

# Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce Meeting Record (Meeting 3)

Location:	Microsoft Teams
Date:	13 October 2020
Time	Started at: 2.34pm Closed at: 4.22pm
Chair	Dr. Phil Watson
File Ref	TBC

## **Members present:**

Phil Watson, Paul Donaldson – Central Coast Council, Sharon Molloy – DPIE Environment Energy and Science (left 4.03pm), Maria Plytariasis – DPIE Planning, Luke Sulkowski – Central Coast Council (on behalf of Gary Murphy, 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, Gary Murphy – Central Coast Council, Jamie Murray – DPIE Crown Land.

The Chair welcomed the Taskforce and completed an Acknowledgement of Country. It was noted the meeting was being recorded for the purposes 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 2 held 8 September 2020, which were distributed to members on 21 September 2020. The finalised minutes were also forwarded to the Minister’s Office to comply with reporting requirements in accordance the adopted Terms of Reference (TORs).

It was noted the minutes were accompanied by a copy of the Manly Hydraulics Laboratory (MHL) presentation provided and the Executive Summary of the Coastal Council review of the certified Gosford Beaches Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP).

#### **Item 4                   Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**

---

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

4.1   DPIE advice to Council regarding Grants: meeting held between DPIE and Council staff on 16 September 2020 to discuss scope of community consultation and additional resources required for project management. Phil Watson attended this meeting and reiterated the strong message from the Taskforce about the urgency for a broader educational piece and face-to-face consultation with the wider community on this issue. Council will be submitting a variation for existing grant in response.

**Action:** Paul Donaldson to confirm submission of grant variation in accordance with advice provided by DPIE regarding community consultation and resources for project management.

4.2   Baseline community consultation program: meeting held between DPIE and Council staff as noted above. Agreed intention is to cover a range of consultation components – multiple components are being explored as part of Communications and Engagement Plan (to be discussed in Item 7).

4.3   Approvals pathway offshore structures: Maria Plytarias (DPIE Planning) advised work is being undertaken to clarify approvals pathways, under Infrastructure SEPP and the Coastal Management Framework. Enquiries made with Crown Lands and DPI Fisheries – anticipated that update will be ready to circulate prior to the next meeting. Phil Watson to circulate when advice is available.

**Action:** Maria Plytarias to forward info on offshore structures to Chair for circulation prior to next meeting.

4.4   HCCDC contact re potential sand source for Wamberal: contact details provided by Phil Watson to Paul Donaldson and MHL project team. Paul Donaldson will progress and provide update when available.

**Action:** Paul Donaldson to provide update on potential sand sources following discussions with HCCDC contact.

4.5   Project Plan: Paul Donaldson to provide update in Item 7.

4.6   Legal advice regarding management/ acquisition of private land on southern section of Wamberal Beach: It was noted that the process for acquiring the residual private land parcel located on the beach, south of the Ruins, has not been advised. Luke Sulkowski (Central Coast Council) confirmed options for progressing this matter were investigated by Council and a report scheduled for the Council Meeting on 12 October 2020 outlines Council's recommended process for acquisition of the land. The report was deferred due to other Council priorities arising with the Council report to be considered at the Council Meeting of 18 October 2020, but is available online here: [https://cdn.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Council/Meetings\\_and\\_minutes/om12october2020agenda.pdf](https://cdn.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Council/Meetings_and_minutes/om12october2020agenda.pdf) (pages 138-147).

**Action:** Luke Sulkowski to circulate Council Report regarding management of coastal land parcels for info of Taskforce members to complete Action Item 6 for Council to provide an update on legal advice and Action 13 for Council to pursue the legal advice about the process required to facilitate the acquisition of private landholding on the southern section of Wamberal Beach. Phil Watson will then follow up with Jamie Murray (DPIE Crown Land) prior to next meeting.

