

Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce Meeting Record (Meeting 7)

Location:	Microsoft Teams
Date:	16 March 2021
Time	Started at: 2.30pm Closed at: 3.19pm
Chair	Dr. Phil Watson

Members present:

Phil Watson, Paul Donaldson – Central Coast Council, Catherine Knight – DPIE Crown Lands (on behalf of Greg Sullivan), Sharon Molloy – DPIE Environment Energy and Science, Maria Plytarias – DPIE Planning, Malcolm Ryan – Central Coast Council,

Observers present:

Michelle Fletcher – Minister Hancock’s Office, Zoie Magann – Central Coast Council (Minute Taker)

Item 1 Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Apologies

Apologies received: Adam Crouch MP – State Government, Greg Sullivan – DPIE Crown Lands

The Chair welcomed the Taskforce and completed an Acknowledgement of Country. It was noted the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of minute taking.

Item 2 Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures were received.

Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record

The Taskforce confirmed the minutes from Meeting 6 held 16 February 2021, which were distributed to members on 2 March 2021. The finalised minutes were also forwarded to the Minister’s Office to comply with reporting requirements in accordance the adopted Terms of Reference (TORs).

Item 4 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

The Taskforce discussed outstanding matters arising from previous meetings as summarised below.

- 4.1 Crown Lands update on management of residual land parcels: Catherine Knight reiterated matter is complex and subject to further investigation. Next step is to liaise with NSW Trustee and Guardian about ownership of parcels and assess if *bona vacantia* applies (ownerless property which passes to Crown). The option of proposing a road reserve, as suggested by Council at the last meeting, will also be explored. A further update to be provided at the next meeting.
- 4.2 Update on NSW Government / Council sand nourishment discussions: investigations are ongoing concerning the re-use of suitable sand from major capital infrastructure projects as a source of beach nourishment sand for Wamberal. Secondly, we are awaiting the commencement of feasibility work to be undertaken on accessing the large sand source in the South Arm of the Hunter River.

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The commencement of the consulting engagement to undertake the feasibility work is currently awaiting the outcome of a grant application to DPIE's Coastal and Estuary Grants Program. A further update to be provided at the next meeting.

4.3 Update on grant variation submission and approval: Grant variation request was submitted by Central Coast Council on 3 March 2021 and is being prioritised for assessment in accordance with DPIE processes.

4.4 Update on Project Manager position hand over: Phil Watson attended meeting with Council management on 4 March 2021 to discuss Project Manager role that will be vacated by Paul Donaldson on 19 March 2021. Central Coast Council are still exploring options to ensure position is filled by right person but confirmed Council representation at meetings will continue in interim. Noted there are some significant changes with Council management as Malcolm Ryan (Chief Operating Officer) and Rik Hart (Interim Chief Executive Officer) will finish up on 16 April 2021 in preparation for new Chief Executive Officer. The Administrator will also finish up on 30 April 2021, and Councillors are expected to return following the Suspension Order.

Action: Central Coast Council to facilitate filling of Project Manager role vacated by Paul Donaldson.

Item 5 Update from the Project Manager

Paul Donaldson (Central Coast Council) provided an update as the Project Manager.

The following key points were noted:

- Paul has largely been focusing on finalising handover in preparation for his departure from Council and appointment of a new Project Manager.
- Next stage of draft MHL reports expected to be provided for review at end of this month. Noted there are some delays with progress by Councils consultants which need to be addressed. Project Manager will continue to meet with consultants to see how further resource impacts can be mitigated to ensure project outcomes remain on track.
- Planning for next phase of community consultation (presenting draft concept design to community for feedback) is underway. The timing of this next phase of engagement is somewhat constrained while waiting for outcomes of MHL study and grant variation, but hope these matters are resolved shortly.
- The Chair thanked Paul for his work on behalf of Taskforce and wished him all the best in future endeavours.

Item 6 Update from the Chair

Phil Watson provided an update as Chair.

The following key points were noted:

- There are concerns in community about continued delays with the finalisation of the technical studies and progress of project. Noting the consulting engagement for the technical studies was originally due

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to be completed in November 2020 but some draft reports are yet to be completed and reviewed. Important to keep commitments to community and deliver solution in timely manner.

- Reiterated importance of attending to an overarching summary from the various technical reports currently being prepared that will be suitable for the community as requested at last meeting. The summary should draw together key learnings of the various related investigations being finalised.
- Concern raised around the internal resourcing necessary to drive this project following Paul's departure and a potential loss of momentum whilst a new Project Manager is sought and a new Council CEO who commences on 12th April 2021 is bought up to speed on this Project and the Taskforce. There is potential for the project to lose momentum within Council at a crucial time with key investigations being finalised and community consultation nearing with further corporate knowledge being lost within Council.
- Noted that an update on the Wamberal Project went to Council's [9 March 2021 Ordinary Council Meeting](#). Concerns have been raised by the community around uncertainty regarding the projects progress. I had fielded calls from the community and media regarding the inference that council was already presiding over detailed plans and making decisions when this is clearly not the case. Phil did an interview with ABC Central Coast Radio to clarify some points and confirm that no decisions have been made yet. Phil also highlighted that the next phase of consultation will be going ahead in due course.
- Noted some strong viewpoints in the community and persistent level of misinformation that is prevalent concerning what is being proposed and the limited understanding of the role and impacts of various protection structures within the physical coastal process setting of the Wamberal embayment. These issues serve to highlight the critical importance of Council and MHL finalising the range of technical studies currently underway ASAP and the associated upcoming community consultation proposed.

Item 7 General Business, Review of Task Log, Next Meeting Date and Close

The Taskforce reviewed the task log and noted action updates.

- Phil advised a further minor change is required in the Terms of Reference as Lee Shearer's appointment as Local Recovery Coordinator ended before the Taskforce met. This means the membership composition point needs to be removed.

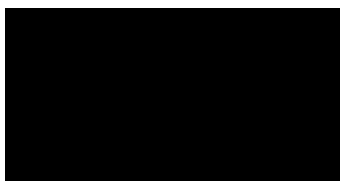
Action: Terms of Reference to be updated with further changes as discussed and re-circulated to members. Amended copy to be placed on Council's website once provided.

- Paul noted there may be challenges from Council's perspective as there continues to be significant reduction in resources. While the project remains a priority for Council, some recalibration may be required once the internal structure is finalised. Funding of the project remains an issue – Council has limited capacity to accept new assets in current financial situation. The Taskforce noted the dire financial situation Council faces and agreed all levels of government need to consider how the project can be supported, as emergency management is expensive and unpredictable for all involved.

The meeting closed at 3.19pm

Next Meetings: Tuesday 13 April 2021
2.30pm – 4pm
Microsoft Teams

Minutes finalised and endorsed 25 March 2021.



Dr Phil Watson
Chair
Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce

Action Log

Action Number	Meeting Date	Group Name	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Date Action Completed	Status
4	11/08/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Phil Watson and Gary Murphy to meet monthly (or on as needs basis) with affected landowners' representatives	Phil Watson / Gary Murphy (CCC)	Ongoing		Standing Agenda Item
14	8/09/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Paul Donaldson/Gary Murphy to circulate draft Coastal Erosion Policy to Taskforce members out of session.	Paul Donaldson (CCC) / Gary Murphy (CCC)	13/10: still underway - awaiting outcomes of MHL study		Pending
19	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Paul Donaldson to provide update on potential sand sources following discussions with HCCDC contact.	Paul Donaldson (CCC)			Standing Agenda Item
26	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Paul Donaldson to finalise Project Plan and Governance Plan endorsed by Council	Paul Donaldson (CCC)			Pending
34	16/02/2021	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Phil Watson (DPIE) to facilitate the establishment of a sand nourishment working group between Northern Beaches Council and Central Coast Council. The Group to consider proposals for new sources of sand from various significant proposed infrastructure projects.	Phil Watson	16/3/21: awaiting direction from Transport for NSW - still pending		Pending
35	16/02/2021	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Sharon Molloy (DPIE), or delegate, to follow up on Council's grant variation request with view to consider fast-tracking to ensure engagement piece can proceed in a timely fashion.	Sharon Molloy (DPIE)	Update provided at 16 March 2021 meeting	16/03/2021	Complete
36	16/02/2021	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Phil Watson (DPIE), Malcolm Ryan (CCC), Paul Donaldson (CCC) and other senior Council staff to discuss filling of the vacated Project Manager position on the Taskforce.	Phil Watson / Malcolm Ryan (CCC) / Paul Donaldson (CCC)	Meeting held 2 March 2021	2/03/2021	Complete
37	16/02/2021	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Terms of Reference will be updated with changes as discussed and re-circulated to members. Amended copy to be placed on Council's website once provided.	Phil Watson		2/03/2021	Complete
38	16/02/2021	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Update Taskforce on management of residual land parcels, incorporating advice about road reserve option suggested by Malcolm Ryan.	Greg Sullivan (DPIE)			Pending
39	16/03/2021	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Terms of Reference to be updated with further changes as discussed and re-circulated to members. Amended copy to be placed on Council's website once provided.	Phil Watson			Pending
40	16/03/2021	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Central Coast Council to facilitate filling of Project Manager role vacated by Paul Donaldson	Central Coast Council			Pending