

Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 12 March, 2025
Location: Jervis Bay Room, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

Please note: Council's Code of Meeting Practice permits the electronic recording and broadcast of the proceedings of meetings of the Council which are open to the public. Your attendance at this meeting is taken as consent to the possibility that your image and/or voice may be recorded and broadcast to the public.

Agenda

1. **Meeting Conduct Statement**
2. **Acknowledgement of Country**
3. **Apologies**
4. **Confirmation of Minutes**
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5. **Declaration of Interests**
6. **Reports**
 - SH25.1 Action Table Report - Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce 12 March 2025.....6
7. **General Business**
 - SH25.2 Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce - Members Request - Update From Staff
The Members of the Taskforce have requested an update from staff on the following items:
 1. An update on the Entrance Management Plan for flooding and particularly the “evidence based technical review” of the trigger points.
 2. Coast Management Program – Lower Shoalhaven River – details of feedback (closed 10th February) and next steps.
 3. Plan for removal of the flood debris, especially around River Road Reserve.
 4. Plan for removal of excess sand at Shoalhaven Heads beach.
 5. Lodgement of the Permit to remove Mangroves from the front of the Council caravan park.

Membership

Clr Selena Clancy - Chairperson
All Councillors
Mr Gareth Ward MP
Mr Phil Guy
Mr Brian Allen
Ms Jessica Zealand
Mr Rob Russell
Ms Natalie Lloyd
Ms Robyn Flack
Ms Jan Turbill

Quorum – Five (5) – One Councillor as Chair or acting Chair and four Community Members

Purpose:

The purpose of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce (SHET) is to act as an advisory and representative group on matters relating to the Shoalhaven River, its estuary and entrance at Shoalhaven Heads.

Role:

- To receive and disseminate information and updates to and from the Shoalhaven Heads community about the management of the Shoalhaven Heads estuary.
- To provide and receive information to the Northern CMP Advisory Committee in the preparation of the Lower Shoalhaven River CMP.
- To provide and receive information to the Northern Floodplain Risk Management Committee in the development and preparation of the Lower Shoalhaven Flood Risk Management Study/Plan.
- When the Lower Shoalhaven River CMP is adopted by Council on behalf of the community, the SHET will be disestablished.

MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN HEADS ESTUARY TASKFORCE

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 27 November 2024
Location: Jervis Bay Room, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.06pm

The following members were present:

Mayor White – Chairperson – left meeting 5.32pm
Clr Matthew Norris
Clr Peter Wilkins – left meeting 5.32pm
Clr Selena Clancy (Remotely) – left meeting 5.41pm
Mr Brian Allen
Mr Phil Guy
Ms Jessica Zealand
Mr Rob Russell (Remotely)
Ms Jan Turbill
Ms Robyn Flack

Others present:

Ms Liza Butler MP – Member for South Coast – (Remotely)
Mr Gareth Ward MP – Member for Kiama (Remotely) – joined meeting 5.01pm
Mr James Ruprai – Acting Chief Executive Officer
Mr Michael Roberts – Manager Environmental Services
Mr Nigel Smith – Lead Coastal Management
Mr Michael Berzins – Manager Works & Services

Mayor White gave an Acknowledgement to Country

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Nil

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (Robyn Flack / Phil Guy)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce held on Wednesday 26 June 2024 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declaration of Interests

Nil

PRESENTATIONS

SH24.9 Ongoing Item - Update From City Services

HPERM Ref:
D24/359737

Mr Michael Berzins – Manager Works & Services updated the Committee and advised the following

- The build-up of debris from flooding events, has now been removed and ongoing mowing has commenced and maintenance has resumed as per normal.
- There is still some debris down towards the water line which has yet to be removed
- The shared user path from Carters Corner through to the existing path has now been completed.
- There was concern from the resident of 11 River Road regarding obstruction of view, however the cycle fence has been installed per the design and Council hasn't received any negative feedback.
- It was noted that a section of the new footpath may have been impacted by poor drainage, staff have taken this on notice and will provide an update to the next meeting.

SH24.10 Presentation - Entrance Management and Flooding

HPERM Ref:
D24/497246

Ms Robyn Flack presented to the Taskforce on Entrance Management and Flooding at Shoalhaven Heads.

A copy of the presentation will be provided to members via email.

During the presentation, members discussed the following points:

- Data collected by residents,
- Trigger levels – For more information: https://headsnews.com.au/water_levels/
- Opening of the entrance
- The Coastal Management Plan and
- Peak flood heights.

Note: Mr Gareth Ward MP joined the meeting remotely at 5.01pm

It was noted that there are a number of parties that need to be involved in any potential solution for flood mitigation.

RESOLVED (Robyn Flack / Jan Turbill)

That Council seek the assistance of the NSW State Government through the Member for South Coast, supported by the Member for Kiama, to ask the Premier of NSW to:

1. Nominate an advisor to work in close consultation with the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce, a Committee of the Shoalhaven City Council, to discuss actions and formulate a future strategy for the management of the Shoalhaven River Entrance.
2. The nominated Advisor provide a quarterly update of the progress to the Parliament and the

Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce.

