

## **5. BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT**

### **5.1 Council's Management Goals**

Warringah Council recognises the need to plan ahead and provide management frameworks to meet the challenges of today and the future. Council's Warringah PLAN 2001-2004 outlines Council's visions and mission statement.

Warringah Council's **Vision** statement is:

*" Warringah is a community which values its quality of life and strives to care for its special bush and beach environment."*

### **5.2 Council's Principles for Community Land Management**

The way in which Community Land is managed by Council is about creating a safe and healthy living environment, thereby influencing the quality of life of residents and visitors to Warringah.

The following principles have been developed to guide Council and the community in the management of Community Land:

- To ensure Warringah's community has an opportunity to be involved in the planning and management of public open space;
- To plan, maintain and enhance a diversity of recreational public open space opportunities;
- To plan and maintain a hierarchy of quality, multi-use public open space facilities;
- To conserve and enhance the natural environment and rehabilitate degraded areas of public open space;
- To recognise the importance of culture and heritage;
- To ensure a high standard of risk management in the provision, maintenance and management of public open space and facilities; and
- To apply the above principles in an economically responsible manner.

### **5.3 Community Values**

The Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge Plan of Management takes a values-based approach to land planning. This approach allows the key values, role and purpose to be identified so that these assets may be protected and enhanced. "Values" can simply be described as "what is important about a place" (DLWC & Mandis Roberts, 1996). The values identified for the Refuge are outlined below, whilst the issues are summarised in Section 6. Appendix A provides background information into the values and issues identified in this Plan of Management.

The process of community consultation has confirmed that the Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge is a highly valued area. The consultation provided Council with information of how the community values the Refuge and subsequently the way in which it should be managed. Management of the Refuge should ensure the protection of the significant natural, conservation and aesthetic values of the area whilst also taking into account the cultural, recreational, access and educational values.



The main consideration for management of the study area is its status as a Wildlife Refuge and in particular a refuge for migratory birds. Any concept of management must therefore consider its conservation value as being paramount to all other values.

**Table 6. Level of Significance for each value identified.**

Values	Level of Significance				
	Local	District	Regional	State	National
Natural Environment	*	*	*	*	*
Recreation	*	*	*		
Education	*	*	*		
Aesthetic	*	*			
Social	*	*			
Heritage	*				
Access	*	*			



Photo 4: Track behind sand dunes.



Photo 5: Lagoon Entrance.

### **Natural Environment**

The Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge is valued as a unique and special area with high conservation value due to the following:-

- The uncommon combination of habitats and landforms in an urban situation;
- The Refuge is home to large numbers of bird species, including migratory birds listed under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995, the Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement 1974 (JAMBA) and the China-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement 1986 (CAMBA). A list of birds found within the Refuge and listed within these Agreements or Act can be found in Appendix A;
- The remaining vegetation habitats are remnants of vegetation types that were common before development;
- Two vegetation communities that exist within the Refuge, “Sydney Freshwater Wetlands” and “Sydney Coastal Estuary Swamp Forest Complex”, are listed as endangered ecological communities under the Threatened Species Conservation Act; and
- The aquatic ecosystem itself has particular environmental significance. Dee Why Lagoon is home to an abundant population of marine invertebrates which is the basis for the habitat value of the lagoon for water birds.



## **Recreation**

The Refuge provides for a wide range of passive recreational uses including walking, nature appreciation and bird watching. The area contains a playground, grassed area of James Meehan Reserve, Surf Life Saving Club, and beach which are all valuable recreational areas.



Photo 6: Relaxing on park bench.



Photo 7: Playground at James Meehan Reserve.

## **Education**

Dee Why Lagoon provides an area for education in ecological processes. It's proximity to schools, colleges and universities, in combination with its natural features is of considerable interest to a range of research disciplines. These include geography, geomorphology, ecology, botany, zoology, aquatic biology and ornithology.

## **Aesthetic**

The open space of the water body and adjacent bushland contribute significantly to the areas visual amenity. Management of the Refuge should seek to retain this visual amenity and thereby maintain and promote a positive community perception of the natural values of the Refuge. Effective management of the boundary is necessary to reduce the incidence and impacts of edge effects and consequent effect on aesthetic value.

## **Social**

The grassed open spaces around the Refuge, such as James Meehan Reserve, makes the reserve an attractive place for social gatherings and events.

## **Heritage**

The lagoon's history has seen the area protected as a valuable conservation area. Public support for it's conservation and protection was noted in the late 1960's when a development proposal in the reserve was heavily opposed by the public. The Black Swan, the symbol of Dee Why, is a reminder of the lagoon's condition in the early 1900's. Remains of a World War II tank trap are also present. An independent Heritage Assessment however, has concluded that the remains of the tank trap are of local significance only and do not require protection.

## **Access**

The availability and opportunity to easily access the related recreational, cultural and natural resources of beaches and surrounding open space, such as the Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge, is valued by the community.



## 5.4 Roles of the Area

The Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge plays a significant role in the conservation of migratory birds, wetlands and remnant stands of native vegetation. Of particular significance is the habitat and feeding areas it provides for migrant water birds. The Lagoon also has a regional role in the provision of opportunities for passive recreation, particularly walking, nature appreciation and bird watching.



Photo 8: Multi-use pathway.



Photo 9: Beach access.

## 5.5 Vision Statement

The principles in Section 5.2 have been taken into account during the preparation of this Plan of Management. A site specific vision, significant role and additional values and management objectives have also been adopted for the Refuge due to the Refuge's significant conservation values and aesthetic appeal to the Warringah community. The positive perceptions of Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge are largely due to the natural appearance of the Lagoon and its surrounds. This fortunate situation sets the scene for the vision of Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge.

**The vision for Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge is to preserve the natural appearance of the lagoon edge and it's original natural perimeter and to:**

- **Conserve a significant natural area supporting a diversity of native aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna; and**
- **Provide a range of low key, predominantly passive, recreational and educational opportunities that are complementary to the Refuge's natural heritage values.**

## 5.6 Management Objectives for the Refuge

To help achieve the vision for the Refuge a number of management objectives have been developed. Council recognises that the Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Refuge's inherent conservation value is the paramount consideration in the management of this Refuge. Accordingly, the management objectives emphasise the management of recreational activities so that inherent conservation values are maintained and enhanced. The legislative management objectives are detailed in Section 7 of this Plan of Management.

