

WAMBERAL BEACH EROSION

Frequently Asked Questions

- community members



Who is in charge of the emergency work?

Council is undertaking emergency remediation works at Wamberal Beach in consultation with expert coastal engineers, in response to an official order from the Local Emergency Operations Controller.

How is coastal erosion managed?

The management of coastal erosion by Central Coast Council is guided by the management actions within the Certified Gosford Open Beaches Coastal Zone Management Plan 2017 (including the Emergency Action Sub-Plan for Wamberal). This document also outlines the responsibilities of local, state and private landholders in the implementation and funding of identified management actions on lands under the varying ownerships. Council is currently working through the priority management actions identified within this plan, supported by funding through the Coast and Estuaries Grants Program.

Council is also preparing Coastal Management Programs (CMPs) in accordance with the NSW Coastal Management Framework for the entire Central Coast. These will be completed prior to the end of 2021. As part of the CMP process, Council will be undertaking significant consultation with our community to finalise the programs.

For further information on coastal erosion management for the Coast visit centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastlines/coastal-zone-management

How is Council responding to the current Wamberal coastal erosion event and why didn't it act sooner?

In response to the current coastal erosion event, Council has engaged leading coastal engineering consultancy Royal Haskoning DHV which is providing emergency remediation works at Wamberal Beach. These works are now possible as Council has received the required direction by the Local Emergency Operations Controller and also received the advice from expert coastal engineers from the Public Works Authority.

What will happen in the future?

In May this year, Council engaged Manly Hydraulics Laboratory to prepare concept plans for a terminal protection structure at Wamberal to assist residents in implementing a long-term solution. This is part-funded by Council and the NSW Government through the Coast and Estuary Grants Program at a total cost of approximately \$400,000. It will include workshops with residents and key stakeholders. The concept design is expected to be completed late 2020.

For further history on coastal erosion management at Wamberal Beach visit centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastlines/coastal-zone-management/coastal-erosion

How many properties have been impacted and what assistance is being provided to residents?

18 properties are impacted, which includes 43 residences with approximately 54 residents evacuated.

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All affected residents have been contacted by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and provided with assistance.

Can I visit the impacted area?

If you do not need to be in the area or any other beach area which is closed and has barriers in place, PLEASE stay away. Sightseers and other non-resident or non-essential visitors make it difficult for residents and essential services to do their work safely and effectively. They also endanger their own and others' safety if they enter or go near eroded areas. They also cause unnecessary traffic which can hinder essential services' access to the area.

Do not try to breach any beach access barriers, especially those to the impacted beach area below the buildings at Wamberal. You will endanger not only yourself but may create further damage to the weakened dune system.

To stay up-to-date on the situation as it evolves, visit centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/coastal-erosion.

What remediation work is being done?

Hundreds of large rock-filled bags are being placed along the base of the escarpment to protect existing remediation works. An additional 600 tonnes of rock is being placed at other priority sites on Wamberal Beach.

Who is paying for the emergency work?

The emergency response and the 'emergency toe protection works' were directed by the Local Emergency Controller (LEOCON) under the authority of the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act (1989).

When works are completed in accordance with the directions of the LEOCON, Council will be seeking to recover costs associated with the works through the State Government.

What is happening with asbestos on the beach at Wamberal? Who is the responsible authority? Have you then buried asbestos on the beach?

Council proactively manages asbestos risks on public land across the Coast. The building waste being exposed in Wamberal due to the current severe weather is from private property. Our teams are onsite daily and as part of our storm recovery actions we are clearing any debris that presents in public areas.

Since the community first reported asbestos findings in Wamberal and Terrigal beaches in 2018, Council has been actively monitoring the areas and removing any and all asbestos found on public land. With the assistance of environmental specialist consultants, Council also excavated test pits and undertook air quality monitoring along Terrigal and Wamberal Beaches, confirming that the risk to public health was, and still is, considered by experts to be low. Air quality monitoring failed to record any airborne asbestos fibres at these locations.

Since, 2018, Council has been undertaking targeted inspections of these beaches multiple times every week, removing all material observed and recording details on each occasion. The amount of material observed over this period has notably decreased.

For further information about asbestos waste, visit centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/asbestos

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Any other questions or feedback?

Please contact Council on 1300 463 954 during business hours.