

Minutes of the Tweed Coast and Waterways Committee Meeting held Wednesday 13 October 2021

Venue: Virtual

Time: 9am

Present: Mayor Chris Cherry; Rhonda James (Chair); David Cranwell; Jane Lofthouse; Marama Hopkins; Tom Alletson; Lindy Smith; Bruce Peate; Robert Quirk; Carl Cormack; Jonathan Yantsch, Ben Fitzgibbon, John Harbison; Joanna Gardner; Bill Hoskins, Frances Smith-Wright (Minutes).

David Burgener; Scott Benitez Hetherington (TSC 10:30 – 11am)

Apologies: Peter Comerford

Acknowledgement of the Bundjalung Nation

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Moved: David Cranwell

Seconded: Cr Chris Cherry

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Committee meeting held 11 August 2021 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Tom informed the committee that the Executive Leadership Team had amended the wording (as per italics) prior to the Minutes going to Council.

A4. Cudgen / Chinderah drainage

Changes highlighted:

RECOMMEND that Council:

1. Notes the concerns about the potential environmental impact of the proposed West Kingscliff drainage strategy.
2. Notes the requests of the Committee to consider the longer-term viability of this development post 2100 in regard the further potential clearing or other environmental impacts that may be required to address sea level rise and increased flood and storm events.
3. Notes the requests of the Committee to limit development to avoid significant environmental impacts including clearing of native vegetation.
4. *Notes that it is more appropriate for drainage and drain management matters to be assessed on its merits by Council's technical staff through specific development assessments in accordance with Council's existing planning controls.*

These minutes will go to the October Council meeting. It was also noted that the planning proposal by Gales Holdings for West Kingscliff was rejected so there will be a renewed process of considering flooding, drainage and related matters on future proposals.

Business Arising:

BA1. Crown Land License application delays

No resolution yet. There has been communication between Director Engineering and Crown Lands staff on the matter. Once Minutes of the August TCWC meeting are adopted by Council, a letter will be written to the Crown Lands Commissioner.

BA2. Erosion at Keith Compton Drive

Tom noted that erosion continues to worsen and that there are no measures available to prevent it. Community complaints are increasing. There has been no response from NSW MIDO in regard to Council's request for assistance at the present time.

BA3. Cudgen Creek boat ramp

After meeting with community members several initiatives have been implemented including new signage on the boat ramp and educational content aimed at both boaters and the general public through traditional and social media. The social media post reached 9035 people and resulted in engagement from 96. Majority of comments were positive and Bruce confirmed the local boating community were supportive. The communication team suggested revisiting this again just before the holidays which may increase impact.

BA 4. Tweed Open Coast Management Program

David requested an update on the Tweed Coastline Coastal Management Program. Jane confirmed that a grant was being applied for and detailed consultant brief was being developed for stages 2, 3 & 4 in 2022.

Agenda Items:

A1. International River Prize Nomination

The committee expressed Congratulations to Tom, Jane and their team for being in the final three for the International River Prize.

Tom suggested that although they did not win it, Council and the TCWC should try and leverage the outcome and use it to increase profile.

Cr Chris Cherry expressed how proud she was to work with the Council and to be part of these projects.

A2. Tweed Estuary CMP update – response from Transport for NSW Maritime

Transport for NSW – Maritime's suggested amendments to be completed prior to their approval of the CMP were listed in the letter.

Tom advised that changes to the CMP could and would be made which reflected the Transport for NSW - Maritime requested amendments, but would also preserve the intent of the CMP actions, respecting the extensive process and findings used to generate these actions.

The committee discussed Maritime's comments at length, and expressed dismay and concern at the wording "*evidence based studies and not merely subjective observations*". It was suggested that Maritime did not perhaps understand the process of developing a CMP consistent with the Coastal Management Act and Manual.

Concern was also expressed regarding the decision to supersede the Tweed River Boating Management Plan with other non-Tweed specific, high level NSW Government strategies. This being done with no prior notice to Council, or consultation, despite clear knowledge of the importance of this issue to the CMP preparation process, and Maritime's statutory and TCWC based role.

It was confirmed that it would be important for Council to respond to Transport for NSW - Maritime, expressing concern and enquiring into the basis of the "*merely subjective observations*" comment, and seeking further information on future plans for management of vessels on the Tweed River.

Resolved that Tom and Jane to draw up a response to Transport for NSW - Maritime letter.

A3. Norrie's Head Master Plan.

David Burgener (Community Development Officer – Cultural Planning) and Scott Benitez Hetherington (Senior Program Leader – Biodiversity) joined the meeting.

David presented the draft master plan for Norries Head which is currently on public exhibition. Community consultation included formation of a local reference group to guide the process. This project was listed in Council's Open Space Strategy 2019-2029.

The master plan proposed outcomes include improved parking, better connectivity with pathways, additional viewing platforms, improved seating and dune fencing. A report is to go to the November Council meeting following review of public feedback.

Tom queried how the masterplan dealt with behavioural issues at Norries Head. David suggested several ways of changing how the community use the areas:

- Infrastructure – design encourages a particular usage of space.
- Community engagement – having a working group from the local community involved.

David explained that costings had not been finalised, but they wanted to complete the plan and have it ready for when grants became available. The plan would most likely be implemented in stages over the next ten years.

Tom and Scott are commencing a similar master planning project for the headland at Hastings Point, and discussed how consultation would be considered with the Norries Head process used as a template. There are funds already allocated to preparation of the Hastings Point management plan.

A4. Recent erosion stabilisation works adjacent to Tweed Valley Way

Artificial reef habitats are being placed into the river in four revetment sites along Tweed Valley Way. Timber habitat structures will be deployed at another project site near Stott's Island.

Discussion on the benefits of monitoring fish usage of artificial habitats of differing designs. Tom noted that a consulting firm has been engaged to do a before / after fish activity monitoring with underwater cameras at the location of several fish habitat creation sites.

A5. Cudgen Creek Foreshore.

Tom presented an overview of issues along the lower foreshores of Cudgen Creek. Matthew Bloor is developing a program of works for a range of people management options to address impacts from uncontrolled access and bank erosion.

Of particular concern is a scour point on the east side of the creek, approximately 200m downstream from the bridge. Erosion in this location is impacting upon the road access into Cudgen Headland.

A coastal engineer would likely be required to undertake an assessment of treatment options at this location, rather than erosion being stabilised with an ad hoc extension of the existing revetment.

Outstanding items:

O1. Gold Coast Airport Ecological Monitoring

Tom confirmed sending out letter from Council to Marion Charlton at Gold Coast Airport regarding supply of ecological reports. No response as yet.

O2. Cobaki Lakes Saltmarsh Rehabilitation

Marama advised there has been no formal reply from the Department of Planning.

General Business:

GB1: David Cranwell requested Council to look at the sand build up where Christies Creek enters the Cudgera Creek estuary.

Discussion on the difficulties in pursuing such a project were highlighted. Agreed that a preliminary investigation would look at growth of the sand shoal, possible impacts on flooding and water quality and the environmental constraints and approval processes for dredging. Tom to report back to the committee.

RESOLVED

That Council staff undertake preliminary investigations into impacts from, and management options for, the sand shoal west of the Cudgera Creek bridge and report back to the committee.

Moved: Robert Quirk

Seconded: David Cranwell

GB2: Jack Evans Boat Harbor.

Cr Chris Cherry suggested looking at a long term plan for erosion at Jack Evans Boat Harbour, noting that revetments need rehabilitation.

Stewart Brawley to be invited to advise on plans for management of JEBH.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Tweed Coast and Waterways Committee will be held Wednesday 1 December 2021 9am.

Minutes



The meeting closed at 11.45am.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS