

Fact Sheet

Lake Macquarie City Council works to a forward plan for the construction of new kerb and channel throughout the City. This fact sheet provides information for property owners and residents on the kerb and channel construction program.

Why does Council construct kerb and channel?

The main benefit of kerb and channel is to protect the road from water entering under the road surface by improving drainage. This means the road condition is improved and there will be less potholes and defects in the road surface. Kerb and channel assists in alleviating stormwater drainage and road maintenance problems, and reduces silt in waterways and the Lake.

How are kerb and channel projects prioritised in the City?

Council has an enormous task to provide kerb and channel adjacent to all urban properties in the City. Current funding levels for this work mean it will take many years into the future to complete. Therefore, projects are selected and prioritised according to strict engineering criteria including:

- alleviating stormwater discharge through private properties,
- reducing ongoing maintenance problems for the road structure, and
- resolving road drainage issues.

Other factors such as high traffic volumes and increased development within an area may also impact on decisions to implement new kerb and channel. Aesthetic reasons are given a lower priority.

When a kerb and channel project has been identified, consultation will be undertaken with affected property owners and residents to ensure that the detailed design meets, as far as possible, with their expectations and considers any specific requests.

If I have requested kerb and channel, when will I get it?

As projects are prioritised based on engineering criteria, specific requests from residents are only one factor considered in the development of Council's construction program. However, Council does have a forward works plan and our staff are able to provide feedback on projects that have been identified for the next few years.

What if I have not requested kerb and channel?

Kerb and channel is not something that can be installed a piece at a time. As such, Council sets the program based on engineering criteria as outlined above. This may not reflect individual requests for kerb and channel; however the result will ensure improved road conditions and drainage for the benefit of all residents.

Property owner contributions

Does the property owner pay for kerb and channel?

Property owners make a contribution to the costs for kerb and channel. The NSW Roads Act (1993) enables Council to seek a contribution from property owners towards the cost of kerb and channel construction on a public road. The amount charged can be up to 50 per cent of the cost of kerb and channel construction along their property frontage. The contribution helps Council undertake kerb and channel work at more locations than would otherwise be possible. Property owners are not charged for replacement kerb and channel.

What is the current contribution charge in Lake Macquarie?

Council has considered the project costs of kerb and channel construction, and has determined the following standard contribution charges for property owners in its Fees and Charges for 2023-2024:

- \$127 per lineal metre for residential and rural frontages,
- \$150 per lineal metre for commercial and industrial, and
- \$147 per lineal metre for school frontages.

This charge is less than 50 per cent of the total cost of kerb and channel construction, the limit allowable under the Roads Act. Residential property owners will only be charged up to 25 metres, even if their property frontage is longer. There are additional concessions and conditions, such as where the property has frontages on more than one street.

For dual or multiple occupancy properties, the charges will be split evenly between the owners.

What is included in the construction cost?

The costs to Council include all survey, design, traffic control, earthworks, drainage and associated road pavement reconstruction. These are necessary to ensure the project outcome is an effective improvement in stormwater and road management, and an efficient use of resources.

Are there any concessions where previous driveway channel crossings have been approved by Council and installed?

It is recognised that some residents have already paid for the construction of their driveway crossing.

If the driveway crossing is a piped or concrete channel crossing and was installed or approved by Council up to 15 years ago and is removed because of the new kerb and channel works, then a rebate from the kerb and channel contribution is available to residents. The rebate is a maximum of four metres per property, even where there were two or more previous crossings.

What if a property owner cannot afford to contribute to the cost?

Council will undertake consultation with all affected property owners during the project design phase, prior to kerb and channel construction, and provide information regarding the charges to be levied. After the work is completed, an account will be sent to the property owner. When the account is received, the property owner can contact Council to request payment by instalments if the cost will cause hardship.

Do all property owners pay the same rate?

Yes. At some locations, kerb and channel will be significantly more expensive to construct. Site variations such as gradient and topography, and the need for new underground drainage and the relocation of services, will increase the project cost. However, the same charge is applied in all locations, and Council covers any extra costs relevant to a specific location.

Will Council replace my channel crossing and driveway?

Council will reconstruct channel crossings and driveways according to the following conditions:

Component	Approval status	Work that Council will undertake	Cost to property owner
Existing channel crossings to driveway	Approved by Council within last 15 years	Channel crossing(s), consistent with the existing construction and approval(s)	Standard contribution charge, reduced by rebate of four metres
	Not approved by Council within last 15 years	Single, standard channel crossing, four metres in width, in line with the property's vehicular entrance	No variation from standard contribution charge for single channel crossing
Existing driveway from channel crossing to property boundary	Approved by Council within last 15 years	Driveways may be removed by Council to allow the work to proceed. Plain concrete replacement driveway included in project	No variation from standard contribution charge
	Not approved by Council within last 15 years	Driveways may be removed by Council to allow the work to proceed. Council will reinstate these driveways in gravel.	No variation from standard contribution charge for gravel driveway. Owner may arrange construction of a concrete driveway across the footway at the owner's cost.
New driveway is made steeper than 1:5 (one metre vertical to five metres horizontal) as a result of kerb and channel construction		Council will reconstruct in concrete or asphaltic concrete to a standard width of at least 2.7 metres	No variation from standard contribution charge for 2.7m width. Owner may request additional width, to be at owner's cost.
No existing driveway		Council will construct driveway in gravel if requested by owner during consultation period.	No variation from standard contribution charge. Owner may arrange construction of a concrete driveway across the footway, after gaining Council approval.

Construction details

How soon after the work taking place can I use the area?

To allow the concrete to gain sufficient strength, no vehicles should be driven over the new kerb and channel for at least three days after the concrete is poured.

Will Council restore landscaping in the footway area?

Where alterations are required to any existing improvements in the footway area, such as rockwork or landscaping, these will only be adjusted or replaced by Council if Council approval was previously obtained for these improvements.

Following the kerb and channel construction, the disturbed areas of the footway will be restored by backfilling, levelling and laying turf.

What if the works affect drainage pipes in my property?

Existing street stormwater discharge drainage from a private property will be connected to the kerb and channel by Council. Any alterations required to drainage pipes or pits within the owner's property will have to be carried out by the owner.

Can I request changes to my property access?

Yes. For example, if the property does not have a current vehicular entrance, or if the owner requires the present one to be relocated, or if additional accesses are requested, the owner will need to provide written details to Council, during the project consultation period. The details need to include a sketch of the requested work.

How do I request changes to my property access?

Work outside the scope of the Council project may be carried out by the owner or a licensed contractor. Levels, specifications and written approval must be obtained from Council before the work is commenced.

The requests should be submitted to Council through the Minor Public Works - Driveway application form available on Council's website.



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