides the context for these goals and strategies and feeds into Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Progress is monitored and reported to Council through biannual Delivery Program updates, an Annual Report, and a State of our City Report, which is presented at the second meeting of each new Council.

Our targets

To track sustainability and environmental performance, Council has developed a series of environmental measures and targets, which are included in Council's Community Strategic Plan. Each year Council reports on the progress towards reaching these environmental targets and an update is included in Council's Annual Report.



Our Environmental Measures			
Priority Action Area	Measure	Target	Frequency
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	Council operations are certified carbon neutral.	Climate Active Certification obtained each year.	Annual
	100% of Council's electricity use is from renewable sources.	100% renewable energy purchased.	Annual
	Decrease carbon emissions offset by Council. 2018/19 result of 7,412 tonnes CO ₂ e.	50% reduction in carbon emissions offset by 2028.	Annual
	Reduce community greenhouse gas emissions, aspiring to net zero emissions by 2030. 2018/19 result of 518,349 tonnes CO ₂ e.	Reduce total community greenhouse gas emissions per annum.	Annual
	No increase in potable water use by Council operations. 2018/19 result of 88,655 kL.	Maintain or reduce kL of potable water used per annum.	Annual
	Reduce community water use per capita. 2018/19 result of 6,616,365kL / 59,387 = 111.4kL per person.	Reduce total water use per capita per annum.	Annual
	Increase number of electric and hybrid vehicles in Council's passenger fleet to 100% by 2025. March 2022 result of 11 electric or hybrid vehicles from a total of 99 passenger vehicles = 11%.	100% of the passenger fleet is electric by 2025.	Annual
	Increase public electric vehicle charging by 10 stations per year. 2021 result of 3.	10 charging stations installed per year.	Annual

Our targets



Our Environmental Measures			
Priority Action Area	Measure	Target	Frequency
Water Quality Improvement	All of Council's six swimming beaches rated 'Good' or 'Very Good' by Beachwatch. 2021–22 results: Watsons Bay: Good Rose Bay: Poor Parsley Bay: Good Murray Rose Pool: Good Nielsen Park: Very Good Camp Cove: Good	100% rated 'Good' or 'Very Good'.	Annual
	Increase in number of stormwater quality improvement devices. 2022: 31 GPTs, 10 raingardens.	One Gross Pollutant Trap and one raingarden installed on Council drainage lines annually.	Annual
Biodiversity Conservation	Maintain or increase number of native flora and fauna species found in Woollahra 2020 result (introduced species excluded): Flora species = 219 Fauna species = 57	No decrease in flora and fauna species.	Biennial
	Increase in canopy cover. 2021 result of 27.4%.	Canopy cover LGA wide is 30% by 2050*.	Biennial
	Increase the number of Bushcare volunteers to 100 by 2030. 2021 result of 81 volunteers.	100 Bushcare volunteers (20% increase)	Annual

*Draft target, not adopted by Council.

Our targets



Our Environmental Measures			
Priority Action Area	Measure	Target	Frequency
Waste Reduction	Kg of waste sent to landfill per household per annum. 2021: 395.2kg / household	Reduce waste sent to landfill by 10% per household by 2030, in line with State Government targets.	Annual
	% of waste collected from kerbside bins that is diverted from landfill. 2022 result of 55%.	Increase recovery rate from all waste streams to 65% by 2030.	Annual
	% of total concrete and asphalt used that contains recycled content. 2023: 7% asphalt, 3% concrete	100% of concrete and asphalt includes recycled content by 2030.	Annual

Our Action Plan

Community Engagement & Education

To support our community to reduce their environmental impact and live more sustainably, Council undertakes a program of community education and engagement. The focus is on four key groups:

- Residents and community groups
- Schools
- Businesses
- Council staff.

Engagement and education activities include targeted workshops, information sessions, environmentally-focussed newsletters, and community environmental grants. The annual program of community engagement activities ensures that engagement occurs across a range of topics covering all Priority Action Areas, including climate change and emission reduction, water quality, water conservation, biodiversity, waste reduction and circular economy.

By keeping our community informed about latest technology and innovation we will drive behavioral change to reduce emissions and ensure efficient resource use.

Tree planting at Christison Park, Vaucluse



Community Engagement & Education

Our Community Engagement & Education Actions

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Develop a comprehensive annual program to engage each of the four target groups.	Program developed annually by 30 June.	Environment and Sustainability
Educate and engage residents and community groups about sustainability issues across all Priority Action Areas, with a focus on supporting the local community to develop capacity and skills to reduce emissions.	Monthly environmental newsletters are distributed. Sustainability content is regularly included in Council e-news, printed newsletters, What's On posters and Customer Service Screens.	Environment and Sustainability, Communications and Engagement
Facilitate 12 community sustainability activities each year, covering each Priority Action Area.	12 activities completed annually by 30 June.	Environment and Sustainability
Support engagement initiatives of the 3 Council Regional Environment Program, such as Compost Revolution and Solar My Suburb.	3 Council Regional Environment Program initiatives supported and promoted through Council channels.	Environment and Sustainability, Waste Projects Communications and Engagement
Provide support to local community gardens.	Regular communication is maintained with Council's 3 formal community gardens and other informal community gardens.	Environment and Sustainability, Open Space and Trees
Coordinate the annual Community Environmental Grants Program.	Environmental grants are awarded annually and support is provided to recipients.	Environment and Sustainability
Coordinate the Eastern Suburbs Sustainable Schools Network (ESSN) meetings in partnership with Waverley and Randwick councils.	Meetings are held quarterly each year.	Environment and Sustainability
Engage with schools about sustainability issues by providing support for school environment groups and sustainability projects.	Ongoing.	Environment and Sustainability, Waste Projects

Community Engagement & Education

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Educate and engage local business about sustainability issues.	Ongoing.	Environment and Sustainability, Waste Projects
Provide support to local businesses to adopt more sustainable practices.	Businesses are encouraged to participate in Council's Sustainable Business Program and other initiatives.	Environment and Sustainability, Waste Projects
Educate and engage Council staff about sustainability issues.	Education and engagement is provided on a range of issues in a timely manner.	Environment and Sustainability
Hold four staff sustainability information sessions per year.	One sustainability information session is held each quarter.	Environment and Sustainability
Include sustainability content in the staff newsletter.	Topical sustainability content is regularly provided to staff quarterly via the staff newsletter.	Communications and Engagement, Environment and Sustainability
Provide education for all staff about environmental responsibilities through the staff induction program.	Induction presentation about environmental management and responsibilities is provided quarterly.	Environment and Sustainability, People, Safety and Performance
Encourage and celebrate staff commitment to sustainability by incorporating a Sustainability Award into the Reward and Recognition Framework.	A Sustainability Award presented at Council's Annual Award Event.	People, Safety and Performance
Coordinate Council's staff Sustainability Sparks Group to drive continual sustainability performance improvement within Council.	Sustainability Sparks meetings are held quarterly.	Environment and Sustainability
Enhance community awareness of environmental issues by increasing engagement with Council's Environmental E-news.	Newsletter engagement data is used to inform the development of Council's annual sustainability engagement program.	Environment and Sustainability

Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

Taking action on climate change is a priority for Woollahra Council and has been for many years. In 2019 Woollahra Council declared a climate emergency, acknowledging the catastrophic changes to the world's climate caused by human activity. Since that time, Council has set ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and taken a number of significant steps to reduce the emissions generated by Council as an organisation and assisted our community to do the same. Council has been certified Climate Active since 2018-19. The Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Organisations is a voluntary standard to manage greenhouse gas emissions, achieve carbon neutrality and to seek Climate Active certification.

In addition to addressing carbon emissions, it is vital to understand and prepare for the long-term changing weather patterns and projected changes to the frequency and severity of extreme events driven by climate change. Council has undertaken an assessment of its exposure to climate change risks and developed an adaptation plan, which identifies measures to adapt and build resilience within the Woollahra Local Government Area.

Gap Park walking trail



Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

Our Actions to Date

- 100% of Council's electricity use is from renewable sources.
- Council operations have been certified carbon neutral by Climate Active since 2018–19.
- Identification of climate change risks and development of adaptation actions.
- Installation of rooftop solar on Council buildings.
- Replacement of lighting at Council facilities with energy efficient LED technology.
- Upgrade of streetlights with LED technology.
- Installation of public electric vehicle chargers to support community EV uptake.
- Support for schools and community organisations to install rooftop solar through the *Solar My School* and *Solar My Suburb* programs, and Council's Environmental Grants program.
- Support for residents to reduce their emissions by
 - o Assisting people living in apartments to identify ways to reduce energy consumption
 - o Providing workshops about installing rooftop solar and batteries.
 - o Promoting and educating about all electric homes.
- Engaged local businesses through the *Business Sustainability Program* and *Energy Smart Cafes Program*.
- Preparing for future drought conditions by monitoring Council's water use and implementing measures to reduce potable water use including:
 - o Installing stormwater harvesting systems and rainwater tanks on Council facilities
 - o Top-dressing Council parks and fields to improve water holding capacity
 - o Installing smart irrigation systems
 - o Responding to water restrictions and educating our local community about water conservation.
- Preparing for future urban heat impacts by developing an Urban Forest Strategy.

