



Local Environment

**Policies to keep Warringah beautiful
by protecting our flora and fauna,
sport, recreation and tourism.**

**Catch the wave
of opportunity**




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Foreword from **Zali Steggall,** Independent MP for Warringah

Australia is one of the most beautiful and biodiverse places on Earth — and Warringah is one of its gems. Our cosy inlets, magnificent beaches and diverse bushlands are all situated on the most stunning natural harbour in the world.

And don't we know it. Warringah residents and visitors flock in droves to our natural environment to rest, relax and recharge. It has sustained us through the last two years of lockdowns. Scores of tourists come and gaze in wonder at what we have, with more than 2.4 million visiting Manly every year.¹

Our environment is our economy

Experience has shown that our local environment is intertwined with our economy and way of life. Local business — especially tourism, recreation and hospitality — thrives only when our environment, our air and our water are healthy.

Yet Warringah's local environment is under pressure like never before. Oil and gas exploration, increasing population and

development, waste pollution, and climate change are combining to threaten our clean air, fresh water and unique flora and fauna.

We must conserve what we have for current and future Warringah residents. That's why I have developed five key policy areas (see next page) to help us safely maintain our beautiful home for generations to come.



Zali Steggall, OAM MP



“Warringah’s environment isn’t just beautiful, it is the core of local business, recreation and quality of life. It is vital that we protect it.”

Zali Steggall





Inspire local action to tackle emissions reduction

Support local initiatives like Warringah's 'Roadmap to Zero,' local government programs, and home grown clean technology solutions

Australia is on the front line of global warming impacts. Temperatures have already warmed by 1.44°C since 1910² and by the end of the century³ we are projected to be 3°C warmer under current policies. This warming poses compounding and escalating risks to our natural environment, economy and way of life.

It is now inevitable Warringah will face the impact of climate initiated change, including more storms, heat waves, floods, fires, coastal erosion and rising sea levels. On current policies, Warringah will warm from an average day time temperature of 21.9°C to 25.1°C by 2050.⁴ The average year will be dominated by extreme heat, with up to 63 days over 30°C, which is nearly three times the 1960-90 average. And this heat will stress both people and flora and fauna alike.

Getting out of hot water

Many of our favourite beaches, like Curl Curl, Freshwater and Manly, will be threatened by rising sea level and coastal erosion — all driven by global warming. Our current emissions and policies will result in at least 0.5 metres of sea level rise.⁵ With this level, coastal events like storm surges and coastal erosion will happen three times more often by 2050, and will be ten times more frequent by 2100.⁶



If we continue on our current path, climate change will impact the liveability, prosperity, and environment of Warringah. Unfortunately, our Federal Government continues to delay the much-needed action to avert these risks.⁷ It is now up to State, Territory, and local governments, businesses and individuals to act. This is not the scenario any of us wanted, but we now must do what we can to reduce emissions to limit warming.

Less conversation, more action

There are many actions businesses and individuals can take, from switching banks and superannuation funds, to adding solar, to investing in an electric vehicle and purchasing emissions offsets.

Warringah's Roadmap to Zero (the Roadmap) is designed to help people and businesses decide the actions they can take to reduce emissions. More than 1,200 have signed on to date, and the project continues to gather momentum.

Similar to the Roadmap, there are local initiatives like Solar Alliance 'Powerhouse Brookvale' that are showing that it's possible to solar large parts of the electorate. Local Governments in Warringah are also playing a pivotal role in decarbonising and they should be supported.

To inspire local action, our key policy is to:

- ✓ Promote Warringah's Roadmap to Zero and pursue the actions it contains
- ✓ Advocate for local initiatives like Solar Alliance's 'Powerhouse Brookvale' Urban Renewable Energy Zone
- ✓ Partner with local governments on innovative emissions reductions solutions
- ✓ Champion home-grown clean technology solutions like Empower Energy's batteries
- ✓ Facilitate grants for innovative emissions reductions projects



Protect our oceans, beaches and coast

Take practical steps to safeguard the ocean including banning offshore oil and gas exploration, support Blue Economy research and development and invest in conserving our reefs.

Warringah's beaches and coast are where people go to relax, have fun, spend time together and get active — whether that's paddle boarding at Balmoral or dropping a fishing line off Clontarf.

Underwater, Warringah's magnificent ocean is home to a plethora of sea life. We have numerous threatened and protected species including the blue groper, green turtles, black rock cod, weedy sea dragon, two types of sea horses and critically endangered grey nurse sharks; which snorkellers off Cabbage Tree Bay might be lucky enough to see.⁸

It's not just rest and respite, thousands of Warringah residents depend on the health of the oceans for their businesses and sustenance. Everything from snorkelling tours, kayaking to diving and surf lessons, as well as the surrounding beach cafes, restaurants and retail. Our ocean, beaches and coast are all part of our economy.

But our oceans, beaches and coast are under threat like never before from plastics, climate change, overfishing, and oil and gas exploration. In 2021, the Government opposed the Great Barrier Reef being listed as in danger despite multiple bleaching events in recent years and they have ignored the Great Southern Reef, which continues to suffer impacts.



To protect our oceans, beaches and coast we need to:


In the same year, the federal government released over 80,000 square kilometres of oil and gas exploration acreage. Some areas are in the most precious marine environments we have, adjacent to world heritage areas like the Twelve Apostles. Warringah had a close call with the proposal to explore for oil and gas off our coast from Newcastle to Manly (PEP-11). Community pressure forced the Government to dismiss the proposal.

Overfishing is a threat to marine biodiversity. Our fish stocks are being depleted faster than the oceans ability to regenerate. Few people realise too that only 1% of Sydney Harbour is protected from fishing. We currently lack a marine park to conserve our beautiful harbour.

There are also gaps to fill in ocean research and development. The Sydney Institute of Marine Science is doing great work on studying our oceans and supporting projects like Living Sea Walls but we can do more and better.

Finally, many of the solutions to the challenge of cleaner and healthier oceans and coasts will come from innovation from cutting edge start ups and accelerators that need federal support.

- ✓ Establish a moratorium on offshore oil and gas exploration and production across Australia's coasts
- ✓ Advocate for a 'Sydney Harbour Marine Park' to conserve our harbour
- ✓ Fund a 'Blue Economy' research and development hub to further understanding of our oceans
- ✓ Invest in early stage ocean focused start-ups and accelerators to drive innovative solutions like Ocean Impact Organisation
- ✓ Support community groups to ban boats from ripping up Cabbage Tree Bay with their anchors
- ✓ Support classifying as endangered the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park on the UNESCO World Heritage List
- ✓ Boost investment in Great Southern Reef conservation



Safeguard our flora, fauna and heritage

Work with local community groups, trusts and conservation organisations, legislate stronger environment and heritage laws and facilitate access to grant money for environmental organisations.

Warringah has a plethora of green space, including parks to take pets, bushlands to enjoy, and walking trails to explore and wander through.

Along the way you might see some of our diverse flora and fauna, from green tree snakes to long-nosed bandicoots, dollar birds, and short-beaked echidnas. Some are a rarer sight. Warringah has more than 26 endangered species like the sunshine wattle;⁹ species that need to be protected and conserved.

Saving sites and species

Interspersed among our bushlands and sandstone cliffs are sites of extraordinary indigenous heritage. Although the exact clans that lived in Warringah are contested, they all left their mark. In areas across Warringah, you can see carvings in rock formations and on cave walls, camp sites, rock shelters and art. Northern Beaches LGA, an area that covers a part of Warringah, has over 300 aboriginal sites dating back almost 6,000 years.¹⁰

Sites like North Head Sanctuary, Headland Park, Sanctuary Cove and Manly Dam Reserve are home to these unique animals, plants and heritage areas. Some sites are within the boundaries of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, which is a Commonwealth Agency that aims to preserve and rehabilitate areas. But there is no guarantee that these areas we enjoy, nor the animals, plants and cultural heritage we see, will be around forever.



To safeguard our flora, fauna and heritage we must:

Staving off ongoing threats

We need to be vigilant toward threats to our heritage, flora and fauna.

The Beaches Link Tunnel is an ever present risk to our natural environment and many in the community feel strongly about it. The development threatens key ecosystems. If not done in the right way, we might lose some of our more precious nature. Every effort must be given to ensure this does not happen.

