Coal loader wetland

A natural water filter

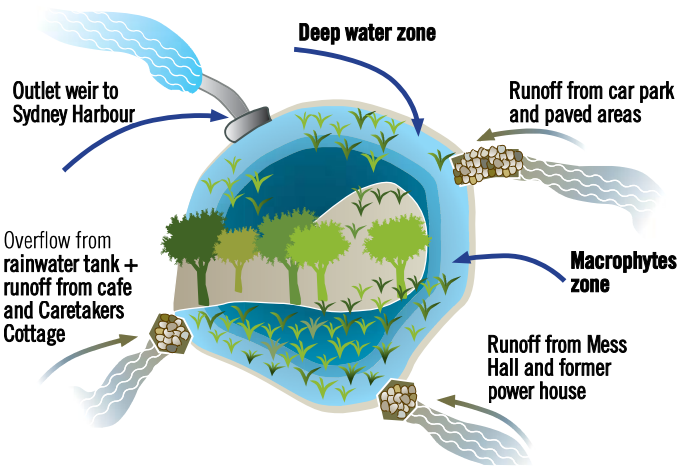
A wetland was constructed by a former caretaker of the site in the footprint of an old oil tank. The wetland acts as a filter, helping clean stormwater runoff from the site before it enters Sydney Harbour.

Increasing development has led to the destruction of many of our natural wetlands. In the past, wetlands were thought to be wastelands which were drained, filled and used for parks, playing fields and housing developments. This meant that stormwater was no longer filtered through the wetlands but instead piped direct **to our local waterways through a system of man made concrete drains. This is why our waterways became polluted.**

How our wetland works

When it rains, water from building roofs and pathways, plus overflow from the rainwater tank, all flow into the man made wetland. The water flows through a litter basket that strains out larger pieces of litter and **debris, then enters a deep pond which spreads and slows the gush of incoming water. This allows some of the debris and sediment in the stormwater to settle into the pond's bottom.**

The reeds and rushes planted in the pond's macrophyte zone filter out dissolved pollutants such as nitrates and phosphates, further slow down water flow, and draw floating solids to the bottom, which mixes with leaf litter. The **sediment is soon converted to rich humus, much the same way as a compost heap works.**



Appropriate water levels are maintained with a weir, through which cleaned water passes before flowing down a pipe and into Sydney Harbour.

your environmental levy at work

NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL