

Meeting Notes

Date: 9 December 2021	Time: 8am – 10.30am	Venue: Stockton Surf Life Saving Club
Meeting No: 26	Meeting Objective: Provide an overview of the Evaluation Report for the Extended CMP and the progress on CMP 2020 actions	

CLG Members

Barbara Whitcher	SCLG Member (Chairperson)
Callan Nickerson	SCLG Member (present part of meeting)
Amanda Plumsted	SCLG Member
Keith Craig	SCLG Member
Ron Boyd	SCLG Member
Ian Taggart	SCLG Member
Lucas Gresham	SCLG Member

City of Newcastle

Councillor Nuatali Nelmes	Lord Mayor
Councillor Declan Clausen	Deputy Lord Mayor
Matthew Murray	Chief of Staff, Lord Mayor's Office
Joanne Rigby	Acting Director Infrastructure and Property
Liz Mitchell	Acting Manager Assets and Projects (until 10am)
Philippa Hill	Senior Strategist – Environment
Suzanne Laucht	Environmental Strategist
Wayne Woodward	Project Manager
Jacinta Campbell	Senior Advisor Communication & Engagement
Jack Slater	Program Delivery Manager

Consultants

Heiko Loehr	Bluecoast Consultant Engineers
Leo Drynan	Rhelm

Observers

Willow Forsyth	Community Member
Paul Johnson	Stockton Community Member on Newcastle CMP Working Group
Jessica Morris	Port Stephens Council
Rean Lourens	Port Stephens Council
Angus Seberry	Hunter Water (online)
Craig Heinjus	Dept Communities & Justice (online)
Elizabeth Dyer	Dept Agriculture, Water & Environment (online)
Leo Rose	Dept Agriculture, Water & Environment (online)
Sonia McKay	Transport for NSW, NSW Maritime (online)
Mike Bardsley	HCCDC (online)
Brad Duncan	Heritage NSW (online)

Apologies

Simon Jones	SCLG Member
Sean Shotter	SCLG Member
Evan Watterson	Bluecoast
	Port of Newcastle
	Mining, Exploration and Geoscience (MEG)
	Crown Lands

1. Welcome and Apologies

- BWhitcher provided an acknowledgement of Country and thanked all for attending the meeting. Wayne Woodward was introduced as the new Project Manager with CN working on the Stockton CMP 2020 implementation works.
- Apologies were noted and recorded.
- PHill provided members with a sheet to capture any additional questions that may not get answered in the meeting due to time constraints. Responses to these will be circulated at a later date

2. Previous Meeting Notes

- Notes of the meeting of 8 July 2021 were endorsed.
- BWhitcher asked about the outcome of any appeal regarding the unsuccessful grant funding application for Barrie Crescent rock bag works. CN advised there is no additional information and works won't be funded via a grant.

3. Taskforce Update

- The Lord Mayor advised the new Deputy Premier, Paul Toole, is committed to the Deputy Premier's Stockton Beach Taskforce and to getting sand back on beach. The Taskforce is expected to meet early next year.

4. Extended Stockton CMP Development Update

4.1 Coastal Inundation Assessment Overview – provided by Bluecoast, Heiko Loehr

- The purpose of this assessment is to identify and map the present and future coastal inundation exposure in terms of extent and depth at Stockton. It is not an assessment of vulnerability.
- The coastal inundation assessment is limited to storm-related flooding by seawater due to elevated ocean water levels (storm surge) and wave processes. It considers both quasi-static elevated water levels (tide, surge and wave setup) and dynamic, wave driven water levels (wave runup) that leads to over wash and overtopping of coastal barriers.
- Inundation maps are based on existing topography without consideration of drainage infrastructure, infiltration, and physical obstructions such as vegetation and/or buildings. Consequently, the results are considered conservative.
- The numerical modelling approach and coastal inundation mapping was validated against the peak of the East Coast Low event on 15 July 2020 and photos and stories from the community overall matched quite well.
- Key coastal inundation sites for all planning periods were identified as South Stockton Beach (Caravan Park), Surf Life Saving Club (SLSC) seawall, the stretch between SLSC and Mitchell St seawall and the low coastal barrier around Meredith St and towards the old Hunter Water site.

Question/Comment	Answer
Projections look the same in the mapping for each scenario year. Why are we not seeing great difference between the scenarios?	Key differences in depths were pointed out in the 2120 scenario.
Sea level rise scenario for 2120	0.9 metres sea rise above the 1999 levels.
1:100 ARI event?	Yes, it assumes the 100-year rain event
Did you look at other event scenarios? What exposure?	Yes, there is a section in the report which covers that.
Does the report show velocity and speed on these events?	No
Is there anything that should be done today, or wait for it to happen?	The short- and medium-term management actions were identified within the Stockton

	CMP 2020 plan - raising Mitchell Street seawall and getting mass sand nourishment. These will be reviewed with the development of the Extended CMP. This information will be used to inform the detailed design.
What was the return event used in the validation process?	1:100-year event.
Another 1:100 year event the entire peninsula of Stockton would be breached	The extent provided is conservative and doesn't include the drains and ground infiltration.

ACTION: The Coastal Inundation Assessment Report to be circulated to committee members after the meeting.

4.2 Evaluation Report Overview – presented by Bluecoast, HLoehr and Rhelm, LDrynan

Further information and breakdown of the analysis and the benefits in relation to each landholder is covered in detail in the presentation pack

Economic evaluation (presented by Rhelm)

- An economic appraisal using a cost benefit analysis (CBA) whereby the comparative costs and benefits of each scheme were assessed against the base case scenario.
- The economic results indicate that all four options are considered economically viable as indicated by a benefit to cost ratio (BCR) over 1. This means that the benefits to society outweigh the costs.
- This analysis also identified beach amenity (67.7%) as the primary contributor to the economic benefit.
- A distributional analysis was undertaken to identify the key beneficiaries of Scheme 1 to inform the potential distribution of costs. This assessment identified the largest beneficiaries as the people of Newcastle and NSW, with 67.7% attributed to beach users from both within and outside the LGA.

Non-economic evaluation: Multi-Criteria Assessment (presented by Bluecoast)

- A non-economic and qualitative appraisal was completed using a multiple criteria assessment (MCA). Its purpose was to capture criteria to support decision making on identifying the preferred scheme based on values that cannot be directly quantified in monetary terms and ensure alignment with the overall CMP strategy and Coastal Management Act 2016 (CM Act) objectives.
- There was discussion about the critical importance of representing the impact of the Harbour Infrastructure and the benefits that infrastructure generates for NSW and Australia within the Report. It was felt that this required strong representation within the report as it distinguishes the Stockton situation as unique from any other coastal erosion locations. It was felt that without it, Stockton is unlikely to be given priority funding consideration. The general community and SCLG members feel extremely strongly on this point. The acknowledgment of the indirect benefits on mental health were also questioned.
- It was explained that the guidelines for the CBA are set by NSW Treasury where the methodology is defined by legislation. While the Harbour infrastructure could not be incorporated within this CBA for the coastal erosion management schemes its relationship to the problem is clearly articulated in the Report and will be reinforced to the State Government.
- CN has followed the State mandated process through the Coastal Management Act 2016 and Coastal Management Manual to provide the justification needed to support funding discussions. This justification includes the benefit of the works to the people of Newcastle and NSW identified by the Report combined with causal relationship of the Harbour infrastructure identified in the Sand Movement Study.

ACTION – CN to work with Rhelm / Bluecoast to review the strength in which the impact of the Harbour Infrastructure is represented within the Report.

ACTION - Discussion with Rhelm / Bluecoast regarding how the report represents mental health benefits

Questions and answers not covered as part of this discussion are captured below.

Question / Comment	Answer
For the annual top up, is PoN on board? Do we expect them to give that amount of sand each year?	<p>CN – PoN have confirmed they will continue to provide appropriate sand from maintenance dredging of the Harbour Entrance as defined by their current permit and will work to incorporate this in subsequent renewals. This will be included as action items within the CMP.</p> <p>The volumes provided from maintenance dredging fluctuates. It is not expected that Stockton's sand requirements will be met from one single source which is why CN is working to progress both Harbour and offshore sand sources.</p>
Why use 1 (low performing) to 3 (high performing) system, not 1 to 5 in MCA?	Quantitative analysis can be a challenge, but the 1-3 system makes it clear - being no, yes or somewhere in between.
Concern for continuous supply of sand. Has that been accommodated? Guaranteed option of resupply needed.	Yes, uncertainty of sand supply was incorporated into the MCA. Acknowledgment that multiple sand sources will be needed to ensure a sustainable supply of sand.
With the costing of the sand supply, what source is it based on?	Bluecoast – several sand sources were costed but offshore provided the most economic option.

4.3 Where to from here? (presented by PHill)

- From the information presented in the Draft Evaluation Report; CN and Northern Landholders consider Scheme 1 - mass sand nourishment supported by annual sand nourishment top ups as the best solution for Stockton both economically, socially, and environmentally.
- It will restore the natural sand supply equivalent to the long-term loss rate and maintain the northerly flow of sand. It addresses the key stakeholder concerns; no increase in erosion rates on any location, northern Stockton Beach will not be flooded with sand, a sand buffer is provided for the landfill and key community assets.
- Key takeaway – The value of the beach amenity benefits far outweigh the protection benefits. This showcases those benefits of sand nourishment extend beyond Stockton.

Sand Sources and Funding

- Acknowledgment that the success of scheme 1 hinges on securing sand sources and funding.
- CN is continuing to work within its remit to progress the investigation of both harbour and offshore sources as well as extraction and placement approvals.
- CN is currently investigating what Council can afford and will initiate discussions with Hunter Water and the NSW State Government regarding an appropriate funding structure for scheme 1.
- The CBA method of economic analysis cannot directly attribute benefits and therefore costs to the Harbour Infrastructure as they are not a beneficiary of coastal management works on Stockton Beach.
- The Draft Evaluation Report findings combined with the causal relationship of the Harbour Infrastructure to the erosion at Stockton as identified by the Sand Movement Study, provides the justification that the NSW Government has a role to play in financially supporting the solution.

Next steps

- Continue to liaise with the DP Premier and the Taskforce regarding approvals and confirmation of funding structure for sand sourcing.
- Actively chase all the different sand sourcing options and ensure CN can accept suitable sand from multiple locations as they become available.
- Management actions will be drafted over the coming months focusing on sand nourishment, public access, short-term protection, heritage and environment management. Discussions will be held to secure agreement and/or funding support with those agencies that have direct ownership or involvement.
- Revisit CMP 2020 actions, and sub-emergency action plan considering the outcomes of the inundation report.
- SCLG workshop, hopefully in April to review all draft action items.
- BWhitcher has asked for a summary of key meeting points ahead of the minutes.
- PHill reiterated the importance of going forward with a collective front. Community and CN as one unified voice in support of securing funding commitment.

ACTION: PHill will provide a summary with presentation prior to the circulation of the minutes

5. Stockton CMP 2020 Implementation Update

5.1 Sand Nourishment update (presented by WWoodward)

An overview of works in progress was provided. Refer to presentation slides.

The solution to ongoing sand supply for Stockton will be a collective approach from numerous sources as they become available.

Aim:

1. Stockton Beach is the primary beneficial reuse location for all suitable sand from the Harbour.
2. We have effective and adaptable designs and approvals in place for Stockton Beach that enable CN to receive appropriate sand as it becomes available.
3. Establish a long-term sustainable sand supply for Stockton.

Offshore Extraction

- The Offshore Sand Assessment Report has been reviewed by CN and is currently being finalised by MEG. It identified three potential sources of sand supply, 2 x bodies further to the east, 1 x close to river mouth. It did not identify any further assessment that may be needed or approval process.
- In the absence of guidance from the Taskforce, CN has engaged a consultant to provide an approval pathway roadmap. This will identify the approval pathways, permits and secondary permits that may be required. We will be seeking feedback from the DP Taskforce once this is completed to confirm its accuracy in terms of consent authority, level of assessment and ownership of the exploration / mining licence.

Harbour Sand

- CN is to work closely with the Port of Newcastle (PoN) to ensure that Stockton is identified as the primary beneficial reuse location for all suitable dredge material within the renewal of the Sea Dumping Permit for maintenance dredging and Long-term Monitoring and Management Plan. Comments will be supplied directly to Dept Agriculture, Water & Environment.
- CN has confirmed its interest with the PoN in the beneficial reuse of any future material arising from this 2013 Dredging Approval for the Strategic Dredging project (Container terminal).

Placement Approvals & Design

- Engineering concept design will cover numerous placement volumes; amenity nourishment, mass nourishment and ongoing top-ups. It will incorporate different placement locations for sand of different qualities and quantities.
- A comment was made that it is unreasonable to expect CN to undertake an EIS for offshore extraction.

5.2 South Arm Feasibility Assessment Update – (presented by Bluecoast)

An overview of the scope and progress of this investigation was given. See presentation slides for detail. Questions raised during this discussion are summarised below.

Question/Comment	Answer
Would we have to wait for a capital works project?	If the funding for extraction was available, you would not need to wait for a capital Port development. However, if extraction is completed as part of a capital works program the proponent would need to bear most of the costs. The purpose of the investigation is to confirm the suitability of the sand so that an opportunity for Stockton is not lost.
Have you expanded on what site constraints were and do they include effects on harbour operations?	Bluecoast – yes, this has been looked at.

5.3 Other Land Based Actions – (presented by WWoodward)

- Barrie crescent rock bags recently completed.
- King Street breakwater extension and rehabilitation – works include improved pedestrian and vehicle access. Designs and REF are complete, and CN is currently in the process of procuring rock now, due for completion towards first half of next year.
- Existing Mitchell Street seawall rehabilitation – monitoring and upgrade needed for structural integrity.
- Buried terminal protection structure in feasibility stage investigating vertical wall structures at the southern end of Mitchell Street and either end of the SLSC seawall. Its purpose is to protect assets in the case of a large weather event prior to mass sand nourishment.
- Dune work - CN operational teams are continuing to work to increase the local resilience Stockton's dunes, particularly along Meredith Street and Corroba oval. We request the communities continued cooperation to minimising vandalism of this work particularly from vehicles on the beach.
- Beach scraping - CN operational teams are continuing to monitor the sand levels along Stockton Beach and have fortunately been able to take advantage of favourable weather conditions and conduct two sand scraping campaigns focusing on the Stockton Holiday Caravan Park and Dalby Oval dunes in recent months. One round took place in October and one took place last week.
- There was discussion surrounding the triggers and importance of sand scraping as the most cost effective and immediate solution to sand supply. There is strong community opinion that every opportunity needs to be taken advantage of
- PDonaldson acknowledged and made observation of all the work CN is doing, enormous resources are being provided.

Question/Comment	Response
Accessways at Little Beach need to be wider for access by surf lifesaving vehicles especially in emergency situations	WWoodward will take on board and put into high priority in design consideration.

ACTION: CN to provide a more detailed response to the SCLG regarding the trigger for sand scraping.

6. General Business

PHill provided a list of what has been achieved over the past 12-18 months to progress coastal management at Stockton since the certification of the Stockton CMP 2020, which includes:

- ✓ Sand Movement Study

- ✓ Coastal Inundation Assessment
- ✓ Love Our Coast Community Survey – capturing beach visitation data
- ✓ Feasibility Assessment into coastal management options for the Extended CMP area
- ✓ Workshops on the four complementary management scheme with SCLG, Government Agencies, Worimi and a month-long community survey capturing broad community feedback on the four options
- ✓ Evaluation Report drafted
- ✓ Grant Applications – rock bags, seawall work, harbour investigations and to support the development of the extended CMP
- ✓ Investigation of harbour-based sand sources commenced
- ✓ Consultation with Port of Newcastle and relevant government agencies to confirm Stockton as the primary beneficial reuse location of suitable sand
- ✓ Review of Offshore Sand Assessment Report
- ✓ Advice on planning pathway offshore sand extraction and placement
- ✓ Formed and held first meeting of the Newcastle Coastal Management Working Group
- ✓ Ongoing implementation of the CMP 2020 actions including rockbags, dune works, sand scraping and renewal of accessways.

BWhitcher and the Lord Mayor thanked Philippa and the team for all the achievements.

Meeting closed.