

## HOW THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT DATA INFORMS OUR FUTURE PLAN

In 2018, Council identified the need to undertake an assessment of Norfolk Island's environmental capacity and provide scientific background on current land use, hydrology, soils, biodiversity and ecosystems, to help inform the development of a population strategy and ensure that an increase in population on Norfolk Island does not exceed its carrying capacity.

The future sustainability of our Island is one of the most important factors for our community; we all need to understand the impacts on the environment, our resources, and the plan to move forward sustainably. We encourage everyone to read the Environmental Assessment (full report and Executive Summary) and provide feedback to council at [regionalcouncil@nirc.gov.nf](mailto:regionalcouncil@nirc.gov.nf) by 15 May. The reports can be found by following the links on this page <http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf/reports-environment>

The Community Strategic Plan 2016-2026 – *Our Plan for the Future (NIRC, 2016)*, and its Delivery Program 2016-2020, mandate the development of a sustainable population policy, acknowledging that population growth needs to be considered within the bounds of environmental sustainability. The Community Strategic Plan also provides some strategic directions for an environmentally sustainable community, which include the following objectives:

- Develop a clean energy future,
- Reduce, reuse and recover waste and end disposal of waste into the sea,
- Create a water secure future,
- Support threatened species and minimise the presence of invasive species,
- Ensure a healthy, diverse marine ecosystem,
- Protect and preserve vegetation communities and habitat.
- Protect and enhance water quality,
- Create a food secure community,
- Retain open spaces and low-density development,
- Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas and those of high conservation value, through improved land management and pest control practices

In this context, and in accordance with those objectives, Council commissioned [The Norfolk Island Environmental Assessment](#), which was conducted from May 2019 to April 2021 by a team of scientific researchers led by **Monash University, Monash Sustainable Development Institute, and The University of Newcastle**. The research team carried out a desktop review, some consultation with key stakeholders, data collection and analysis, according to the four main streams of the Environmental Assessment:

- Land-use capability, coastal zones and soils, the extent to which existing land use is consistent with environmental sustainability;
- Hydrology, examining surface and groundwater resources, existing use and long-term sustainability;
- Ecosystems and biodiversity; and,
- Systems and technologies that have applicability on Norfolk Island for waste management, energy and food production.

Council will include scientific evidence obtained from these assessments in the community engagement program, to develop a sustainable population strategy for Norfolk Island. It will review the Norfolk Island Plan, the island's main land use planning document, in line with this evidence to bring in a system of planning controls that: a) better reflects ecosystem and population dynamics; and, b) aligns with economic development objectives and community expectations.

We encourage you to take the time to read the important information contained in both the Environmental Assessment Executive Summary and the full Environmental Assessment report and provide your thoughts and feedback to [regionalcouncil@nirc.gov.nf](mailto:regionalcouncil@nirc.gov.nf) by 15 May 2022. Both reports can be found by following the links on this page <http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf/reports-environment>

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**MANAGER ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING**

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