Double Bay Public School rooftop solar



Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

Our Future Actions

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Continue to purchase 100% renewable electricity for Council operations.	100% renewable electricity purchased, PPA contracts renewed as required.	Environment and Sustainability, Finance
Audit and review Council's energy use and carbon emissions to maintain Council's carbon neutral certification.	Prepare and submit data for certification annually by 30 November.	Environment and Sustainability
Complete the Street Lighting Improvement Program, upgrading street lights to energy efficient LED technology.	Upgrade remaining streetlights in partnership with Ausgrid by 2024.	Engineering Services
Monitor energy consumption data to establish efficiency trends for Council's top energy consuming sites.	Monitoring is completed quarterly.	Environment and Sustainability
Identify ways to improve energy performance of Council buildings and facilities.	Actions are identified, added to Council's budget annually and implemented.	Environment and Sustainability
Maximise renewable energy generation at Council facilities.	Council facilities reviewed and opportunities for further renewables identified by June 2025.	Environment and Sustainability
Review options for energy efficient air conditioning system at Council Chambers.	Review complete by June 2025.	Environment and Sustainability, Property and Projects
Investigate the potential to install solar canopies above open air carparks.	Feasibility study complete by June 2024.	Environment and Sustainability
Electrify Council operations, facilities and equipment, using electricity from renewable sources instead of gas.	Transition from gas underway by December 2023.	Environment and Sustainability
Implement actions from the Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan.	Actions are implemented to schedule.	Environment and Sustainability

Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Incorporate climate related risks identified by the Climate Change Risk Assessment into Council's risk register.	Climate risks added to Council's Operational Risk Register by December 2023.	Corporate Performance
Support residents to reduce emissions by adopting energy efficient behaviours and using renewable energy.	Education and behaviour change programs are developed and delivered to residents on an ongoing basis.	Environment and Sustainability
Support schools to mitigate climate change by providing information about emerging technology and techniques to reduce emissions.	Information and assistance is provided to schools on an ongoing basis.	Environment and Sustainability
Support businesses and community organisations to adopt energy efficient behaviours and processes, through programs such as Energy Smart Cafés and Solar My Suburb.	Information and assistance is provided to businesses by direct engagement and information is included on Council's website.	Environment and Sustainability
Monitor water consumption data to identify Council's top water consuming sites.	Monitoring is completed quarterly.	Environment and Sustainability
Conduct regular water audits and efficiency upgrades of Council's facilities.	Audits are completed every 4 years.	Environment and Sustainability
Install additional rainwater tanks and other water reuse systems at Council facilities.	Review of Council sites completed by June 2025. Systems installed as identified.	Environment and Sustainability, Property and Projects, Open Space and Trees
Ensure that Council's irrigation systems are functioning at maximum efficiency and have sensors installed.	Complete a review of irrigation systems by June 2025.	Environment and Sustainability, Open Space and Trees
Participate in programs to reduce community water consumption, for example WaterFix.	Programs are implemented on an ongoing basis.	Environment and Sustainability

Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Support active transport by ensuring that cycling and walking routes are linked to public transport routes and key community destinations such as schools, sports fields and shops.	Council's Active Transport Plan is implemented to schedule.	Engineering Services
Advocate for improved public transport.	Advocacy is ongoing.	Engineering Services
Implement the 3 Council Regional Environment Program Electric Vehicle Strategy.	Actions are implemented to schedule.	Environment and Sustainability, Engineering Services.
Support the uptake of electric vehicles by providing public electric vehicle charging and implementing the 3 Council Regional Environment Program Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.	Ten public electric vehicle chargers are installed annually.	Environment and Sustainability, Engineering Services
Ensure that Council's electric vehicle charging DCP controls are implemented.	New development includes EV charging. DCP controls are reviewed by end 2024.	Planning and Place
Support the community to reduce transport emissions by providing education sessions about cycling and electric vehicles.	Sessions are included in the annual education program.	Environment and Sustainability
Transition Council's passenger vehicle fleet to electric.	Council's passenger fleet vehicles are replaced with electric / hybrid versions by 2025.	Fleet Management
Transition Council's non-passenger vehicles to electric as options become available.	Council's non-passenger vehicles are replaced with electric versions by 2032.	Fleet Management
Support staff to adopt sustainable transport behaviours by encouraging carpooling, providing bike storage facilities, and encouraging use of public transport.	A review of sustainable transport for staff is undertaken.	Environment and Sustainability, People, Safety and Performance

Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Reduce emissions generated by Council's purchasing decisions by integrating sustainability aspects into Council's procurement policy and procedures.	Procurement policy and procedures are reviewed and updated by June 2024.	Environment and Sustainability, Finance
Advocate for changes to State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 that encourage adaptive reuse rather than the demolition of buildings.	Written submission provided to NSW Department of Planning and Environment by June 2024.	Planning and Place
Update the DA Guide to encourage the use of green concrete and other sustainable building products.	DA Guide to be updated to encourage the use of green concrete and other sustainable building products by the end of September 2024.	Planning and Place
Advocate for better building standards at a State Government level to improve sustainability outcomes, including reducing energy, water, embodied carbon, and construction waste.	Written submission to be provided to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment advocating for better building standards to improve sustainability outcomes which could form part of State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 (by June 2024).	Planning and Place
Advocate for State Government to mandate a standard for embodied emissions from building materials.	Written submission to be provided to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment advocating to mandate a standard for embodied emissions from building materials which could form part of State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 (by June 2024).	Planning and Place
Stay abreast of emerging innovation and technology to reduce emissions and address climate change.	Retain Council's membership of industry groups such as the Cities Power Partnership.	Environment and Sustainability

Water Quality Improvement

Woollahra is at the ocean end of the Sydney Harbour catchment, which extends as far west as Blacktown. Anything that enters the stormwater network in this large catchment flows into Sydney Harbour making its way downstream towards Woollahra.

Likewise, any water that falls on the land of Woollahra flows into our stormwater drainage network and creeks, and ends up in Sydney Harbour, taking with it sediment, leaves and litter. Due to the location of Woollahra at the mouth of Sydney Harbour and the orientation of the beaches, the foreshore areas of Woollahra are particularly susceptible to having litter deposited by prevailing winds and currents. Our waterways are highly impacted by stormwater runoff – the catchment is large and highly urbanised, however water quality is generally suitable for swimming in dry weather conditions. When high pollution levels are experienced, this is predominantly following high rainfall events, as is the case for the majority of harbour beaches.

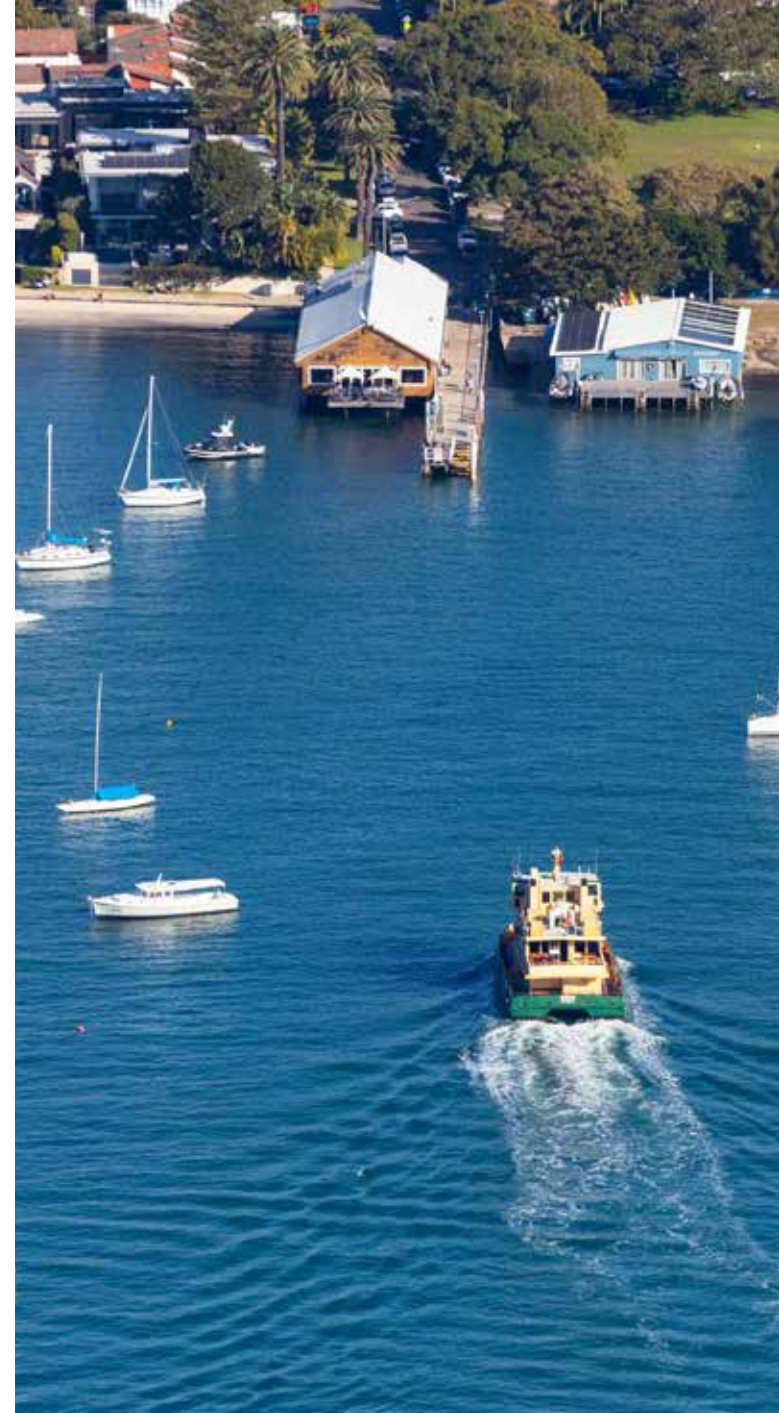
The foreshores and beach areas of Woollahra are highly valued by the local community and visitors

alike. To protect the water quality of Sydney Harbour, we must ensure a high level of water quality in our creeks. This is challenging in highly urban areas, which experience increased runoff and pollution from impervious surfaces such as roads, sediment from construction sites, nutrients from fertilised fields, litter from our streets and organic matter that has accumulated in drains. A further challenge is the leaking of sewage into our stormwater system through cracked pipes, overflows and illegal connections.