Another active risk to the ongoing threat of predation of native flora and fauna by feral animals. Foxes, and cats are decimating natural wildlife across Australia. Many fauna have been pushed onto the endangered list. Several inquiries have looked into this topic and have recommended strong action. I support these calls, we must act now.

Weak environmental laws risks nature destruction across the country. The Samuel's Review into the EPBC Act painted a bleak picture of the state of our environment without reform. We need to implement the recommendations in full not cherry pick and streamline at the expense of the environment.

Finally, we need to consult with environment and conservation groups who are doing great work on the ground protecting our flora and fauna.

- ✓ Work with local groups, trusts and organisations
- ✓ Advocate for the State and Federal Governments to invest in our protecting wildlife
- ✓ Increase funding to the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust
- ✓ Implement the Samuel's EPBC Act Review recommendations in full
- ✓ Facilitate access to grant money for environmental and heritage projects
- ✓ Implement the recommendations of committee inquiries into feral animals
- ✓ Support the calls for a Federal 'Environmental Protection Agency'



Balance infrastructure development with the environment

Incorporate better environmental protections in all development and advocate for strong environmental standards in legislation.

Australia is a growing democracy. Although the COVID-19 pandemic substantially reduced net immigration, our population is still projected to reach 28 million people by 2028.¹¹ Just one part of Warringah, the Northern Beaches, is expected to grow by an extra 39,000 people in the next two decades.¹²

With a growing population comes the need develop infrastructure to meet the community's needs. Bridges, tunnels, buildings, hospitals, schools and roads will need to be developed to support future residents, but they will all impact upon the environment when done in an unsustainable fashion.

Enshrining our environment in law

Our national and local laws have insufficient environmental protections against development, which puts our local environment at risk of destruction. We need strong environmental standards in statute to ensure our local environment survives and flourishes.



Although we will continually need new developments in our community, we can manage the impacts in a way that safely grows our capacity, retains our local character and heritage, and crucially, safeguards our environment.

To protect our environment, policies should include:

- ✓ Promote sustainable infrastructure practices
- ✓ Avoid intensification of development
- ✓ Engage with the community on projects
- ✓ Advocate for stronger environmental laws



Stop packaging and plastic pollution

Prohibit single use plastics, develop new waste solutions, and support local and national initiatives to reduce waste.

From water bottles, to plastic bags and eating utensils, plastics and packaging have become part of everyday life. It's hard to imagine modern life without the simple ease of plastics and hygienic packaging.

Australians are leading consumers of plastic. We consume 3.5 million tonnes annually¹³ and we consume more single use plastic per capita than any other country except Singapore.¹⁴

That means millions of tonnes of plastics and packaging is continually produced and discarded. To make matters worse, over 130,000 tonnes of plastic escapes our waste streams every year and makes its way into the environment.¹⁵

The huge cost of cheap plastics

All of this has a substantial cost on our health, society, economy and environment. In fact, the lifetime cost of plastics produced in just one year is now \$17 billion to the Australian economy (2019).¹⁶



It is time for a new evolution of packaging. Policies must include:

- ✓ Ban all unnecessary and problematic single use plastics items from 2023
- ✓ Invest in alternative packaging research and development programs and funds to innovate future solutions
- ✓ Incentivise plastic alternative development and deployment, as well as re-use and reparability of other products through grants and tax relief
- ✓ Reform our national packaging scheme to improve uptake of better packaging
- ✓ Support a global plastic pollution treaty that addresses the full lifecycle of plastics

Plastics and packaging can now be found on the highest mountains, in the widest rivers, in the deepest parts of the ocean. It is all over Warringah, polluting waterways, damaging ecosystems, and harming wildlife. It can even be found in our food. This has put unprecedented pressure on environments around Australia — and Warringah is not an exception.

Getting drastic about plastic

Some organisations in Warringah have seen the damage and are acting to reduce plastics. For example, Ocean Action Pod is raising awareness of plastics and waste build-up in the ocean, while another organisation called War on Single Use Plastic is providing non-plastic alternatives to single-use plastic.

But to make large-scale change, the Federal Government must step in and accelerate behaviours away from plastics.

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Find out more at:
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