- 4.7 Draft Coastal Erosion Policy: policy is in preliminary draft format and on hold, awaiting outcomes of MHL study. This approach is in accordance with determinations made by the Wamberal Working Group. Council needs to reconsider policy post July 2020 coastal erosion emergency and current financial situation. Northern Beaches Erosion Policy will also be considered as part of review. Commitment from Taskforce members to assist Council navigate issues that have arisen with coastal erosion policies elsewhere which Council staff welcomed.
- 4.8 NSW Coastal Council review of CZMP: document was circulated for review prior to meeting. The Chair welcomed any feedback/concerns about document. Noted review was undertaken prior to most recent erosion event, so context of the review and its recommendations need to be clearly understood. No further questions from Taskforce members on the review report.
- 4.9 CCC Project Working Group: Taskforce gave consideration to the function of existing Project Working Group. The Taskforce recommends that the Working Group closes and that Council focus on progressing matters relating to Wamberal Beach through the Advisory Taskforce. The Taskforce acknowledged the value and efforts of the Working Group and would like to thank members for their commitment to driving progress in Wamberal Beach throughout its tenure.
- Action:** Council to liaise with Project Working Group to finalise tenure and pass on appreciation of Taskforce to members in closing out the Group.
- 4.10 Meeting with Lucy Wicks MP: Phil Watson met with Lucy Wicks on the 24 September 2020 to discuss the role of Taskforce, and opportunities to not only implement protection works but also improve public use and beach amenity for Wamberal Beach. Agreed interest in holistic approach to create genuine community asset. Noted further detailed plans and broader community consultation is urgently needed. Phil will continue to liaise with Lucy Wicks MP as the Taskforce progresses and provide relevant updates.

## **Item 5 Update from the Chair**

---

Phil Watson provided an update on matters as Chair of the Taskforce.

The following key points were noted:

- Significant concerns raised from various stakeholders regarding future of the project at hand given recent announcements about Council's financial position. Unsure at this point in time of the impact on the role of the Taskforce as the issue is still evolving, however consider business as usual until otherwise advised.

**Action:** Council to provide update on financial position with regard to any related impact on the project as further information becomes available.

- Concerns also raised regarding delays in broader community consultation and engagement deliverables. There have been increased pressures to respond to enquiries directed to the NSW Government, which could be mitigated by more proactive and direct engagement by Council with large concerned stakeholder groups. Communication with the broader community has been recognised by the Taskforce as a key and overdue priority with members frustrated the urgency isn't being met with tangible deliverables. Noted that update on Council's Communication and Engagement Plan to be provided in Item 7.

- Concerns also raised that Taskforce TORs and meeting minutes not on Council's website for public access. Discussion held regarding responsibility of data, given that project is managed by Council but the Taskforce is viewed by Council as a State function. Paul Donaldson advised consultation was undertaken with regard to governance and sharing documents that are not Council's property. Documents have been published online this morning (13 October 2020):  
<https://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/council/meetings/wamberal-seawall-advisory-taskforce>

---

## **Item 6                    Project Working Group**

*This matter was considered as part of Item 4.*

---

## **Item 7                    Standing Item: Update from the Project Manager**

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

The following key points were noted:

- There has been substantial progress made on actions assigned to Council. Also, much work has been undertaken to support the proactive release of the Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce documents on Council's website, following a period of stakeholder consultation.
- MHL report has 6 Stages (Stage 1 report draft complete) and expected to be finalised before year end.
- Broad internal consultation is being undertaken with various areas of Council to confirm holistic approach and who will be involved in project moving forward.
- Drafts of key documents have been prepared including a Communications and Engagement Plan, Working Project Plan, and Project Governance Structure.
- Noted there have been some challenges with regard to progressing actions:
  - Ensuring correct procedures and governance for proactive release of documents.
  - Extensive internal briefings/consultation required.
  - Community interest continues to build from anti-seawall campaigners, although this may provide broader understanding of whole of community expectations
- Draft Project Governance Structure presented to show how different stakeholders will be interacting. Noted a Project Executive for Council Project Team has been established to ensure decision makers are looped into the project and to help manage any issues that may arise. Confirmed Paul is main conduit between Council and the Taskforce.
- Reiterated that community stakeholders include more than just the beachside property holders – also general public, beach users, interest groups etc.
- Draft Communications and Engagement Plan should be ready soon to circulate out of session prior to the next meeting (currently with senior staff for approval). Noted draft includes some suggestions already made by Taskforce.
- Proposed there will be 4 phases of engagement, including various face-to-face and online forums. Once again noted that Taskforce is a State function and Council Plans will only cover aspects of project managed by Council. Council genuinely looking to engage with the community.
- Proposed phases of engagement are as follows:
  - Project initiation (internal consultation and preparation) – happening now
  - Broader community consultation – expected late October/early November.
  - Workshopping concept designs (including plans and impacts of different options) – expected late November
    - Broader community

- Impacted property owners
  - Public exhibition (expected early 2021)
- Methods of engagement expected to include website updates, media releases, online surveys, community pop-ups, workshops, ongoing informal meetings, public exhibition (format TBC). Members highlighted importance of being flexible and adaptive (challenges with meeting community expectation and needs). Suggested it may be helpful to consider examples of Stockton Beach engagement and learn from experiences. Paul confirmed plan is consistent with previous formats used by Council.
- Concerns raised by members with regard to impact of social media groups and spread of misconceptions about the project and related literature. It is important to ensure community has access to basic information that can be easily understood. Clear that community is very interested in project and this should be positively addressed.
- Phil Watson also reiterated that it is important for community to understand how the current project fits in historic context (e.g. that a seawall was previously approved, and that current plan includes sand nourishment program to ensure long-term outcomes for Wamberal Beach). Agreed it would be ideal to develop FAQs in an accessible format for community information to help dispel myths and develop trust.
- Draft Working Project Plan was presented along with Gantt charts for proposed tasks over 2020 and 2021.
- Sharon Molloy (DPIE Environment Energy and Science) confirmed that DPIE can provide advice and guidance about project actions to be included in Council's project plan.
- Members acknowledged the difficulties associated with combating misinformation within the community.

**Action:** Paul Donaldson to distribute Communications and Engagement Plan to Taskforce for review once available.

---

## **Item 8 Coastal Council Review of Gosford Beaches CZMP**

*This matter was considered as part of Item 4.*

---

## **Item 9 General Business, Review of Task Log, Next Meeting Date and Close**

- a) Noted that TORs include a minor confidentiality clause about discussions within the Taskforce, however requests were made to share TORs and minutes on Council's website. Taskforce confirmed they are happy for TORs to be amended to specifically permit publication of meeting minutes, noting the significant public interest. Discussion also held regarding responsibility of publishing meeting documents, given that Taskforce was initiated by State Government to assist Council with delivery of project. Need to be clear on messaging and who is responsible for what (i.e. the Taskforce and project itself are separate entities).

**Action:** Phil Watson to draft amended TORs clause for consideration outside of meeting, relating to publication of the minutes.

**Action:** Sharon Molloy and Phil Watson were asked by Luke Sulkowski to follow up about provision of Taskforce documents on State website, with view to consider that Council project website would include a link to State page.

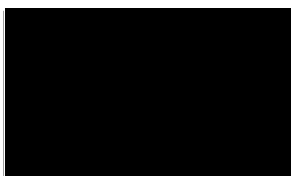
- b) Paul Donaldson confirmed he is undertaking the secretariat role for the Taskforce as prescribed by the TORs, and will be supported by one of Council's Advisory Group Support Officers for administrative functions. Noted that format of documents may be different moving forward but changes will be confirmed with the Chair.
- c) Phil Watson and Gary Murphy met with representatives from the Wamberal Protection Association (WPA) on 15 September 2020. Primary concerns raised by the WPA were about urgently increasing broader community consultation to develop and implement the longer-term protection solution in accordance with the certified CZMP. Paul Donaldson will also attend the next meeting as Council's Project Manager.
- d) Adam Crouch MP issued a Press Release about the Taskforce on 23 September 2020. Available online here: [https://www.adamcrouchmp.com.au/wamberal\\_taskforce\\_progressing\\_toward\\_long\\_term\\_solution](https://www.adamcrouchmp.com.au/wamberal_taskforce_progressing_toward_long_term_solution)
- e) Adam Crouch MP and Phil Watson met with concerned community members on 25 September 2020 and 8 October 2020 to discuss the role of the Taskforce and hear prominent community views on management of Wamberal Beach and longer-term plans moving forward.
- f) Taskforce members discussed the Task Log, noting which actions are complete or still underway following this meeting. A revised Action Log will be generated as a separate attachment to this Meeting Record.

The meeting closed at 4.22pm

**Next Meetings:            Tuesday 10 November 2020**  
**2.30pm – 4pm**  
**Microsoft Teams**

**Tuesday 8 December 2020**  
**2.30pm – 4pm**  
**Microsoft Teams**

Minutes finalised and endorsed 26 October 2020.



Dr Phil Watson  
Chair  
Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce

Enc. Action Log.

Action Number	Meeting Date	Group Name	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Date Action Completed	Status
1	11/08/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Council to appoint Project Manager	Gary Murphy or delegate (CCC)	Paul Donaldson appointed as Project Manager and attended 8 September meeting	8/09/2020	Complete
2	11/08/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	MHL to present at next Taskforce meeting on their engagement and progress to date	Manly Hydraulics Laboratory	Presentation provided at 8 September 2020 meeting	8/09/2020	Complete
3	11/08/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Council's Project Manager to develop a project plan including governance and community engagement plan	Paul Donaldson (CCC)	13/10: still pending. Superseded by Action 23 and 26		Closed
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
5	11/08/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Confirm with Minister Hancock communication to be issued to community on a fortnightly basis via Adam Crouch's office.	Adam Crouch MP			Complete
6	11/08/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Council to provide update of progression of legal advice pertaining to managing/acquiring private landholdings on the beach.	Paul Donaldson (CCC)	13/10: legal info was sought and report to go to Council 12 October 2020 but was deferred. Superseded by Action 20		Closed
7	11/08/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Council to update Taskforce on draft Erosion Policy	Gary Murphy or delegate (CCC)	13/10: still underway - awaiting outcomes of MHL study. Superseded by Action 14		Closed
8	11/08/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Gary Murphy, Adam Crouch and Phil Watson to request meeting with Federal Member for Robertson, Lucy Wicks MP to discuss possibility of federal funding	Phil Watson / Adam Crouch MP / Gary Murphy (CCC)	Meeting held 24 September 2020. Phil will continue to liaise as Taskforce progresses and provide updates as available	24/09/2020	Complete
9	8/09/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Sharon Molloy and Michelle Fletcher to facilitate discussion between DPIE's regional team and council about funding assistance for increasing community facilitation.	Sharon Molloy (DPIE) / Michelle Fletcher	Meeting held 16 September 2020. Superseded by Action 17	16/09/2020	Complete
10	8/09/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Paul Donaldson and Council's community engagement team to work with Gary Murphy and Phil Watson on urgently developing a baseline community consultation program in advance of the MHL consultation workshop	Paul Donaldson (CCC)	Meeting held 16 September 2020. Superseded by Actions 17 and 23		Closed
11	8/09/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	MP to follow up on approval pathway for an offshore breakwater/submerged reef type proposal	Maria Plytarias (DPIE)	13/10: still pending. Superseded by Action 18		Closed
12	8/09/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Phil Watson to provide Paul Donaldson with relevant contact in Hunter/Central Coast Development Corporation regarding potential sand sources for nourishment at Wamberal	Phil Watson	Details provided. Paul will liaise with HCCDC accordingly. Superseded by Action 19		Complete
13	8/09/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Paul Donaldson/Gary Murphy to pursue the legal advice about the process required to facilitate acquisition of the private landholding on the southern section of Wamberal Beach in the event it was required to create an easement for the plan footprint of the proposed seawall structure.	Paul Donaldson (CCC) / Gary Murphy (CCC)	13/10: legal info was sought and report to go to Council 12 October 2020 but was deferred. Superseded by Action 20		Closed
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
15	8/09/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Phil Watson to circulate Executive Summary of Coastal Council review to Taskforce members out of session and table the document at the next meeting.	Phil Watson	Circulated to Taskforce members via email		Complete
16	8/09/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Consider the utility of the Project Working Group and provide a Taskforce recommendation as an agenda item for Meeting No.3	Taskforce Members	Discussed at 13 October 2020 meeting. Superseded by Action 21.	13/10/2020	Complete

Action Number	Meeting Date	Group Name	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Date Action Completed	Status
17	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Paul Donaldson to confirm submission of grant variation in accordance with advice provided by DPIE regarding community consultation and resources for project management.	Paul Donaldson (CCC)			Pending
18	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Maria Plytarias to forward info on offshore structures to Chair for circulation prior to next meeting.	Maria Plytarias (DPIE)			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)			Pending
20	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Luke Sulkowski to circulate Council Report regarding management of coastal land parcels for info of Taskforce members. Phil Watson will then follow up with Jamie Murray (DPIE Crown Land) prior to next meeting.	Paul Donaldson (CCC) / Phil Watson	Link included in draft minutes and sent to Phil for circulation		Pending
21	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Council to liaise with Project Working Group to finalise tenure and pass on appreciation of Taskforce to members in close.	Central Coast Council			Pending
22	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Council to provide update on financial position with regard to any related impact on project as further information becomes available.	Central Coast Council			Pending
23	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Paul Donaldson to distribute Communications and Engagement Plan to Taskforce for review once available.	Paul Donaldson (CCC)			Pending
24	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Phil Watson to draft amended TORs clause for consideration outside of meeting, relating to publication of the minutes.	Phil Watson			Pending
25	13/10/2020	Wamberal Seawall Advisory Taskforce (External)	Sharon Molloy and Phil Watson to follow up about provision of Taskforce documents on State website, with view to consider that Council website would include a link to State page.	Sharon Molloy (DPIE) / Phil Watson			Pending
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