

# AMENDED ITEM

22 October 2014  
To the Ordinary Council Meeting

Director's Report  
Community and Recreation Services  
Department

## 6.3 Lakes Beach Access Ramp

---

TRIM REFERENCE: F2004/06214 - D11726604

MANAGER: Brett Sherar, Manager

AUTHOR: Alan Cibilic; Section Manager Natural Areas

### SUMMARY

The Northern Lakes Disability Tourism Precinct Committee has constructed a beach access ramp at Lakes Beach which, when completed, will be compliant for use as a disability ramp. Council has provided financial and in-kind support to the group to help this project happen. Stage 1 of the project, the beach ramp and part of the viewing deck, has been completed with the exception of a number of items that will make it fully disability accessible. Council has been asked to take ownership of and maintain the Lakes Beach access ramp. This report describes the implications if Council agree.

### RECOMMENDATION

***That Council agree to take ownership of and maintain the Lakes Beach access ramp Stage 1 which is located on Council controlled land.***

### BACKGROUND

Council, at its meeting held 24 September 2014;

*“RESOLVED unanimously on the motion of Councillor BEST and seconded by Councillor TROY:*

*1089/14 That Council recognise the tremendous efforts of the volunteers of the Lakes Beach United Dune Care and Coast Care in volunteering to build the beach access facility at Lakes Beach.*

*1090/14 That Council note that this group has indicated it would like the access ramp to be handed over to Council to maintain as a Council asset.*

*1091/14 That Council request the General Manager to provide a report to Council on this matter.”*

Construction of the access ramp at Lakes Beach has been a project driven by the Northern Lakes Disability Tourism Precinct Committee since it was first proposed in 2010. Following this proposal, at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 11 August 2010, Council unanimously resolved on 8 items (listed below) to provide support for the installation of disabled beach access facilities at Lakes Beach:

*“RESOLVED unanimously on the motion of Councillor VINCENT and seconded by Councillor MATTHEWS:*

- 1 That Council receive the status report on the proposed installation of disabled beach access facilities at the Lakes Beach Surf Club.*
- 2 That Council support in principle the installation of disabled beach access facilities at the Lakes Beach Surf Club with the provision that the project meets the Standards established under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.*
- 3 That the matter be considered as part of the initiatives to be funded in the four year delivery plan.*
- 4 That Council acknowledge potential growth opportunities identified in the Central Coast Destination Management Plan for Tourism in the areas of disability / accessible tourism.*
- 5 That Council give in principle support to the formation of the Northern Lakes Disability Tourism Steering Committee.*
- 6 That Council facilitate a disability access audit of the Northern Lakes Disability Tourism Precinct by the Disability Tourism Precinct Steering Committee.*
- 7 That Council report on the progress made by both the Lakes Disability Beach Access Steering Committee and the Northern Lakes Disability Tourism Steering Committee.*
- 8 That Council delegates to the General Manager to give owners consent to any development applications relating to the proposed access.”*

Subsequent to this Resolution, staff assisted in completing documentation, including the Development Application for the project to proceed in March 2011.

Further assistance was provided as follows:

- Council prepared the Statement of Environmental Effects and the Development Application
- Council lodged the DA as the applicant on behalf of the owner, Trustees Lakes Surf Club, as the entire project is not predominantly on Council land
- Waiving the fees for the Development Application in the sum of \$1,277.00
- Provision of a cash grant in the sum of \$16,485.00 through Council's Matching Fund
- The Manager of Open Space and Recreation provided a recommendation to Delta Electricity to assist with funding for this venture. Delta Electricity subsequently assisted the Committee with a cash sum of \$8,000.00
- Council has recently made modifications to the car park at Lakes Beach to provide suitable parking for disabled visitors

The Development Application for the project was submitted by Council on behalf of the applicant, the Northern Lakes Disability Tourism Precinct Committee. Owner's approval was granted by Trustees Lakes Surf Club and Crown Land.

Stage 1 of the project has been completed and a building certificate issued.

Stages 2 and 3 will include making stage 1 fully disability compliant, as well as installing a wheelchair friendly BBQ, constructing a covered deck, an open viewing deck and a connection to the Lakes Beach Surf Club building.

### **CURRENT STATUS**

Council has undertaken a survey of the land and can confirm that the main access to the beach and the existing ramp to the viewing deck are located on reserve trust land under the care and control of Council (Budgewoi Tourist Park (R88683) Reserve Trust). The existing viewing deck and all of future stages 2 and 3, are located on Crown land leased directly by the Trustees Lakes Beach Surf Club. (See Attachment 1)

The observation deck and ramp as constructed is not fully compliant with the accessible provisions of the relevant Australian Standards with regard to handrails and tactile ground surface indicators. As a result, the access ramp and associated structure may be identified as a beach access ramp and observation deck, not a disabled access. The constructors have advised that due to a lack of funding, the handrails and tactile ground surface indicators are to be provided at a later stage during Stage 2 and 3 works.

The current access ramp (Stage 1), is constructed of treated pine. In the harsh coastal environment has an estimated lifespan of 10 to 15 years and possibly up to 20 years with annual maintenance.

While maintenance costs for assets constructed using the materials that this beach access is built from are generally higher than for accesses built using council current methods and materials, the full life costing will be no greater due to the saving made in construction being undertaken at minimal cost to council.

### **THE PROPOSAL**

Council has been requested to take ownership of and maintain the access ramp. Council already owns and maintains approximately 80 accesses to Shire beaches. Prior to the construction of this ramp there was a standard beach access maintained by Council on the same site. This timber access ramp provides better access to the beach for beach wheelchairs as well as viewing of the beach, than any other beach access in Wyong Shire.

The maintenance costs will be marginally higher than for the previous board-and-chain access, however Council will obtain a very useful structure which will better meet the needs of residents and visitors. The considerable efforts of volunteers through labour, donations, and grant funding, will result in provision of a valuable public asset at little cost to Council. Maintenance costs can be managed within current operational budgets.

Proposed future stages of the project, previously outlined in this report, could cost in excess of \$200,000 based on cost-estimates in the Development Application. It is not proposed that

## 6.3 Lakes Beach Access Ramp (contd)

Council agree to fund or own any of these stages which will be located on land controlled by the Lakes Beach Surf Club.

### OPTIONS

#### Option 1

Reject the offer to take ownership of and maintain the access ramp. (Not recommended as the ramp is on Council controlled land and any public liability due to asset deterioration will become an issue for Council).

#### Option 2

Accept the offer to take ownership of and maintain that part of the Lakes Beach access ramp Stage 1 which is located on Council-controlled land, in its present state as a general access. (Recommended).

#### Option 3

Accept the offer to take ownership of and maintain that part of the Lakes Beach access ramp Stage 1 which is located on Council-controlled land and complete the disability compliant handrails and warning tactiles. (Not recommended).

#### Option 4

Accept the offer to take control of, complete, and maintain the access ramp Stage 1 as well as stages 2 and 3. (Not recommended due to the proposed stages 2 and 3 being constructed on Crown Land, leased directly to the Lakes Beach Surf Lifesaving Club)

### STRATEGIC LINKS

#### Wyong Shire Council Strategic/ Annual Plan

<i>Principal Activity</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Key Action and Objectives</i>	<i>Funding Source and Description</i>	<i>Impact on Key Performance Indicators/ Service Performance Indicators</i>
1. Community and Education 2. Community Recreation	Natural areas	3. Facilities and Services	CRS.31 (Beach access renewal program) and beach maintenance operational funds	Reduce the risk to the community while accessing the Shire's beaches

**Contribution of Proposal to the Principal Activity**

Council ownership and maintenance of the existing access ramp Stage 1 will ensure all members of the public have a suitable access to view the beach and ocean, and provide easier access for existing beach wheelchairs to reach the beach.

**Long Term Financial Strategy**

Open Space and Recreation's Natural Areas Section has available an existing operational budget to maintain beach accesses which can be used to maintain this structure (Stage 1) for its life.

**Asset Management Strategy**

Council ownership and maintenance of this access ramp Stage 1 is aligned with the asset-based action: 'a healthy, active and connected community' and key commitment for asset management planning and decision making; 'upgrades and new projects that have external funding sources (e.g. grant funding) are given higher priority within the upgrade and new works annual budget allocations, in conjunction with an assessment of affordability for future life cycle costs'.

**Workforce Management Strategy**

Not applicable.

**Link to Community Strategic Plan (2030)**

"Communities will have access to a diverse range of affordable and coordinated facilities, programs and services".

We will have a range of local and regional facilities that support the diverse needs of the community and contribute to its vibrancy, connections and pride, including complementary programs, services and activities that are affordable, financially sustainable and maximise use of the facilities.

This will be achieved through:

**3a** - Providing and maintaining local and regional community facilities for recreation, culture, health and education.

**3e** - Balancing the varying provision of facilities and amenities between towns/suburbs to enhance the quality of life in the Shire.

**3f** - Maximising the access to, and potential for, new and existing facilities/infrastructure to support growth.

**3g** - Supporting people in the community to lead healthy, active lifestyles.

**Budget Impact**

Ongoing maintenance can be managed within the beach maintenance operational budget.

**CONSULTATION**

The Building Services Unit has provided advice regarding maintenance of timber structures in harsh coastal environments which has informed this proposal. The Open Space and Recreation Unit were consulted and their advice incorporated.

**GOVERNANCE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Disability compliant access implications have been considered and incorporated into the proposal.

**MATERIAL RISKS AND ISSUES**

Public liability claims against Council if the beach access on Council controlled land is not maintained and causes injury to members of the public.

**CONCLUSION**

Stage 1 of the Lakes Beach access ramp has been completed to allow general access. This access ramp (but not the viewing deck) is located on a Council reserve and is a useful facility to allow general access to the beach for residents and visitors.

Stage 1 has been constructed at minimal cost to Council due to the considerable efforts of the community through volunteer labour, donations, and grant funding. Maintenance costs for Stage 1 can be managed within current budgets.

Future stages will be located on Crown Land leased directly to Lakes Beach Surf Club and it is not proposed that Council take control of, or commit funds towards these.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- 1 Survey sketch displaying existing location of ramp at Lakes Beach D11734482



**Everitt & Everitt**  
CONSULTING SURVEYORS  
"The Halton Rivers Business Centre"  
34-36 Pacific Highway Wyong  
PO Box 198 Wyong NSW 2259  
DX: 7314 Wyong  
Telephone: (02) 4352 1419  
Fax: (02) 43512437  
E-mail: admin@everittsurveyors.com.au

SCALE 1:200 (A3)

SKETCH

ACCOMPANYING OUR REPORT DATED 7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2014 OUR REF: 17932



*M. Jones*

REGISTERED SURVEYOR