

Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce

Meeting Number: 1

Location : Microsoft Teams

Date : 11 AUGUST 2020

MINUTES

Attendees:

Taskforce Members	Affiliation
Phil Watson (PW)	Chair
Gary Murphy (GM)	Central Coast Council
Adam Crouch MP (AC)	NSW Government
Sharon Molloy (SM)	DPIE Environment Energy and Science
Lee Shearer (LS)	Resilience NSW
Jamie Murray (JM)	DPIE Crown Land
Maria Plytarias (MP)	DPIE Planning
Michelle Fletcher (MF)	Minister Hancock's Office (temporary Secretariat until Central Coast Council Project Manager Appointed)

1. Welcome and apologies: Chair

PW opened first meeting of Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (the Taskforce) at 3.00pm with all members present.

Acknowledged the auspiciousness of this first meeting and appreciation for the experience and expertise of the group. Introductions and setting of the scene. Context of Minister Hancock setting up the Taskforce, providing a great opportunity to work alongside and guide Central Coast Council to deliver a key piece of coastal infrastructure to remove this coastal hazard threat. It is anticipated that an implemented solution might be possible over the course of the next 12-18 months and that hopefully the group will be able to look back toward the end of next year and be proud of its contribution toward a finished product. That is the challenge that lies in front of the group.

Chair reiterated the key role of the group to provide Central Coast Council (Council) with whatever advice, guidance and support required from a NSW Government perspective. There are a lot of outstanding people on the group providing a necessary forum for the exchange of high level information, professional experience, guidance and advice with tasks relevant to implementing the protection solution for Wamberal which forms the cornerstone of the certified CZMP at this location.

2. Acknowledgment of Country: Chair

The Chair, on behalf of the Taskforce acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and conduct the meeting this afternoon from various locations online. We recognise and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

3. Declaration of interests: All

Nil to report.

4 Draft Terms of Reference: All

SM raised question around the timing of meetings? Chair suggested at this stage monthly, second Tuesday of each month. All agreed.

Draft Terms of Reference endorsed by all.

5. Update from Recovery Coordinator (closing out of emergency declaration and handover to Central Coast Council): Lee Shearer

Announcement that LS is finishing up in the role of Recovery Coordinator, with Resilience NSW. This will be Lee's first and last meeting. Originally considered that there may be a significant period of overlap between the recovery coordination phase and the Taskforce work, however this is no longer the case.

LS explained that she began on the 21st of July and acted as a central point of coordination between NSW Government agencies, Council and residents. At the time, 11 displaced people were in emergency accommodation and 18 houses were subject to an evacuation order. The critical issues really involved coordinating and centralising communication between relevant parties.

Evacuation orders have now been lifted on all properties, noting ongoing issues with [redacted] Ocean View Drive. That evacuation order has been lifted but this house remains uninhabitable. LS has done a handover to Council now. People who need repair works done are working directly with Council. No one is currently in emergency accommodation.

Community have felt and continue to feel a high level of anxiety. The straight line of communication should remain a key priority moving forward.

PW advised local coordination committee organised by Central Coast Council and Chaired by Scott Cox has been established to manage residual issues moving forward following the formal cessation of the Recovery Coordinator.

AC expressed his thanks and gratitude to LS. AC noted the work Lee has done has been invaluable, as demonstrated today when the Premier met a number of residents and they expressed that they feel they are being listened to. PW echoed those thoughts and thanked LS for her leadership throughout the role as Recovery Coordinator.

LS reiterated that both state and local government have worked very well together during this emergency situation on a high level of trust and that it is never just one person that makes these things work.

6. Update from Central Coast Council on Manly Hydraulics Laboratory engagement and progress (Seawall concept designs and other studies): Gary Murphy

GM acknowledged and thanked LS for her work as Recovery Coordinator. GM expressed further thanks and acknowledgement to both AC and Minister Hancock for their support and setting up of the Taskforce. History has shown there has been many approaches to this over the years from various governments and there hasn't been the commitment to support the Council or the residents. We now have the intent by state government to support the Council, the right people around the

table (special mention of PW and his leadership). GM asked that his appreciation and thanks for the aforementioned be added to the record.

MHL – Ed Couriel and Matt Phillips are working on the project. So far they have undertaken:

- Review of previous design and investigation reports
- Coastal Protection Assessment
- Seawall concept design options
- Sand nourishment considerations
- Additional Coastal Monitoring Studies
- Cost Benefit Analysis and Distributional Analysis

It was noted that the Cost Benefit Analysis commissioned by State Government a few years back could be improved and needs to be revisited. Technical studies and Cost Benefit Analysis are useful tools to support decision making and there will be opportunities for residents to contribute.

Seawall concept design options have been brought forward and additional resources available at MHL to begin this within the next month. MHL will work with Council and come up with shortlisted options, cost estimates and minimum engineering standards.

