



# CAPTURING STORMWATER AT NEWCASTLE RACECOURSE

**THE STORMWATER HARVESTING SCHEME COULD OFFSET 55 MILLION LITRES OF DRINKING WATER PER YEAR. THIS IS THE EQUIVALENT OF THE ANNUAL WATER USE OF ABOUT 365 HOUSEHOLDS.**



## The Memorandum of Understanding

A tripartite MoU involving Hunter Water, Newcastle Jockey Club and City of Newcastle for a period of two years.

It provides the framework for commitment and collaboration by each party to investigate the feasibility of capturing stormwater for irrigation, the funding sources required to deliver such a scheme and the long-term ownership, operation and maintenance of the scheme.

## Stormwater capture and use – how it could work in Newcastle

A branch of the Styx Creek stormwater channel flows under the north-western corner of Newcastle Racecourse. During rain events, stormwater from the channel could be captured and diverted into storage ponds, proposed to be located in the Racecourse infield. An onsite treatment system would treat the stormwater to a standard required for irrigating the grass tracks and for dust suppression.

In addition to exploring the use of treated stormwater to irrigate the racetracks, the MoU parties will look at the possibility of installing pipelines to nearby, City of Newcastle-owned parks and sports fields where automatic irrigation sprinkler systems are already in place. The fields and ovals being investigated include Learmonth Park, Darling Street Oval, and Adamstown No.1 Oval.

Extensive consultation and engagement with sporting clubs and user groups, and the general community, would be required if the project is deemed viable to proceed.

Under the MoU arrangement, more detailed analysis will be undertaken to determine and quantify all costs and benefits, as well as potential funding streams. This will enable the parties to assess whether the scheme is viable to proceed.

## Potential drinking water saving and other benefits

Newcastle Jockey Club currently uses on average about 42 million litres per year of drinking water.

City of Newcastle uses about 13 million litres per year of drinking water to irrigate the three abovementioned sports grounds.

Combined, the Stormwater Harvesting Scheme could offset 55 million litres of drinking water per year. This is the equivalent of the annual water use of about 365 households.

The scheme supports the work already happening by NJC and CN to improve irrigation water efficiency, such as the installation of high-tech controllers with built-in weather stations that automatically switch off pre-set irrigation programs during rain periods.

It would support greening sporting fields and open spaces, and cooling the urban environment, for community enjoyment and wellbeing.