

MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN NATURAL RESOURCE & FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 18 April 2018
Location: Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre Studio, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4:00pm

The following members were present:

Clr Amanda Findley- Chairperson
Clr John Levett
Clr Patricia White
Ian Stewart
Michael Brungs
Dirk Treloar
Helen Moody
David Reynolds
Chris Grounds
Paul Beckett
Peter Hanson
Robyn Flack
John Bucinskas
John Murtagh
Jason Carson
Duncan Marshall

Others present:

Janis Natt – President, Safe Navigation Action Group
Fran Clements
Alasdair Stratton – Natural Resources & Floodplain Unit Manager
Kelie Clarke – Environmental Services Manager
Coralie Bell – Manager, Tourism
Phil Costello – Director, Planning Environment and Development
Tanvir Ahmed – Floodplain Engineer Project Officer
Mir Abdus Subhan – Floodplain & Stormwater Quality Engineer
Ali Sevenler – Senior Floodplain Engineer

Apologies / Leave of Absence

A Leave of Absence was received for Clr Alldrick. Apologies were received from Annie Boutland, Mike Clear, Kaye Milsom, Brett Stevenson, David Zerafa, Bill McInnes, and Danny Wiecek.

Confirmation of the Minutes

Recommendation

1. That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Natural Resource & Floodplain Management Committee held on Thursday 23 November 2017 be confirmed.
2. That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Natural Resource & Floodplain Management Committee held on Monday 22 January 2018 be confirmed.

RESOLVED (By consent)

1. That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Natural Resource & Floodplain Management Committee held on Thursday 23 November 2017 be confirmed, with the amendment that Clr White had been elected Chairperson of the Committee for that meeting only.
2. That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Natural Resource & Floodplain Management Committee held on Monday 22 January 2018 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declarations of Interest

Nil.

PRESENTATIONS

SN18.2 Tourism Discussion - 360 Model

**HPERM Ref:
D18/122503**

Coralie Bell (Manager, Tourism) and Kelie Clarke (Environmental Services Manager) conducted a brief workshop to discuss the environmental indicators for healthy tourism. Coralie described the Destination 360 Model, which aims to measure the sustainability of the tourism industry through indicators of a healthy community, healthy environment and healthy visitor experience, as well as through economic growth. A University of Wollongong research team is looking to work with Shoalhaven Tourism to develop the tools.

Concerns were raised that the committee had not been apprised in advance of the workshop format of this item, so they were not sufficiently prepared. Ian Stewart identified a possible conflict between tourism policy and practices, and visitation impact on the community, including its effect on the creative economy. Coralie clarified that the purpose was to redefine success in tourism policy, and to collate data which will provide leverage for grant funding applications.

Coralie asked attendees to nominate their top three environmental measures that consider should be addressed, drawing on their own experience. A 'hotspot' is not necessarily a place with environmental problems, but where a confluence of different issues is arising in the economy and community. Suggestions included:

- Sussex Inlet – water quality. Paul Beckett added that community respect is important for our local environment to demonstrate to visitors that we value this place and expect them to do so as well.
- Conjola. Coralie is looking at patterns of visitor trips and acknowledged that current consumer behaviour favours short trips.
- Upper reaches of the Shoalhaven River – the environmental impact of activities such as boating and wakeboarding.
- Catchments.

It was recognised that there are deficiencies in infrastructure to support visitors.

Indicators of impact by both locals and visitors included:

- Condition of foreshore vegetation
- Rubbish
- Dogs
- Erosion from boat wash
- Damage to assets – from flood, bushfire, ECLs

Clr White raised the impact of natural disasters such as flooding on tourism – is this something that can be measured? Coralie referred to adaptive management. Following an event like the substantial damage in 2016 to the walking tracks in the Bay & Basin area, for example, Council would seek grant funding.

Robyn Flack reported a very busy tourist season at Shoalhaven Heads. How can demand and supply be managed? Coralie confirmed that visitor information is being collated. The goal is more effective management, not to strangle demand.

Clr Levett proposed the need for a vision of tourism as an objective from which we can work backwards. Having an agreed vision will provide a focus for management.

Ian Stewart said our historical approach to tourism should be discussed as a general conversation first. We know of many examples of tourism having a significant impact on the environment; it does not make sense to be spending so much to attract more visitors when there are already such large numbers. He proposed that some of this budget could be allocated to investigating and managing impact. Coralie clarified that tourism marketing is being strategically aimed at increasing overnight and winter visitations, with the goal of improving economic prospects for sections of the community affected by weak jobs growth. She wishes to make the measurement tool a catalyst for improvement. Optimal procedures have been outlined following earlier meetings and community consultation workshops.

Clr Findley clarified that Tourism is asking this meeting to identify two or three representative issues so that ultimately grant funding can be secured to help manage the problems. The Committee however wants to know first what these are. She identified a difficulty with the terminology used by the respective sides. In summary, she advised that we have catchment management plans across the Shoalhaven, which can be broken down into pieces for our environmental management; Coralie is seeking to identify similar pieces for environmental tourism management.

Clr Findley acknowledged those members of the Committee who had not had an opportunity to speak, but drew the discussion to a close. She recommended that the Committee take away today's deliberations and return for a further discussion, which she will facilitate.

Comments for Tourism are to be sent by email to AllGovernance@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That:

1. The Tourism Manager circulate to this Committee the briefing notes and feedback to date on environmental issues.
2. NRM members are to consider the impact points between tourism and the environment and how they relate to hotspots and top issues, and in their considerations to send them to Coralie in writing at AllGovernance@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au.
3. That a further workshop be conducted with those interested members of the Committee.

CARRIED

REPORTS

SN18.3 Safe Navigation Action Group (SNAG) - Sussex Inlet Dredging Plan 2017

HPERM Ref:
D18/13156

Janis Natt, President of the Safe Navigation Action Group (SNAG), was present as an observer.

Clr White noted that SNAG had been unaware of this agenda item until the previous Saturday, and suggested that further discussion with the group and Council staff is needed in order to make a deputation to this committee. Following discussion the Committee resolved to arrange an opportunity for this engagement and bring the item back to a subsequent meeting.

Paul Beckett expressed that the dredging plan does not just address channel optimisation but is about much more. He was concerned that staff had missed opportunities for community consultation. He said that Council has permitted the bulldozers to go through the dunes for an 'eco camp' at the expense of the natural environment and wildlife.

Clr Findley asked the Committee for permission for Janis Natt to speak, which was granted.

Janis Natt described the very emotive situation that was being faced. The plan had been developed by a committee of five, who had met every fortnight for six months. Great care had been taken by Paul Beckett and the SNAG team to look at as many environmental issues as possible. Their foremost concern was for the safety of people using the waterway; safety factors had been reduced by the narrowing of the channel. For example, one of the dunes needing repair has high voltage power lines on it.

Phil Costello assured SNAG of the recognition of their work, and that the representation of this report to the Committee is in recognition of it. He clarified that accepting the report for information at this stage is not intended to sideline it.

John Bucinkas (OEH) noted that since the Coastal Reforms were finalised there has been a State government direction on the management framework for estuaries. The issues being discussed should be addressed in the Coastal Management Framework – OEH will require Council to deal with this in the Coastal Management Program. He added the Coastal Management Act requires Councils to consider community feedback.

Recommendation

That the Shoalhaven Natural Resources and Floodplain Management Committee receive the report on the Safe Navigation Action Group's Sussex Inlet Dredging Plan 2017 for information.

RECOMMENDATION (Clr White / Paul Beckett)

That:

1. The Committee receive the report on the Safe Navigation Action Group's Sussex Inlet Dredging Plan 2017 for information.
2. Further engagement between Council staff and SNAG take place.
3. Following the consultation between SNAG and SCC, that a further report be brought back to this Committee.
4. The Committee notes that any future dredging program needs to be strategically considered within Council's coastal management program.

CARRIED

SN18.4 Update on the review of the draft 2012 Coastal Zone Management Plan**HPERM Ref:
D18/73442**

Kelie Clarke presented a progress briefing on the Shoalhaven Coastal Management Plan (CZMP). Council had resolved in 2017 to update the CZMP, pursue certification and engage a Project Officer for this project. At that stage the government did not certify the plan. Council authorised updating in November, and this work is now ongoing. Certification is necessary to be eligible to apply for grant funding for major coastal projects.

Six months were given to complete the review, hold a public exhibition, allow for adoption by Council and assessment by OEH, then achieve certification. In recent months, staff have revised the structure and content of the plan, including sections dealing with community consultation, citywide strategies and local area action plans, and sought additional technical review.

The next steps will be:

11 May: place the draft CZMP on the Council hub.

15 May: report to Strategy & Assets Committee.

21 May to 15 June: Public Exhibition – also to be sent to consultative groups.

10 July :Briefing on submissions if required.

24 July : Report finalised CZMP plus details of submissions to Strategy & Assets Committee.

26 July: Refer adopted CZMP to OEH for Minister's certification.

Kelie and the team are seeking support from the Committee in getting the CZMP through to certification. The meeting commended Kelie and the staff but acknowledged the tight timeframe they face. John Bucinkas confirmed that OEH need three to four months to approve the plan once it has been provided to the Minister. If the CZMP is not certified by October, Council will lose its eligibility for the next round of the Coastal Grants Program.

Clr Findley was concerned that if Council does not have its plan with the OEH by end of July that opportunities for funding may be missed. Council staff have prepared numerous versions of the plan and she feels the government has let them down with this deadline. John clarified the timeframes had been set out in the 2016 legislation.

Among other coastal councils, Wollongong and Shellharbour have been through this process.

Grant funding for natural disaster response is not contingent on an action being in the plan, but other actions do have to be in the plan. This is a new rule.

Kelie stated that risk assessments had been carried out in 2004, and most actions are directed towards mitigating those risks.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Council receive the update report on the revision of the Shoalhaven Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) 2018 for information.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That Council receive the update report on the revision of the Shoalhaven Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) 2018 for information.

CARRIED

SN18.5 Citizen Science - Utilising Technology to Monitor the Coast

**HPERM Ref:
D18/80832**

Alasdair Stratton reported that Council staff had been given information by Mike Clear about Photomon, a photograph database app developed by the WA Northern Agricultural Catchments Council. It provides a way of collecting photos from citizens on changing dynamics in the environment. There is the opportunity take up a three-month free trial, collate the information, see how well it is received, test its ease of use, and if it meets our needs to potentially bring it inhouse.

Ian Stewart noted there is a similar app already, Nature Mapper, which has considerable support in the region. It is similarly citizen science based, trialled and tested. It was confirmed that Council staff have investigated Nature Mapper and are interested in using it, but for different purposes.

We could monitor the changes over time to an entrance using the app – Photomon is specifically designed for these kinds of applications. Regarding whether it is live, offering realtime collection of data, or collated, we know the photo are collated in the database, but not sure if live. One of its main attractions is the ability to overlay photos in transparency to see changes.

Chris Grounds said there is a huge amount of databases and apps databases reporting information about the environment. Birdlife Australia has an app, for example, and the Atlas of Living Australia. OEH have their own database.

Helen Moody suggested avoiding the term ‘citizen science’, which is a buzzword to attract children, and may not represent the more specific users who would be involved in a monitoring project. It was confirmed we will approach those with a special interest, rather than any person providing data.

Recommendation

That:

1. Council endorse the opportunity to engage in a citizen science project by taking up the three-month free trial offered for the Photomon App;
2. Council seek an expression of interest through the Shoalhaven Natural Resources & Floodplain Management Committee, Council Consultative Bodies and Shoalhaven Bushcare Groups for volunteers to be involved in the citizen science project via the Photomon App; and
3. A further report be provided to the Shoalhaven Natural Resources & Floodplain Committee and Council on the outcomes of the trial in order to determine whether to proceed with a full subscription for future coastal monitoring.

RECOMMENDATION (By consent)

That:

1. Council endorse the opportunity to engage in a citizen science project by taking up the three-month free trial offered for the Photomon App;
2. Council seek an expression of interest through the Shoalhaven Natural Resources & Floodplain Management Committee, Community Consultative Bodies and Shoalhaven Bushcare Groups for volunteers to be involved in the citizen science project via the Photomon App; and
3. A further report be provided to the Shoalhaven Natural Resources & Floodplain Committee and Council on the outcomes of the trial in order to determine whether to proceed with a full subscription for future coastal monitoring.

CARRIED

SN18.6 Update on the Review of the Lake Tabourie Entrance Management Policy**HPERM Ref:
D18/89903**

Ali Sevenler reported that Council is reviewing the policy. The first stage of community consultation has been done – the options are in the report. The feedback was found to be equally distributed across the options. Staff are now measuring the options and arriving at a cost benefit analysis. There were no strong community requests for specific items. We will determine what is practical that can be implemented now, and the consultant is modelling the options in a consultation document. There is to be a second round community consultation in the next couple of months.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Committee receive the report on the review of the Lake Tabourie Entrance Management Policy for information.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That Committee receive the report on the review of the Lake Tabourie Entrance Management Policy for information

CARRIED

SN18.7 Update on the Shoalhaven River Levee Flood Damage Restoration 2017 Project**HPERM Ref:
D18/92311**

Mir Abdus Subhan provided a brief update on flood damage. Council had recently engaged the NSW Soil Conservation Service to repair the Shoalhaven River Levee. Previously, Public Works Advisory had been engaged to project manage the Shoalhaven River Levee Flood Damage Restoration 2017 Project on behalf of Council.

It is expected that the contractor will mobilise their machinery from next week for a completion in September 2018. Currently they have submitted preliminary documents and are about to start stockpiling materials. They will repair levee defects at Terara and Comerong Island in this stage, with Numbaa levee defects being addressed at the second stage.

Council received NDRRA grant funding for the flood damage sustained in August 2015. Council then submitted a revised NDRRA claim for the August 2015 flood and a fresh claim for the June 2016 flood. Council will also partially contribute to the project. NDRRA is a joint initiative of the Federal Government and NSW State Government.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Committee receive the report for information.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Committee receive the report for information.

CARRIED

SN18.8 South Mollymook Beach Cost Benefit Distribution Analysis (CBA) Coastal Hazard Assessment

HPERM Ref: D18/102646

Alasdair Stratton provided a presentation which outlined the South Mollymook Beach Cost Benefit and Distribution Analysis. The rock seawall was constructed in 1993, and sustained damage over time and particularly in 2016. A hazard survey in 2006 had confirmed that the southern section of Mollymook was a high-risk coastal hazard. Mollymook is also an 'erosion hotspot'. Various options have been considered, and following community consultation Council commissioned a report on foreshore stabilisation at South Mollymook Beach. Funding of \$50,000 was matched by Council to undertake a Cost Benefit Analysis and coastal hazard distribution analysis. Conducting a Cost Benefit Analysis is now a requirement of the OEH. The aim is to improve our understanding of the economic implications of various management options, and to assist decisions on future cost sharing arrangements and funding.

Current work involves emergency works to protect the failing rock wall. The hill is stable. It was confirmed the bedrock lies approximately 1.5m below the mean water mark.

Clr Findley said it will be interesting to see the cost sharing arrangements for this work.

This issue highlights the importance of maintaining awareness of the 'next storm' – increasing or need for environmental monitoring and to and protect assets. There is also the factor of private individuals deciding to locate themselves directly on the coast.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Council receive the South Mollymook foreshore protection structure, Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) "initial findings report" for information.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That Council receive the South Mollymook foreshore protection structure, Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) "initial findings report" for information.

CARRIED

ADDENDUM REPORTS

SN18.9 Technical peer review of the River Road Foreshore Shoalhaven Heads: Assessment of the Coastal Management Options Report by MHL.

HPERM Ref: D18/75302

Kelie Clarke explained that Council had sought the peer review as it had applied for large grant for foreshore works. The assessment report had been produced by the UNSW Water Research Laboratory, and had recommended that one section undergo works. Council subsequently engaged the Manly Hydraulics Laboratory to review, who agreed with the approach, and recommended including the additional design elements to increase resilience.

Robyn Flack agreed it was a very worthwhile exercise obtaining peer review. She stated that the River Road channel is problematic, identified as far back as the report of 1999. She had raised this at the Committee meeting in September 2017, and referred to previous reports. She requested the addition of a further recommendation 3 on the viability of the channel. She added that the present document is dated 20 February, and the Committee should have had it before now. She advised that sufficient data is available for a desktop review by experts.

Kelie clarified that there had been several drafts of the 20 February document, and the date on the document has not kept up with drafts. She said Council is looking at sourcing sand as part of beach nourishment / dry notch work. She spoke against including a part 3 as the grant guidelines are very specific, and there is a risk of not meeting our milestone requirements. We can investigate

long term sources of sand as a side project to the recommendation. Council had been presented with dredging as one option, so was obliged to look into it. We need to understand the channel and how it works. The advice received by Council was that it is not a simple desktop assessment.

Dirk Treloar asked about the use of sand already on site. The response was that we need a process study into how this would affect the estuary if sand is moved. Sand will be needed over time to nourish the beach.

Phil Costello clarified the proposal is a short-term option that will not interfere with other long-term options. Robyn stressed the need to design for the longer term.

Chris Grounds added that works need to be carried out at particular time of the year. Kelie confirmed that Council is working on that basis.

Regarding the timeframe, Council has just received formal grant notification, and is to formally accept it in two weeks' time. Cllr Findley was concerned this may be too late. Up until this time the Shoalhaven Heads community has had significant consultation. There is a need to balance the process of consultation, the scoping of the project, with what is being asked for. If SHET wish to continue to move the navigation channel south, it has to be separate. We have an opinion that we move the channel to the south that will provide a better outcome. Staff have advised that the movement of that channel will take extensive planning and assessment. Do we use the funds we have to address the initial issue of stormwater, and then come back at a later time to consider the matter of moving the channel as part of a larger plan and consultation process?

Robyn clarified she was not suggesting to move anything, but that the channel may not be viable. It is a dead channel, and this is recognised as such by experts. We should not introduce new assets or dredge for navigation. The sands would have to continue to be replenished in years to come.

Recommendation:

That Council

1. Receive the Manly Hydraulics Laboratory technical review of the WRL River Road Coastal Option Report titled *MHL2595 – Review of River Road Foreshore, Shoalhaven Heads: Assessment of Coastal Management Options Report dated February 2018*, for information; and
2. Subject to availability of funding, incorporate the following technical information in the detailed design of any future coastal erosion remediation control structure at the River Road foreshore precinct:
 - a. Coastal erosion remediation structure be designed for a more conservative large river entrance opening to reduce the risk of failure.
 - b. A minimum design life of 25 years for coastal erosion remediation structure be adopted.

RECOMMENDATION (By consent)

That Council

1. Receive the Manly Hydraulics Laboratory technical review of the WRL River Road Coastal Option Report titled *MHL2595 – Review of River Road Foreshore, Shoalhaven Heads: Assessment of Coastal Management Options Report dated February 2018*, for information; and
2. Subject to availability of funding, incorporate the following technical information in the detailed design of any future coastal erosion remediation control structure at the River Road foreshore precinct:
 - a. Coastal erosion remediation structure be designed for a more conservative large river entrance opening to reduce the risk of failure.
 - b. A minimum design life of 25 years for coastal erosion remediation structure be adopted.

CARRIED

SN18.12 Additional Item - River Road Channel

Discussion of the River Road channel would have to go to Council as it involves budgetary implications. It needs to be considered in the context of works in the whole Shoalhaven.

Kelie suggested she meet with Robyn to clarify the channel's viability. If we go back to NHL they may be able to investigate. We will have to work out budget, time, and impact matters.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That Council arrange a meeting with Robyn Flack, Council staff and members of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce to clarify if the navigation channel viability fits with the funding model.

CARRIED

SN18.10 Undertaking a Scientific Analysis of the Shoalhaven Dredging Program**HPERM Ref:**
D18/80719

Clr White recommended the report should be received for information only at this stage, as point 2 of the recommendation will all form part of coastal management program. The Committee agreed.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receive the report for information; and
2. Include the development and implementation of a scientifically based environmental monitoring and evaluation program in the project brief and design of any future dredging projects and other large-scale Council projects. This will ensure that:
 - the implementation and success of projects can be monitored and evaluated;
 - reduce the risk of failure of environmental controls and mitigation measures and potential increased project costs;
 - ensure compliance with legislative obligations; and
 - learn valuable lessons for future projects to avoid and minimise potential environmental and community impacts and therefore save resources, time and money.

The scale of an environmental monitoring and evaluation program would be dependent upon the scale of the proposed project and potential direct and indirect environmental impacts.

RECOMMENDATION (By consent)

That Council receive the report for information.

CARRIED

SN18.11 Proposed Millards Creek and Currarong Creek Flood Study Projects**HPERM Ref:**
D18/68633

Ali Sevenler presented the background and outline of the project. Council has received funding from OEH for this flood management study. The grant application had not initially been funded but it was accepted from the reserve list.

The estimated project timeframe is as follows:

By July 2018: Prepare technical briefs, forward them to local, region, NRFC and SES for feedback; Prepare tender documentation; Appoint successful tenderer(s).

By October 2019: Project familiarisation; Review Existing Data; Preparing and managing Survey Brief; Development of hydrologic model; Development of hydraulic model; Technical steering group and community engagement; Consultation with local, region, NRFC and SES for feedback.

By December 2019: Draft flood studies for peer review; Public exhibition; Finalise flood studies; Council adopt flood studies.

Council is currently preparing the technical briefs and tender documentation. We plan to advertise the tender by May/mid-June, and engage the successful tender end of July. The studies are expected to be completed by December 2019.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Accept the OEH grant of \$88,666 toward the cost of the flood study for Millards Creek;
2. Allocate \$44,333 from the 2017/18 Flood Programme budget (Job Number 15706) as Council's contribution to the Millards Creek Flood Study;
3. Accept the OEH grant of \$77,000 toward the cost of the flood study for Currarong Creek; and
4. Allocate \$38,500 from the 2017/18 Flood Programme budget (Job Number 15706) as Council's contribution to the Currarong Creek Flood Study.

RECOMMENDATION (By consent)

That Council:

1. Accept the OEH grant of \$88,666 toward the cost of the flood study for Millards Creek;
2. Allocate \$44,333 from the 2017/18 Flood Programme budget (Job Number 15706) as Council's contribution to the Millards Creek Flood Study;
3. Accept the OEH grant of \$77,000 toward the cost of the flood study for Currarong Creek; and
4. Allocate \$38,500 from the 2017/18 Flood Programme budget (Job Number 15706) as Council's contribution to the Currarong Creek Flood Study.

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

Ian Stewart advised that he had attended the workshop yesterday on Managing Environmental Change Through Planning for Transformative Pathways. A small number of people from this Committee had been present, and a larger number from the Sustainable Futures Committee. Scenario planning exercise comprising six workshops over 12 months. He suggested that members should participate.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 7.12pm.

Clr Amanda Findley
CHAIRPERSON