MHL has set up a camera on one of the lifeguard towers and other coast snap locations are set up to bring together a community web site. All this information will be pulled together for use on a live coastal monitoring public webpage which will include the latest coastal imagery, latest wave runup statistics, latest beach condition/width and nearshore waves and tides.

MHL have been working with Balmoral Group on the Cost Benefit Analysis and Distributional Analysis including socioeconomic profile and identifying future uncertainties.

Stakeholder Engagement includes four progress meetings scheduled with Council between now and late November, two Project workshops scheduled with Council, one in the next few weeks and one in September and two Community Workshops (with timing TBC).

Progress Summary:

- Review previous design and investigation reports – First draft almost complete
- Coastal protection assessment – 60% complete – estimated completion early September
- Seawall concept design options – prioritised fast tracked completion August
- Sand nourishment – estimated completion October
- Additional coastal monitoring studies – estimated completion October
- Cost Benefit Analysis and Distributional Analysis – Socioeconomic profile close to first draft, hedonic modelling underway.
- Estimated Project Delivery – November 2020

It was noted that if the Cost Benefit Analysis and Distributional Analysis are close to first draft, it may be advantageous for staff and community to be able to review this information to better inform the report going to Council in September.

PW and GM had spoken offline about an opportunity for MHL to present to the Taskforce about the work that has been done and the work that needs to be done. This would be beneficial given the expertise on the Taskforce.

Council intends to appoint a dedicated Project Manager, as set out in the ToR of the Taskforce. GM should be in a position to announce who that Project Manager is by next month and have them

attend the 2nd meeting of the Taskforce. This will allow Council to provide the secretariat support as set out and agreed in the draft ToR.

PW reiterated the benefit of the Project Manager taking over the Secretariat role of the Taskforce to fully integrate the advice of the Taskforce with the operational, day to day role of the Project Manager to progress the implementation of the protection option. Reiteration that MHL milestones will be brought forward, noting Ed Couriel has also worked extensively on the emergency response in his capacity with Public Works Advisory.

PW asked for confirmation around community aspects of MHL contract, when it is intended to have a meeting between MHL, Council and the community to talk about concept designs etc. GM confirmed scope includes 2 community workshops (and other Council workshops) between now and late November.

GM raised the role of the community representatives on Council's Working Group for Wamberal. Also discussed the level of interest and organisation of the resident's group. Question on how the Taskforce will engage with residents. Other question was ongoing role of Working Group.

Acknowledgement that the community does not just include impacted landowners, also includes others with concerns around impacts on the beach and surfing amenity.

PW spoke about need for the community engagement process to be iterative and reflective of what the community need. Suggest that PW and GM meet monthly with reps from the Wamberal Protection Association Inc (a body established to represent the interests of all beachfront property owners along Wamberal Beach) once a month. This will also act as a conduit for residents' concerns to be raised directly with the Taskforce. Broader community can be consulted through MHL work, with Taskforce members available to assist with these important processes. PW has already met with reps from Wamberal Protection Association Inc to set expectations and to rebuild their relationship with Council. PW acknowledged the extensive funding provided by Council to date in responding to the emergency, whereby Central Coast Council has quietly funded everything that has happened to date. The relationship and trust between Council and the residents is improving and is expected to continue to do so.

SM commented around the project plan and advised that it may be useful to scope out governance with respect to the various groups and how they relate to each other to make sure the information gets to the right people at the right time. For example, you have this Taskforce, the Wamberal Protection Association Inc, and Council's Working Group. It's important that the flow of information proceeds to the right people in order that they get the information they need in time to inform decisions etc. SM reiterated that people across the community will need different information at different times. For example, ocean front residents, who may be intimately involved in design details and then you have the community members from a few streets back, who will have an interest in beach amenity, but may not be interested in the detailed design aspects. The governance arrangements and community consultation strategy go hand in hand to make sure no one misses out in hearing what is going on.

PW agreed this would be a key aspect for the Project Manager in developing a project plan moving forward. Such a plan would set out the relationships between the individual groups, the Taskforce and how it will interact with Council, and the dedicated Project Manager. It should also outline the relationship it is anticipated that the Taskforce will have regarding community consultation. For example, representatives of the Taskforce may be required to provide advice at community consultation events, just as they are advising Council.

AC thanked GM for confirming the intention to allocate a dedicated Project Manager and noted the importance of having the right person in that role as it interfaces with the community. AC also raised concerns regarding Council's Project Working Group and its slow progress and suggested that it might be time to wrap that group up. The Taskforce are mindful of who the key stakeholders are and can involve them in the process as it unfolds (e.g. occasional invitation to Taskforce meets, etc). Suggestion that regardless of COVID restrictions, community consultation may be best undertaken with smaller groups to allow everyone to be heard. Potential change to MHL scope to include more consultation events at a smaller scale.

Everyone in favour of MHL attending next meeting.

7 Other business: All

Item raised by Adam Crouch MP: Communication

AC : Communication of Taskforce progress is going to be very important. AC acknowledged that anything would need to go via the Chair and be agreed to by Minister Hancock. If communications need to be facilitated urgently, he was confident this could happen. Suggested a fortnightly update to community, via Adam Crouch's office, with Minister Hancock approval. PW happy for this to occur, noting that the Taskforce will meet monthly, but there will be some work happening in between.

Item raised by Jamie Murray: Land Status

JM has had a representation from Council seeking to close a road which would result in it vesting back into Crown Lands- this would create a range of complexities. It would vest a large portion of the erosion zone back to the Crown. JM and GM to talk offline. Suggestion that if this is something Council staff are looking at that GM could bring to the Taskforce for consideration and further discussion.

PW mentioned the private landholdings on the beach and the necessary legal advice on how these could be acquired/managed had not yet been resolved, noting nobody wants this to become a showstopper further down the track for other tenures such as easements for the protection works, etc. It is noted Council's Project Working Group had commenced discussions on these issues probably over 15 months ago, but it remains unresolved. This will need to be resolved. Suggested that a pathway forward is agreed upon within a month and that the Taskforce is updated at the next meeting.

JM – this would need to be looked at holistically, as with all landholdings. This would be important strategy work for the Taskforce.

PW raised an ideal endpoint where there is an easement that covers the totality of the footprint of the structure. If there are impediments with private landholdings (eg. no known contacts, etc), then work needs to progress on these matters and be prioritised now. This body of work can be done in parallel with the design work that is already underway. This is a better approach than leaving it for 12 months. All agreed attention should be turned to this. JM agreed and reiterated that a key learning from Collaroy has been the importance of consolidating status of land early.

Item raised by Phil Watson: Erosion Policy

Central Coast Council staff were looking at adopting a similar policy to the Collaroy Narrabeen Erosion Policy that has been used to guide the implementation of the protection strategy there. There have been some important learnings from this policy and the way it was constructed for

Collaroy Narrabeen as implementation has occurred. GM was asked to confirm the status of the policy and indicated that it hasn't made it to the Council Chamber yet and that Council would welcome further advice to prepare an enabling policy. All agreed Council will bring the erosion policy to the Taskforce. GM agreed it would be useful to seek advice from the Taskforce before bringing to Council to benefit from experiences elsewhere and avoid unnecessary difficulties further down the track.

Item raised by Phil Watson

Funding model is going to be a pinch point moving forward. Although final costs are yet to be determined, it would be worth early discussions with the Federal Government on potential for any commonwealth funding contribution toward the project. Agreement that GM, AC and PW meet with Lucy Wicks to discuss the possibility of federal funding.

Item raised by Michelle Fletcher/Phil Watson

Earlier in the year, Minister Hancock had requested the Coastal Council undertake a review of the implementation of the Gosford Open Beaches CZMP as it relates to Wamberal. This was provided to the Minister in June. The review and its recommendations were written before the recent event and will need to be considered in that context. Before the event, the Minister had asked that PW provide a briefing to AC and GM on this, just prior to the emergency situation. The Minister has also asked that the report be tabled with the Taskforce. PW will table the Coastal Council review report at the next meeting and provide a summary. To be added to the agenda for Meeting No. 2.

8 Date for next meeting: Secretariat

Tentative date for second Tuesday in September – Tuesday 8th September.

Closing by PW- expressed feeling great privilege and honour to be chairing the Taskforce that he believes will achieve some great things over the next 6-12 months. All agreed and passed on thanks.

Meeting closed at 3.46pm.

Summary of resolutions:

1. Tentative date for next meeting Tuesday 8th September and second Tuesday of every month thereafter.
2. Council to appoint a Project Manager- this person will attend future Taskforce meetings and provide a Secretariat function.
3. MHL to present at next Taskforce meeting on their engagement and progress to date.
4. Council Project Manager to develop a project plan including governance and engagement plan.
5. PW and GM to meet monthly (or on as needs basis) with affected landowners' representatives. Broader community engagement to be picked up through MHL work.
6. Confirm with Minister Hancock communication to be issued to community on a fortnightly basis via Adam Crouch's office. Intention is to consult with Minister Hancock Office and Taskforce Chair on draft content.
7. Land status work needs to be an immediate priority for the Council Project Manager, in parallel with concept design work being undertaken by MHL. Council to provide definitive update of progression of legal advice pertaining to managing/acquiring private landholdings on the beach.
8. Council will provide draft Erosion Policy to the Taskforce to seek advice based on key learnings for Collaroy Narrabeen.

9. GM, AC and PW to request meeting with Federal Member for Robertson, Lucy Wicks MP to discuss possibility of federal funding.

Summary of agreed additions to next agenda

- MHL presentation – MHL (GM).
- Coastal Council review of implementation of the Gosford Open Beaches CZMP- in respect of Wamberal Beach (PW).
- Central Coast Council Draft Erosion Policy (GM).
- Discussion of Land Status for benefit of Council appointed Project Manager (JM, PW and all).

Minutes finalised and endorsed 17 August 2020.



Dr Phil Watson
Chair
Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce