

ENVIRONMENT

**Caroline Riches**

Rubbish in roads to tackle waste crisis

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Sydney's Northern Beaches Council is the latest to trial asphalt containing plastics and other recycled materials.

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Sydney's Northern Beaches Council is the latest to trial asphalt containing plastics and other recycled materials, which it hopes will improve road quality and significantly reduce landfill.

The trial will use Plastiphalt, which is made with a combination of soft plastics, glass and waste toners from printer cartridges, mixed with traditional asphalt. While the product will look no different to standard asphalt, it will reuse a mammoth amount of waste material, Mayor Michael Regan told *Government News*.

A kilometre-stretch of a two-lane road converted with Plastiphalt will contain 500,000 plastic bags, 165,000 glass bottles and 12,000 toners.

"This would equate to 357.5 tonnes of recycled material used," said Cr Regan.

"We are always looking at ways we can improve our environment, and there is a lot of science going into this area, so I am pleased we are implementing this trial."

More than 300,000 tonnes of soft plastic are dumped into landfills in Australia every year. The country's waste crisis has become even more pressing in the wake



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of China's crackdown on imported waste.

The Plastiphalt trial on Sydney's Northern Beaches follows earlier trials in Sutherland Shire in the city's south and others in Victoria.

Results of previous trials have been promising, said Cr Regan.

"Other councils are satisfied with this product and there are no issues or residential concerns reported with the new pavement," he said.

"They also mentioned that the new asphalt looks no different to any new standard asphalt."

Trial to monitor cost and performance of Plastiphalt

Plastiphalt is expected to extend a road's life by improving its resistance to cracking and deformation, which will allow the road to handle higher volumes of traffic.

It will take several years to confirm the engineering benefits of the newly developed product, Mayor Regan added.

"In this trial, we will be monitoring the cost and performance of using Plastiphalt and any associated issues, such as micro-plastics entering the environment, which we will monitor very closely."

Plastiphalt is expected to cost an additional \$5 per tonne, with the program to be funded by the council's road resurfacing program.

Northern Beaches Council says it plans to use the Plastiphalt on a "select number of roads throughout the region" but is yet to identify which ones. The roads will be selected from the current road resurfacing program.

Mayor Regan said there was scope to increase the number of roads in future years if the trial is successful, provided the long-term performance meets with the suppliers claims.

"The roads using this product will need to meet the required engineering performance and condition parameters to ensure the product will perform within its intended limits," he said.

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Joy Baker says:

[November 5, 2019 at 10:10 am](#)

this is awesome and more councils should get on board

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