Council monitors the water quality of creeks and the NSW Government Beachwatch Program monitors the water quality at our harbour swimming areas, including Redleaf Pool, Rose Bay Beach, Nielsen Park, Parsley Bay, Watsons Bay and Camp Cove.

Council has a strong commitment to improving water quality in all waterways across the Woollahra LGA. Our approach to improving water quality is based on the principles of total catchment management, recognising the impact that activities upstream and throughout the catchment have on the system as a whole.

Double Bay ferry wharf



Water Quality Improvement

Our Actions to Date

- Council undertakes regular street sweeping in all commercial and residential streets to reduce pollutants entering the stormwater system.
- 31 gross pollutant traps have been installed across the LGA to capture pollutants before they enter waterways.
- 10 raingardens have been installed and are regularly maintained to ensure maximum filtration and capture of pollutants.
- Sediment and erosion controls are enforced on construction sites.
- Council's Development Control Plan includes water sensitive urban design controls to ensure that stormwater is retained onsite for re-use or treated.
- Review of water management in the Cooper Park catchment.
- Support for our community to undertake clean-ups of local beaches through the HarbourCare program.
- Awareness raising about protection of water quality and prevention of stormwater pollution through our environmental education program.



Local beach clean-up at Rose Bay

- Working with the NSW Government, Sydney Water and community representatives to improve water quality at Rose Bay, including a detailed water quality audit, identification of hotspots, and rectification of sewer leaks.
- Ongoing water quality monitoring of our local creeks.



Council street sweeper

Water Quality Improvement

Our Future Actions

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Integrate raingardens into streetscape works where feasible.	As streetscape works are planned.	Engineering Services, Environment and Sustainability
Monitor the water quality and ecological health of local waterways.	Monitoring is completed via Council's Environmental and Biodiversity Monitoring Program every two years.	Environment and Sustainability
Work with Sydney Water and other stakeholders to explore the potential to harvest stormwater from drainage channels, including progressing plans to naturalise Rose Bay Channel.	Opportunities are identified. Rose Bay Channel is included in Sydney Water's plans for naturalisation.	Environment and Sustainability, Engineering Services
Work with Sydney Water, City of Sydney and other stakeholders to address odour and other issues at Rushcutters Bay.	Working group is established and meetings held quarterly.	Environment and Sustainability
Maintain and monitor Council's gross pollutant traps (GPTs).	GPTs are cleaned and inspected every 6 months, collection statistics are monitored.	Civil Operations
Continue to regularly sweep Council's streets via mechanical sweeper to reduce pollutants.	Ongoing – commercial areas swept daily and other areas monthly.	Civil Operations
Strengthen measures to reduce stormwater pollution incidents from construction sites.	Ongoing – review and enforce sediment controls.	Compliance
Enforce penalties and fines for pollution incidents.	Pollution reports are investigated promptly.	Compliance, Regulatory
Participate in annual Get the Site Right campaign coordinated by the Sydney Coastal Councils Group.	Inspection report provided to the Sydney Coastal Councils Group annually.	Compliance, Regulatory
Support the community volunteers to undertake clean-up activities via the HarbourCare Program.	Ongoing – individuals and groups are assisted to undertake beach cleaning activities.	Environment and Sustainability

Water Quality Improvement

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Continue to require water sensitive urban design on private land to retain and treat stormwater onsite.	Ongoing – DCP controls are implemented.	Planning and Development, Compliance
Work with the NSW Government, Sydney Water and other stakeholders to develop and implement a Coastal Management Program (CMP) and other initiatives to improve water quality in Sydney Harbour.	Greater Sydney Harbour CMP is progressed.	Environment and Sustainability
Work with the Sydney Coastal Councils Group to implement the Greater Sydney Harbour Regional Litter Prevention Strategy and other water quality initiatives.	Active membership of the Sydney Coastal Councils Group is maintained and actions from strategy are implemented.	Environment and Sustainability
Educate the community about catchment management and water quality.	Catchment management and water quality information is incorporated into Council's annual environmental education program.	Environment and Sustainability
Work with the NSW Government and Sydney Water to improve the quality of water discharging to Sydney Harbour through the Rose Bay Beach Working Party.	Meetings held quarterly or as required.	Environment and Sustainability

Biodiversity Conservation

The Woollahra municipality contains a diverse range of ecosystem elements and habitat types, including:

- Wooded sandstone slopes and gullies – e.g. Cooper Park
- Exposed coastal heaths – e.g. Christison Park, Gap Park
- Freshwater and tidal creeks – e.g. Cooper Creek, Parsley Bay Creek
- Intertidal estuarine areas – e.g. Vaucluse Bay
- Sandy beaches – e.g. Parsley Bay, Watsons Bay, Nielsen Park, Camp Cove
- Rock platforms – e.g. Bottle and Glass Point, Parsley Bay
- Seagrass meadows – e.g. Rose Bay, Watsons Bay, Vaucluse Bay

These varied habitats provide feeding grounds, shelter, nesting and transport corridors for many fauna species. A number of these species are threatened or vulnerable and protected by State and / or Commonwealth legislation, such as the Large Bent-Wing Bat (*Miniopterus orianae oceanensis*), White's Seahorse (*Hippocampus whitei*) and the Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*).

The remnant bushland areas in Woollahra are predominantly composed of vegetation categorised as Sydney Coastal Sandstone Headland Heath and Sydney Coastal Sandstone Foreshores Forest. To help protect and restore this vegetation Council has a dedicated team of bush regeneration specialists on staff and also supports a committed team of community Bushcare volunteers. Bush regeneration is undertaken at key habitat areas, including Cooper Park, Parsley Bay Reserve, Gap Park, Trumper Park, and Harbour View Park. Where these bushland reserves connect with our parks, backyards, and street trees they create important corridors for native wildlife to move across our area.

To protect biodiversity in Woollahra, Council developed a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, actions from which have been implemented since 2015. In recognition of the important role our urban forest plays in reducing urban heat, sequestering carbon, improving air quality and providing habitat, Council has developed an Urban Forest Strategy, which will complement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.



Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*)



White's Seahorse (*Hippocampus whitei*)

Biodiversity Conservation

Our Actions to Date

- Since 2015, Council has been implementing actions from the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS), which details initiatives to protect and enhance biodiversity.
- Establishment of a long term Biodiversity and Environmental Monitoring Program to develop an understanding of biodiversity and environmental change over time.
- Regeneration of bushland areas by a dedicated team of qualified staff bush regenerators.
- Ten Bushcare volunteer groups operate across Council's bushland areas, removing weeds and improving the quality of the bushland.
- Introduction of development controls to protect tree canopy.
- Development of an Urban Forest Strategy and adoption of a canopy cover target.
- Development of programs to protect threatened species, including the *Acacia terminalis subsp. Eastern Sydney* Saving our Species rehabilitation program, and the seahorse monitoring program.



Programs are developed to protect threatened species.

- Encouragement of the local community to plant native species in their backyards, to create habitat pockets and strengthen wildlife corridor links.
- Creation of habitat for pollinators and small birds, including native flowering plants and native bee hives.



Staff volunteers observing Powerful Owls.



Native flowering plants create habitat for pollinators and birds.

Biodiversity Conservation

Our Future Actions

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Continue to implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.	Actions are implemented and Strategy is reviewed every 10 years.	Environment and Sustainability, Open Space and Trees
Monitor biodiversity across Woollahra's key habitat areas.	Monitoring is completed every two years.	Environment and Sustainability
Continue to monitor the populations of White's Seahorse.	Monitoring is completed every six months.	Environment and Sustainability
Continue to support Council's Bushcare volunteer program across multiple bushland sites.	100 Bushcare volunteers are registered by 2030.	Open Space and Trees
Work with NSW Government to implement programs to protect threatened species, including actions to support <i>Acacia terminalis subsp. Eastern Sydney</i> , <i>Syzygium paniculatum</i> , <i>Allocasuarina portuensis</i> and the Powerful Owl.	Programs are developed and implemented.	Environment and Sustainability, Open Space and Trees
Revise bush regeneration and revegetation schedules for 2023-2032.	Bush regeneration and revegetation schedules are revised every 3 years.	Open Space and Trees
Continue to create habitat for small birds and pollinators.	Planting schedules designed to attract small birds and pollinators.	Environment and Sustainability, Open Space and Trees
Educate the community about protecting and enhancing biodiversity.	Biodiversity focussed sessions are included in Council's annual education program.	Environment and Sustainability
Encourage the local community to undertake native habitat plantings on private land.	Annual education program includes content on habitat planting.	Environment and Sustainability

Biodiversity Conservation

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Investigate the potential to strengthen Council's planning controls to increase planting of native species in new developments.	LEP and DCP reviewed by 2025.	Environment and Sustainability, Strategic Planning
Identify opportunities to undertake urban rewilding by restoring natural processes.	Rewilding opportunities identified and implemented.	Environment and Sustainability
Ensure that Council manages biosecurity risks.	Council's biosecurity policy is implemented and reviewed.	Open Space and Trees

Waste Reduction

There is urgent need for changes to our traditional waste management system. According to the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy (DPIE 2021), at current rates of waste generation, putrescible waste landfills servicing Greater Sydney are likely to reach capacity in the next 15 years. Recycling is also under pressure, with contraction of demand for recycled materials.

Council is committed to moving toward a circular economy, reducing the amount of waste generated and sent to landfill from Woollahra, and to providing services that enable our community to avoid and minimise waste. The simplest and most impactful way to reduce resource use and generate less waste is to consume less.

Council measures performance by documenting the tonnages of materials diverted from landfill by avoidance, reduction, reuse and recycling initiatives. Woollahra has a history of innovative waste management programs, being one of the first Councils to introduce a residential food and organics collection, which has



Woollahra Council's residential food and organics collection has been in place since 2008.

resulted in significant decreases in the amount of waste sent to landfill and also reducing community greenhouse gas emissions.

Through our procurement processes, we aim to increase the use of recycled materials and support a circular economy.

Waste Reduction

Our Actions to Date

- Kitchen to Compost Program – residential food and garden organics collection in place since 2008.
- Provision of residential recycling program, and education to raise awareness.
- Provision of a regular drop-off service for hard to recycle products such as paint, textiles and batteries.
- Implementation of a bookable kerbside collection for electronic waste.
- Implementation of programs supporting and encouraging community composting and worm-farming via the Compost Revolution Program.
- Programs encouraging reuse of items, such as garage sales.
- Collection of used batteries at Double Bay and Paddington libraries.
- Assistance for schools to reduce waste generation and waste sent to landfill.
- Illegal dumping management.
- Adoption of a Single Use Plastics Policy to reduce the generation of plastic waste.



Kitchen to Compost Program



E-waste bookable kerbside collection



Drop-off service for hard to recycle items

IMAGE : CASSANDRA HANNAGAN

Waste Reduction

Our Future Actions

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Continue to implement Council's waste programs, including residential recycling and food and organics collection.	Volume of waste sent to landfill is reduced by 40kg / household (10%) by 2030.	Civil Operations
Support programs that encourage and educate about reuse and waste avoidance in the community.	Events promoting reuse are held annually (e.g. Garage Sale Trail or similar).	Civil Operations, Environment and Sustainability,
Support and encourage community uptake of composting and worm farming.	Regular workshops and events coordinated for residents to attend.	Environment and Sustainability, Civil Operations
Measure the food waste diverted from landfill through the Compost Revolution Project.	Tonnes diverted from landfill recorded annually.	Environment and Sustainability, Civil Operations
Investigate opportunities to provide expanded recycling services to residents, including collection of 'hard to recycle' items.	List of items collected is reviewed annually or as opportunities arise.	Civil Operations
Continue to provide on-call collection of electronic waste for residents.	E-waste pick-ups provided as requested.	Civil Operations
Support staff to adopt waste minimisation and avoidance behaviours.	Information provided to staff on sustainable resource use.	Environment and Sustainability
Integrate sustainability aspects into Council's procurement policy and procedures, including circular economy considerations.	Procurement policy and procedures are updated by June 2024.	Corporate Services, Environment and Sustainability.
Maximise the use of recycled product such as asphalt and concrete with recycled glass content.	Participation SSROC's Pave the Way 1 & 2 initiative by 2024.	Civil Operations

Waste Reduction

Action	Deliverable & Timeframe	Responsible Council Team
Ensure that Council's Single Use Plastics Policy is implemented.	Policy is implemented and reviewed every two years.	Environment and Sustainability
Advocate for recycling of soft plastics.	Lobby State and Federal Government and large retailers to develop a solution.	Civil Operations, Environment and Sustainability
Support schools to adopt waste avoidance and minimisation behaviours.	School visits provided on request to support waste minimisation and avoidance education and engagement.	Civil Operations, Environment and Sustainability
Support businesses to adopt waste minimisation and avoidance behaviours.	Waste reduction and avoidance information made available to businesses.	Environment and Sustainability

Our Environmental Management Policy Framework

Woollahra Council has established an environmental management policy framework, outlining Council's approach to environmental management.

Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Council's plans and actions are based on the principles of sustainability, ensuring that we meet the needs of today while maintaining the long-term ability of Council to meet the needs of future generations. Council's approach to environmental management and sustainability is guided by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) Principles for Sustainable Cities and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Protecting, Conserving, Enhancing

Woollahra Council plays a critical role in protecting our natural environment by ensuring that our activities do not negatively impact on the environment. We aim to conserve and enhance the important pockets of bushland in our area, and protect our waterways and beaches. Council aims to minimise resource use and support the community to do the same, in order to ensure a sustainable future.



Beach clean-up at Rose Bay.



Bushcare volunteering in our parks.

Legislative Context

At Woollahra Municipal Council, environmental management is the responsibility of all staff. Every team has a role to play and a legislative responsibility to protect the environment. The Local Government Act explicitly states the responsibility of local government to consider the principles of ecologically sustainable development. In addition, Council has responsibilities to protect the environment under the following State and Commonwealth legislation:

- *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (NSW)*
- *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (NSW)*
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)*
- *Coastal Management Act 2016 (NSW)*
- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth)*

Documenting our Framework

Environmental management and sustainability is embedded into Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP), *Woollahra 2032*. This document outlines Council's vision, mission, values and priorities. It states Council's alignment with UNEP Principles.

The CSP is supported by Council's *Environmental Sustainability Action Plan* (ESAP), which sets out environmental sustainability priority areas, and details Council's targets and initiatives to address the priority action areas and improve environmental performance.

The actions in the ESAP have been developed through a number of environmental studies undertaken by experts in their field. For example, Council's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy identifies Council's biodiversity values and details actions to ensure biodiversity is protected and enhanced.

The CSP and the ESAP actions feed into Council's annual Delivery Program and Operational Plan, to ensure that they are implemented and reported on. Reporting takes place via Council's Annual Report.



Guiding Taskforce

Council has a taskforce dedicated to environmental management and sustainability, the Ecological Sustainability Taskforce (EST). The EST was established in 2009. The Terms of Reference state that the purpose of the EST is to:

- Review and recommend Council strategy in relation to sustainability initiatives, and
- Provide strategic guidance to Council on environmental and sustainability issues.

The role of the EST is to assist Council to integrate environmental sustainability into Council policy, plans and operations. Membership includes 5 Councillors including the Chair (appointed by the Mayor). Council Officers attend the meetings and minutes are reported to Council's Environmental Planning Committee.

Monitoring our Performance

Council has a number of tools in place to monitor environmental performance.

- Annual reporting on environmental targets – the state of the local environment and progress towards achieving environmental targets is reported annually to the Office of Local Government.
- Sustainability monitoring program – database of all energy, water and fuel use. Monitors use, identifies abnormal patterns and demonstrates the impact of energy and water savings projects.
- Biodiversity and Environmental Monitoring Program – Council's biodiversity is monitored biennially to identify any changes over time.
- GIS Mapping – biodiversity, catchments, stormwater drainage network and other environmental information is included on Council's Geographic Information System.

Informing our Staff

All staff attend a corporate induction session about environmental management and sustainability. In this session staff are informed about:

- Legislative responsibilities regarding environmental protection
- Council's framework for environmental management
- Woollahra's environmental values
- Environmental information available to inform their work.

Quarterly education sessions are provided to staff about different environmental issues and environmental information is available on Council's website.

Working in Partnership

Council works in partnership with other organisations, such as Sydney Water, NSW DPE Beachwatch, and community volunteer groups to improve the quality of our environment. Council also works collaboratively with other councils and groups such as SSROC, the Sydney Coastal Councils Group, and the 3 Council Regional Environment Program.

Supporting Reference Documents, Strategies and Plans

The following documents relate to, inform and support the targets and actions in this Plan.

BMT Commercial Australia, 2021, *Eastern Beaches: Regional Sea Level Rise Hazard Assessment*, prepared for Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils.

DCCEEW, 2023, *National Electric Vehicle Strategy*, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Canberra.

Edge Impact, 2023 (Draft), *Woollahra Municipal Council Urban Forest Strategy 2024-2050*.

Kinesis, 2015, *Eastern Suburbs Low Carbon Future Plan 2015*, prepared by Kinesis for Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils.

Kinesis, 2018, *Eastern Suburbs Water Reduction Plan 2018*, prepared by Kinesis for Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils.

NSW Government Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2020, *Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020–2030*.

NSW Government Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2021, *NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041*.

Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils, 2023 (Draft), *Leading the Charge - Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy*.

Resilient Sydney, 2018, *Resilient Sydney: A Strategy for City Resilience 2018*.

Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, 2021, *SSROC Guide to Sustainability Criteria, Clauses and Metrics in Procurement*.

Sydney Coastal Councils Group and Parramatta River Catchment Group, 2022, *Greater Sydney Harbour Regional Litter Prevention Strategy*.

Woollahra Municipal Council, 2023 (Draft), *Plans of Management for Crown Land Reserves* (various documents)

Woollahra Municipal Council, 2022, *Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Policy*.

Woollahra Municipal Council, 2022 (Draft), *Woollahra Active Transport Plan*.

Woollahra Municipal Council, 2022, *Woollahra 2032 Community Strategic Plan*.

Woollahra Municipal Council, 2020, *Woollahra Local Strategic Planning Statement*.

Woollahra Municipal Council, 2022 (Draft), *Woollahra Integrated Transport Strategy*.

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