3. The Acting CEO action the above recommendation in agreement with the Member for South Coast and Member for Kiama.

CARRIED

REPORTS

SH24.11 Action Table Report - Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce 27 November 2024

HPERM Ref:
D24/359744

It was noted that a meeting will be scheduled for 2 December 2024 to look at the National Disaster Relief with Clr Clancy, Phil Guy and Robyn Flack to discuss the removal of flood debris, there is an accumulation of flood debris in the foreshore.

It was noted that staff have commenced an application for a Fisheries permit, which is estimated to take 2-3 weeks for processing.

The Committee discussed the flood debris and processes for removal including permit and MOU.

Mayor White left during discussion, the time being 5.32pm

Peter Wilkins left the meeting, the time being 5.32pm

Clr Norris assumed the role of Chairperson, the time being 5.32pm

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce:

1. Accept and receive the Action Table Report (Attachment 1) for information.
2. Acknowledge the following actions as complete and remove from the action table:
 - a. SH24.8 - Additional Item - Action SH24.6 - Ongoing - City Services Update - Investigate - flood debris - River Road

RESOLVED (Jessica Zealand / Phil Guy)

That the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce:

1. Accept and receive the Action Table Report (Attachment 1) for information.
2. Acknowledge the following actions as complete and remove from the action table:
 - a. SH24.8 - Additional Item - Action SH24.6 - Ongoing - City Services Update - Investigate - flood debris - River Road

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

Note: Clr Clancy left the meeting during discussions in General Business, the time being 5.41pm

The following was discussed during General Business:

Shoalhaven River Entrance Trigger Review

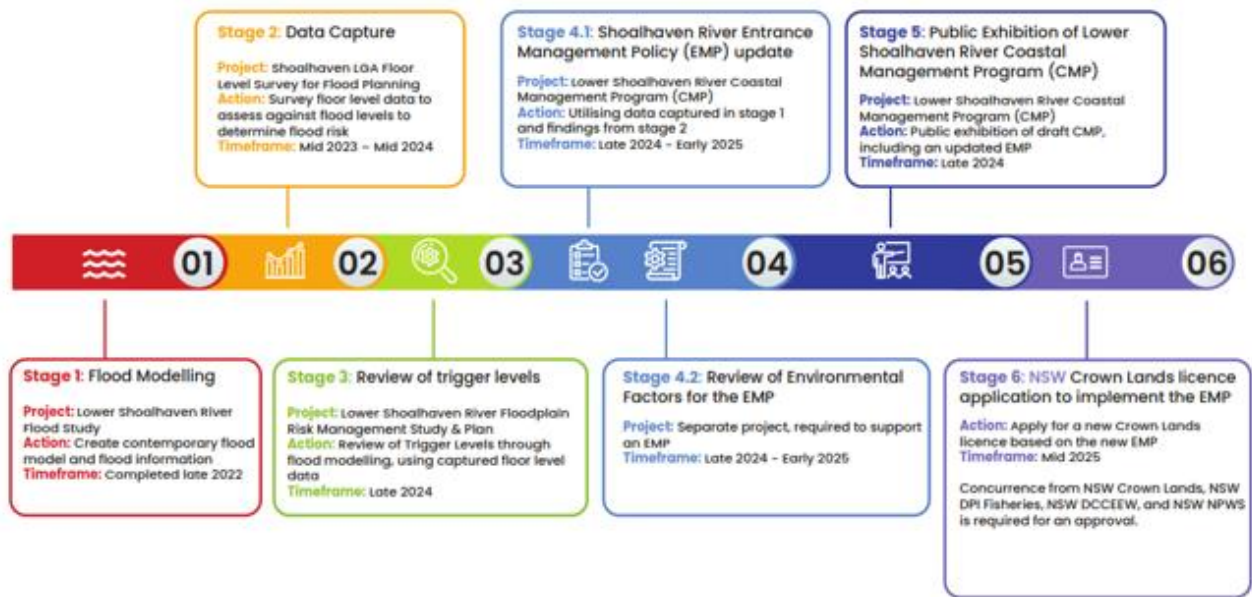
- Rhelm have completed a technical review of the Shoalhaven River EMP triggers. A DRAFT memo has been completed, issued to Council, and is currently being reviewed by Council and DCCEEW. This technical review included assessing a range of trigger levels between 1.5m AHD and 2.6m AHD and other management measures such as berm maintenance and lowering – in conjunction with maintaining the dry notch. The review has also looked into pre-emptive opening on a Flood Watch and Flood Warning.
- Feedback has been provided to Rhelm today to allow the memo to be updated based on agency feedback.
- If any changes to trigger levels or management measures are recommended, this may result in environmental impacts needing to be assessed.
- The preparation of an REF for the Shoalhaven River EMP is underway. The outcomes from the Shoalhaven River Entrance Trigger Review will be considered in the REF.
- Once the REF has been completed (approx. 4 weeks after the Shoalhaven River Entrance Trigger Review memo has been completed and provide to Water Technology) the key recommendations and outcomes will be communicated to the community. This is important to ensure State Government agency feedback has been provided on whether the REF is supported. Noting that Council can only implement an EMP in accordance with policy and legislation authorisations provided by the NSW Government.
- Afterwards a NSW Crown Lands licence will be applied for based on the DRAFT EMP and REF. Any changes to entrance management cannot be implemented until a NSW Crown Lands licence has been received. It is also noted that a threatened species permit will also be required after the NSW Crown Lands licence has been received.

The following is noted regarding the Shoalhaven River Entrance approach. See Image 1.

- Stage 1: Flood Modelling. COMPLETED in 2022.
- Stage 2: Data Capture. Flood Level Survey project. COMPLETED in June 2024.
- Stage 3: Review of trigger levels. ALMOST COMPLETE and on track to be completed by late 2024 timeframe.
- Stage 4.1: Shoalhaven River EMP Update. ALMOST COMPLETE. A DRAFT EMP has been prepared. To be finalised after Stage 3 memo completed. On track for completion by late 2024 to early 2025 timeframe.
- Stage 4.2: REF for EMP. UNDERWAY and will be completed following outcomes from the Stage 3 memo. On track for completion by early 2025 timeframe.
- Stage 5: Public Exhibition of Lower Shoalhaven River CMP. UNDERWAY. Noting that the EMP is not being exhibited as part of the CMP.
- Stage 6: NSW Crown Lands Licence application to implement EMP. All preceding tasks are on track to allow this to be completed by mid-2025 timeframe.

In summary, a lot of great work has been completed and currently Council is on track to complete the EMP update as per the timeframe communicated earlier this year.

Image 1



Letter of Support – Mangrove Removal

Ms Robyn Flack advised the Taskforce that the Native Botanic Garden, Riverwatch and a representative from Jerrinja LALC have offered a letter of support to allow the community to remove the mangroves to ensure the community of Shoalhaven Heads are able to retain the area for community use.

There being no further business the meeting concluded, the time being 6.00pm.

Clr Matthew Norris
CHAIRPERSON

SH25.1 Action Table Report - Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce 12 March 2025

HPERM Ref: D25/13528

Department: Business Assurance & Risk

Approver: Lindsay Usher, Acting Director - City Development

Attachments: 1. Action Table Report - 12 March 2025 [↓](#)

Reason for Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce with a progress report on outstanding/completed actions.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce:

1. Accept and receive the Action Table Report (Attachment 1) for information.
2. Acknowledge the following actions as complete and remove from the action table:
 - a. SH24.10 - Presentation Entrance Management and Flooding - Seek Assistance NSW Government - Member South Coast - Nominate Advisor to Discuss Actions & Formulate Future Strategy - Quarterly Progress Reports

Options

1. As recommended.

Implications: The Action Table will be received and updated to reflect recently completed actions.

2. That the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce note the update to the Action Table and request more information.

Implications: Additional information as requested will be provided to the group at the next meeting.

Background

At the meeting held on 20 March 2024, it was requested that a list of all actions arising from the meeting be provided to be considered at the next meeting. Following this meeting, staff decided to begin providing an on-going action table report so the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce can keep a record of outstanding and completed actions. This report is to update the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce on outstanding/completed actions from previous meetings.

Attachment 1 provides information regarding the status of actions from previous meetings, including items which are completed or still in progress. Staff can provide an update at the meeting, should members have any further questions on the status of actions.

Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce			Action Sheets Report
Meeting Date: 27/11/2024	Item No: SH24.10	Officer: Hayden, Donna	Completed: 25 February 2025
Title: Presentation Entrance Management and Flooding - Seek Assistance NSW Government - Member South Coast - Nominate Advisor to Discuss Actions & Formulate Future Strategy - Quarterly Progress Reports			
<p>RESOLVED (Robyn Flack / Jan Turbill)</p> <p>That Council seek the assistance of the NSW State Government through the Member for South Coast, supported by the Member for Kiama, to ask the Premier of NSW to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nominate an advisor to work in close consultation with the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce, a Committee of the Shoalhaven City Council, to discuss actions and formulate a future strategy for the management of the Shoalhaven River Entrance. 2. The nominated Advisor provide a quarterly update of the progress to the Parliament and the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce. 3. The Acting CEO action the above recommendation in agreement with the Member for South Coast and Member for Kiama. <p>CARRIED</p>		<p>Notes:</p> <p>13 Jan 2025 3:42pm Fischer, Ben - Reallocation Action reassigned to Hayden, Donna by Fischer, Ben - Hi Donna - The action specifies that this resolution will be actioned by the Acting CEO.</p> <p>25 February 2025 11:14am Hayden, Donna – Completion Letter of request for support has been sent to Liza Butler and Gareth Ward's office on 25 Feb 2025</p>	