



Appendix B

Communications and Engagement
Plan and Summary Report

Communications and Engagement Plan and Summary Report

Port Stephens Coastal Management Program

November 2023



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

Port Stephens CMP Communicati

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1. Context

This Communications and Engagement Plan and Summary (CEPS) report sets out our strategy to engage with the broader community and stakeholders and documents the outcomes of the engagement activities undertaken in relation to the Port Stephens Coastal Management Program (CMP).

The NSW *Coastal Management Act 2016* (CM Act) and the NSW Coastal Management Manual (CM Manual; OEH, 2018) require that engagement be undertaken with a range of community and other stakeholders when preparing a CMP, including:

- State Government agencies;
- Committees comprised of Local and State Government agency staff, including:
 - Port Stephens Council (PSC) Steering Group;
 - PSC Business Units working group;
 - Stakeholder Reference Group;
- Local Aboriginal community:
 - Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC);
 - Worimi Conservation Lands Board;
 - Birubi Point Aboriginal Advisory Group;
- Affected landholders; and
- The broader community.

This Plan aligns with the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) principles for engagement and the Port Stephens Communication and Engagement Strategy 2022 to 2027 (PSC, 2022), as well as the CM Act and the CM Manual.

1.1 Background

The CMP study area encompasses Port Stephens, including the Inner and Outer Port up to the northern Local Government Area (LGA) boundary, as well as the open coast including Stockton Bight and the headlands and embayed beaches to the north.

A CMP is prepared in five stages as illustrated in **Figure 1-1**. Port Stephens Council commenced the Port Stephens CMP in 2019 with the preparation of the CMP Stage 1 Scoping Study (PSC, 2020), which set the context and scope for the CMP, including evaluation of threats to the coastal zone.

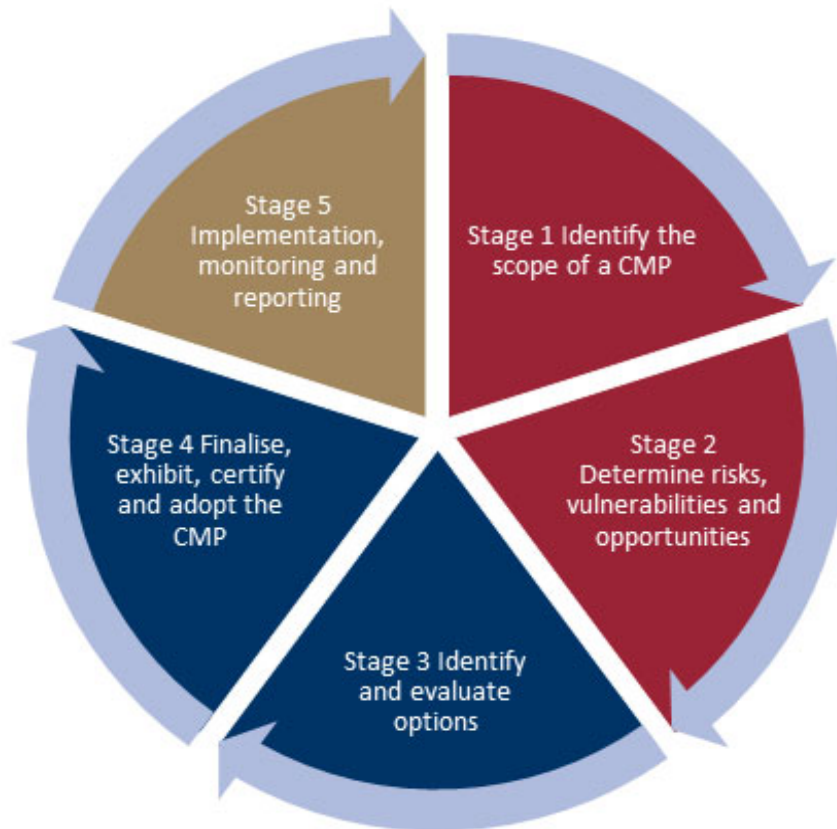


Figure 1-1 Stages in preparing and implementing a CMP (after: OEH, 2018)

Council has also undertaken Stage 2, which involved a range of investigations to fill knowledge gaps and evaluate risk to key values and uses of the coastal zone. These included:

- An assessment of coastal inundation for the study area at 2020, 2040, 2070 and 2120 (BMT, 2021);
- A probabilistic assessment of beach erosion and shoreline recession for the open coast at 2020, 2040, 2070 and 2120 (BMT, 2021);
- An assessment of dune transgression at Stock Bight at 2020, 2040, 2070 and 2120 (BMT, 2021);
- An audit and condition assessment of coastal protection structures (BMT, 2021);
- An assessment of risk to key Council assets (roads, stormwater and key facilities, e.g. surf life saving clubs, schools, etc.) arising from coastal and tidal inundation (BMT, 2022a);
- An assessment of risk to private properties based on land usage from coastal and tidal inundation (BMT, 2022a); and
- An audit of water quality objectives and actions from previous documents, strategies and plans (BMT, 2022b).

A range of stakeholder and community engagement activities were undertaken as part of these previous studies. The outcomes of these engagement activities has

been used to inform our preliminary understanding of what the community values about the Port Stephens coastline and what they expect when it comes to management of the coast.

The Port Stephens CMP considers current and future land use and population, how the coast is used and enjoyed by the community, coast-dependent economic activity, and Aboriginal cultural heritage. It captures the community views and expectations on how the coastline should be managed into the future.

2. Engagement and Communication Objectives

The objectives of this CEPS are to:

- Confirm that Council have considered the community and stakeholder feedback in consultation undertaken in CMP Stages 1 and 2 and have progressed the suggestions made in these earlier stages.
- Increase community awareness of the CMP and facilitate feedback and submission of ideas and concerns about acceptable risk and around how the coast in their local area should be managed in the future.
- Inform the key stakeholders and the community about the coastal hazard mapping, particularly affected landholders.
- Seek feedback on potential coastal management options.
- Identify and report on the preferred coastal management options for inclusion as actions in the CMP, and in doing so, clarify the roles and responsibilities for implementation of the CMP over the next 10 years.

The commitment made in this CEPS regarding Stages 3 and 4 of the CMP (in particular the management options and the evaluation process) is that it will:

- Raise awareness of the strategic and staged approach to management of coastal issues.
- Ensure the community have had an opportunity to inform how the coast is managed in the future for their local area.
- Provide Council with early feedback about coastal management actions that are acceptable and of a high priority to local communities and the broader population of the LGA and visitors to Port Stephens.
- Clarify the agency roles and public authority position on coastal management actions that require a collaborative effort, for instance around compliance issues and prioritisation of public access and recreational amenity.
- Help identify communities or groups requiring more targeted engagement or a different engagement approach to facilitate conversations and gain feedback on coastal hazards, management options and legal implications.
- Ensure that the approach to evaluating the management options (i.e. the feasibility, viability (cost-benefit) and acceptability assessments) is transparent and well-communicated.
- Build on previous consultation undertaken over 2019-2022 during previous stages of the CMP and ensure that the community feels that their previous feedback was heard.

3. Engagement Principles

1.2 Alignment with Council Strategy

This Port Stephens CMP CEPS aligns with the principles within Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy (PSC, 2022). These include:

- We deliver relevant, timely and easy to understand information
- We're honest and transparent
- We're inclusive and encourage a diversity of voices to be heard
- We listen, value and respect community input and feedback
- We embrace innovation and encourage new ideas.

Council has given effect to these principles through the guiding principles adopted during development of the CMP, as follows:

- We consider the unique character of each place
- We are fair and equitable in outcomes and decisions
- We listen, value and respect community input and feedback
- We prioritise community safety in our planning and decision making.

1.3 Alignment with the IAP2 Framework

The IAP2 is a peak international body advancing the practice of public participation. Their mission is to advance and extend the practice of public participation through professional development, certification, standards of practice, core values, advocacy and key initiatives with strategic partners around the world.

IAP2 Australasia are a member association incorporating individuals, governments, institutions and other entities that affect the public interest throughout the world.

IAP2 has developed tools that are widely used and acknowledged. These include the **Core Values for Public Participation** for use in the development and implementation of public participation processes and the **IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum** which assists with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any community engagement program. Additionally, the **Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement**, is recognised as the international standard for public participation practice.

This CEPS has been prepared in consideration of the IAP2 tools and guidelines, consistent with the requirements of Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy (PSC, 2022).

1.4 Alignment with the CM Act and CM Manual

The CM Act sets out the following requirements for preparing a CMP:

Before adopting a CMP, a local council must consult on the draft program with:

- a) *the community, and*
- b) *if the local council's local government area contains:*
 - (i) *land within the coastal vulnerability area, any local council whose local government area contains land within the same coastal sediment compartment (as specified in Schedule 1), and*
 - (ii) *an estuary that is within two or more local government areas (as specified in Schedule 1), the other local councils, and*
- c) *other public authorities if the coastal management program:*
 - (i) *proposes actions or activities to be carried out by that public authority, or*
 - (ii) *proposed specific emergency actions or activities to be carried out by a public authority under the coastal zone emergency action subplan, or*
 - (iii) *relates to, affects or impacts on any land or assets owned or managed by that public authority.*

The CM Manual provides guidance on how to undertake engagement with stakeholders and the community to achieve the requirements of the CM Act. This guidance has been considered in the preparation of this CEPS.

4. Stakeholder Analysis

It is important to ensure that all those who need to be involved in coastal management (i.e. those with responsibility for managing the coast, community members who use and enjoy the amenity of the coast, and those with a vested interest in its management, such as property owners, refer **Figure 4-1**) are kept informed and invited to contribute to the process to establish a common understanding of coastal management and how decisions are made.



Figure 4-1 Overview of Community Stakeholders

Stakeholders may tend to make judgements about coastal management based solely on their own perceptions. These perceptions can vary due to differences in values, needs, assumptions, concepts, concerns and degrees of knowledge. Stakeholders' views can have a significant impact on how they interpret the decisions made through the coastal management process, so it is important that differences in their perceptions of risk be identified, recorded and addressed.

A stakeholder matrix has been developed to identify relevant stakeholders, and their relative level of interest, influence and impact on the CMP. The outcomes of this

analysis identify the suitable level of consultation based on the IAP2 consultation spectrum (**Table 4-1**).

The stakeholder matrix is provided in **Table 4-2**. The matrix also indicates the suggested engagement method selected for each stakeholder based on the outcomes of the stakeholder analysis. The details of the engagement methods and the outcomes of the engagement for each are provided in **Section 5**.

Table 4-1 IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Participation Goal	To provide the stakeholders and community with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain stakeholder and community feedback on analyses, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the community and stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the community and stakeholders in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public or stakeholders.
Promise	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listed to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how stakeholder and community input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how stakeholder and community input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

Table 4-2 Stakeholder Matrix

Type	Stakeholder Group(s)	Level of Interest	Level of Influence	Level of Engagement	Methods
Elected Representatives	Federal and State Members of Parliament	Moderate	High	Inform	Council / DPE to notify as required.
	PSC - Councillors	High	High	Empower	Regular communications and two-way presentations
	PSC Project Manager	High	High	Collaborate	Regular project meetings
	PSC CMP Steering Group	High	High	Collaborate	Stage 3 activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project inception meeting • Regular monthly meetings • Review of deliverables
Local Government Port Stephens Council	PSC - other Council teams / staff	High	High	Collaborate	Stage 3 activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at inception meeting • Virtual asset prioritisation workshop • Coastal hazard planning controls workshop • Management options workshop Additional meetings as required.
	PSC - Youth Advisory Panel	Med	Med	Involve	Stage 1 & 2 activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pizza for the Planet Youth week event Stage 3 activities Emails about the CMP, including invitations to drop-in sessions / workshops

Type	Stakeholder Group(s)	Level of Interest	Level of Influence	Level of Engagement	Methods
Other Local Government	MidCoast Council*	Moderate	Moderate	Inform	Virtual meeting(s), members of Stakeholder Reference Group (see below).
	City of Newcastle*	Moderate	Moderate	Inform	Virtual meeting(s), members of Stakeholder Reference Group (see below).
State Government Agencies	Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) – Environment and Heritage Group (EHG) (project team)*	High	High	Collaborate	Regular project meetings, review of deliverables.
	DPE – National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)*	Moderate	Moderate	Involve	Members of Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) (see below under Advisory Group), virtual meeting(s) as required. Includes those government agencies marked with an asterisk.
	Crown Lands*	Moderate	High		
	Department of Primary Industries (DPI) – Fisheries	Moderate	Low		
	DPI – Marine Parks (Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park)*	Moderate	Moderate		
	Hunter Local Land Services*	Moderate	Moderate		
Transport for NSW (including the Maritime Infrastructure Development Organisation (MIDO))*	Moderate	Moderate			

Type	Stakeholder Group(s)	Level of Interest	Level of Influence	Level of Engagement	Methods
	DPE – EHG (other than project team)	Moderate	Moderate	Consult	
	DPE – Planning	Moderate	High	Consult	As required.
Advisory bodies	PSC CMP Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG)	High	High	Collaborate	<p>Stage 3 activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastal hazard workshop Workshop to discuss management options Meetings and correspondence regarding potential management options <p>This group includes those government agencies above marked with an asterisk.</p>
Traditional Owners	Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), Karuah LALC and Aboriginal community representatives and Elders	High	High	Involve	<p>Stage 1 activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial briefing on CMP via Aboriginal Strategic Committee <p>Stage 3 activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial briefing on CMP Meeting to discuss preferred engagement approach Follow-up discussion to confirm low level of interest in ongoing engagement.
	Worimi Conservation Lands Board (WCLB)*	High	High	Involve	<p>Stage 3 activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastal hazard workshop Workshop to discuss management options <p>Meetings and correspondence regarding potential management options.</p>

Type	Stakeholder Group(s)	Level of Interest	Level of Influence	Level of Engagement	Methods
	Birubi Point Cultural Heritage Advisory Group	Medium	Medium	Consult	Stage 3 activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial briefing on CMP Updates provided via email.
	Native Title claimants	High	High	Consult	As required.
Community organisations (in alphabetical order)	Bay area Boardriders Birubi Point SLSC EcoNetwork Port Stephens # Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove Progress Association Fingal Bay Parks Group Fingal Beach Surf Life Saving Club Friends of Tomaree National Park Karuah Progress Association Marine Rescue - Lemon Tree Passage Marine Rescue - Nelson Bay Medowie Progress Association One Mile Surf Club Port Stephens Koalas Shoal Bay Community Association	Medium	Low	Consult	Stage 3 activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct emails about the CMP, including invitations to drop-in sessions / workshops

Type	Stakeholder Group(s)	Level of Interest	Level of Influence	Level of Engagement	Methods
	Soldiers Point Community Group South Tomaree Community Association Tilligerry Community Association Tilligerry Habitat Tomaree Ratepayers & Residents Association#				Stage 2 activities: Online catch up with key community interest groups marked with a # Stage 3 activities: Direct emails about the CMP, including invitations to drop-in sessions / workshops
Community organisations – Landcare groups	Anna Bay Landcare Group Boat Harbour Volunteers Group Corlette Reserves and Landcare Group Fern Bay Seaside Group Fingal Bay Parks Group Fishermans Bay Landcare Fly Point Nature Reserve Group Gan Gan Lookout Group Karuah Landcare Group Kent Guardians				Stage 3 activities: Direct emails about the CMP, including invitations to drop-in sessions / workshops

Type	Stakeholder Group(s)	Level of Interest	Level of Influence	Level of Engagement	Methods
	Lemon Tree Passage Parks Reserves and Landcare Group				Stage 3 activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct emails about the CMP, including invitations to drop-in sessions / workshops
	Mallabulla Parks and Environment Group				
	Mambo Wanda Wetlands Reserves and Landcare Group				
	Nelson Bay West Landcare Volunteers Group				
	Nyrang Reserve				
	Shoal Bay Landcare Group				
	Shoal Bay West Landcare Group				
	Soldiers Point - Salamander Bay Landcare Group				
	Tanilba Foreshore Parks Group				
	Tilligerry Landcare Group				

Type	Stakeholder Group(s)	Level of Interest	Level of Influence	Level of Engagement	Methods
Individuals	Residents and rate payers	High	Medium	Consult	Stage 3 activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 10.7 notifications mail-out and targeted face-to-face engagement with landholders in key hazard 'hot spots' • Community drop-in sessions (4) on coastal hazards • Virtual (1) and face-to-face workshops (2) on management options.
	Local businesses and employees	High	Medium	Consult	
	Visitors	Low	Low	Consult	
Media	Local news outlets	Medium	Medium	Consult	In addition, updates were provided via social media, newspaper adverts and project webpage. Videos and fact sheets were prepared to support engagement activities. Direct emails to local media channels as per standard protocols when issuing media releases.

5. Communication and Engagement Methods and Key findings

5.1 Stage 1

Port Stephens Council commenced the Port Stephens CMP in 2019 with the preparation of the CMP Stage 1 Scoping Study (PSC, 2020), which set the context and scope for the CMP, including evaluation of threats to the coastal zone.

This stage was a broad introduction of the CMP to the local community and key stakeholders.

Stage 1 Communication and Engagement objectives were specifically:

- to raise the profile of the CMP to community especially those that live in and utilise the coastal zone;
- refine the community values for specific locations around Port Stephens
- raise awareness to foreshore residents in CMP risk areas; and
- Identify opportunities for the review of proposed management actions.

A description of the communication and engagement methods is provided in **Table 5-1** and **Table 5-2**, respectively, together with a summary of the key outcomes.

Table 5-1 Stage 1 Communication Methods

Communication Methods	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Have your say website page	Inform the broad community about the project provide opportunity for people to download information, participate in providing feedback via a survey and contact point for questions.	February 2019 to July 2020	Total visits: 192 Document downloads: 47
General PSC website page	Inform the broad community about the project provide opportunity for people to download information.	January 2019 to July 2020	See https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program
Factsheets	Preparation of fact sheets to help provide support and to gather input into survey Preparation of Coastal Management Program Stage 1 Scoping Study Key Points	July 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two sheets were prepared to use for low tech, event friendly survey regarding coastal use and values. • Stage 1 - Scoping Study Key Points document on website https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program/key-documents

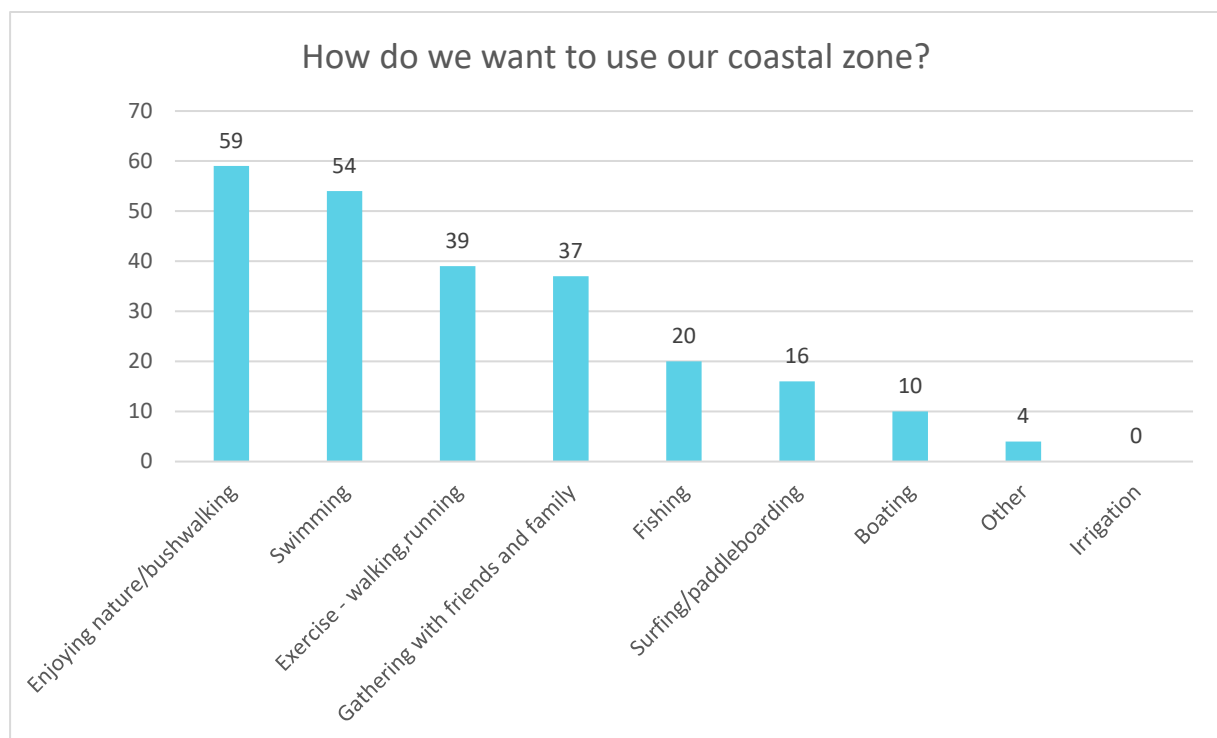
Table 5-2 Stage 1 Engagement Methods

Engagement Methods	Description	Timing	Outcomes
PSC Steering Group Meetings	Monthly meetings were held beginning in May 2018.	May 2018 – July 2019	Monthly meetings were used to provide updates on progress with the CMP and discuss key issues.
Stakeholder presentations and meetings	Various stakeholders presentations and meetings	January 2019 – July 2019	Written feedback received from key agencies to help develop Stage 1 Scoping Study including Mid-Coast Council, Marine Parks, OEH, Local Land Services
Survey	Survey used at local events (3) to collect information on how we use the coastal zone and the value of the coastal zone.	January 2019 – July 2019	Survey results are used to help define community values in scoping study.

Stage 1 Key findings

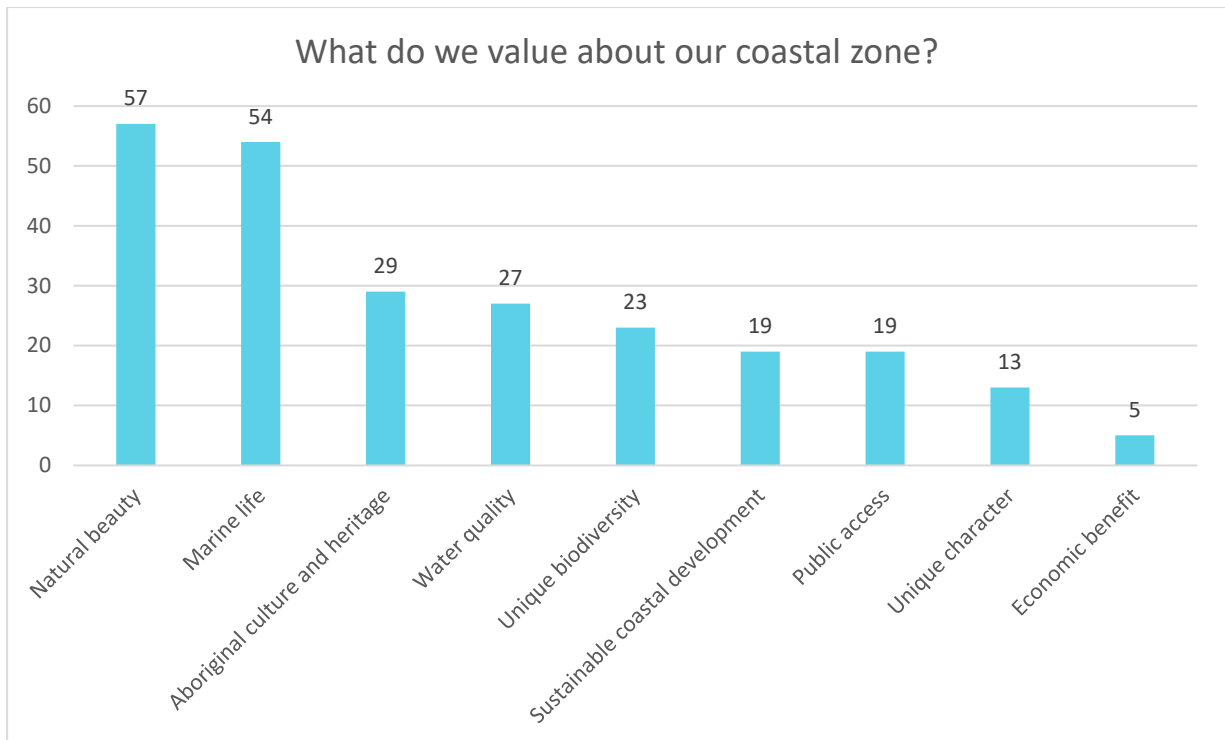
One of the primary objectives of this stage was to obtain early involvement and collaboration across the business units of PSC and with other agencies. The SRG at the time consisted of MidCoast Council, NPWS; Department of Industry – Lands; DPI – Marine Parks and Fisheries, Roads and Maritime Services (now known as Transport for NSW) and Office of Environment and Heritage (now known as DPE). There were a number of workshops throughout Stage 1 with these key external stakeholders to help identify the current coastal hazards, identify existing knowledge and current management actions and what knowledge gaps we have around coastal hazards in Port Stephens.

For the community a simple survey was developed to help understand how people use the coast and what elements they placed the most value on. Respondents were only permitted to provide their top two answers. The survey was used at local events to help raise the profile of the CMP. The survey was conducted using a low tech, event friendly ‘dot’ system. This system also provides an interactive and transparent element as people could see what other people had selected. The three events were the African Olive Field Day in Hinton on 24 March 2019; Seaside Scavenger Event at Robinson Reserve, Anna Bay on 13 April 2019 and from the Youth Week events held in April 2021*. The survey was also available on the online haveyoursay engagement platform where results were also recorded. Survey results are as follows:



N = 239 responses

* data includes (N=22) responses from Youth Week event in 2021 from Stage 2



N = 246 responses

* data includes (N=24) responses from Youth Week event in 2021 from Stage 2

These responses were used together with the SRG feedback, to develop one of the primary outcomes of this stage was the Stage 1 - Scoping Study available on Council's website. The document was created as a 'flip book' for better accessibility as well as downloadable see www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program/key-documents

5.2 Stage 2

Stage 2 of the CMP began in earnest in 2020 when BMT were engaged to undertake a range of investigations to fill knowledge gaps and evaluate risks to key values and uses of the coastal zone which were established in Stage 1.

These investigations included:

- An assessment of coastal inundation for the study area at 2020, 2040, 2070 and 2120 (BMT, 2021);
- A probabilistic assessment of beach erosion and shoreline recession for the open coast at 2020, 2040, 2070 and 2120 (BMT, 2021);
- An assessment of dune transgression at Stock Bight at 2020, 2040, 2070 and 2120 (BMT, 2021);
- An audit and condition assessment of coastal protection structures (BMT, 2021);
- An assessment of risk to key Council assets (roads, stormwater and key facilities, e.g. surf lifesaving clubs, schools, etc.) arising from coastal and tidal inundation (BMT, 2022a);
- An assessment of risk to private properties based on land usage from coastal and tidal inundation (BMT, 2022a); and
- An audit of water quality objectives and actions from previous documents, strategies and plans (BMT, 2022b).

Stage 2 Communication and Engagement objectives were:

- Increase broader community understanding of the CMP in general.
- Increase broader community understanding of the key coastal hazards identified in Stage 1.
- Ensure community input into the development of the CMP.

While Stage 2 was predominantly a stage for technical data gathering there were opportunities to build in community engagement during this phase to help continue the conversation around coastal processes and hazards.

A description of the communications and engagement methods is provided in **Table 5-3** and **Table 5-4**, respectively, together with a summary of the key outcomes.

Table 5-3 Stage 2 Communication Methods

Communication Methods	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Have your say website page	Inform the broad community about the project provide opportunity for people to download information.	July 2020 to October 2022	Provided the community with access to project updates, a project email address and contact, fact sheets and social pinpoint to map area of concern for Stage 2.
General PSC website page	Inform the broad community about the project provide opportunity for people to download information.	July 2020 to October 2022	See https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program
Video	CMP video update for Stage 2	12 November 2020	382 YouTube views See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EF1b08hiFRs and https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program/background or Also shared on social media – see below
Factsheets	Community update – November 2020, ‘What are our coastal hazards?’	November 2020	Currently on Council’s website under key documents: https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program/key-documents
Media releases	Council have sent out 3 media releases relating to the Port Stephens CMP <u>‘Coast lovers invited to learn more at webinar series’</u> November 2020	11 Nov 20	https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/news/2021/coast-lovers-invited-to-learn-more-at-webinar-series
	<u>‘Protecting our planet a key focus for 2021 Youth Week’</u> April 2021	12 Apr 21	https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/news/2021/protecting-our-planet-a-key-focus-for-2021-youth-week
	<u>‘\$200,000 for Port Stephens coastal management’</u> September 2022	7 Sep 22	https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/news/2022/\$200,000-for-port-stephens-coastal-management

Communication Methods	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Social media	Project updates are also provided on Council's Facebook and Instagram social media platform.	12 Nov 20	12 November 2020, CMP video for Stage 2
		16 Nov 20	16 November 2020, Have your say on coastal hazards - Register for our webinars
Direct emails	E-newsletter (have your say database)	18 Nov 2020	Your Community engagement update 18 Nov 2020 Article 'Join a Coastal Management Program webinar' – approximate reach ~4000

Table 5-4 Stage 2 Engagement Methods

Engagement Methods	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Steering Group Meetings	An initial meeting was held with the Stage 2 consultants BMT. In addition, regular Steering Group meetings were held throughout the project.	February 2020 Feb to Oct 2022	Attendees discussed key issues and existing management plans to be considered in the CMP. Regular meetings were used to provide updates on progress with the CMP and discuss key issues.
Presentation to Councillors	Update regarding Stage 1 and 2 progress	27 October 2020	Part of regular communications commitment
Engagement with Traditional Owners	Initial Stage 2 presentation to Aboriginal Strategic Committee	August 2020	Early engagement with representatives from the Worimi and Karuah LALC representatives.
Webinar series	Online webinar series Webinar 1 – dune transgression Webinar 2 – coastal inundation Webinar 3 – coastal erosion	16 Nov 2020 23 Nov 2020 25 Nov 2020	The webinar series were open to interested community members and attended by representatives from Aboriginal community, TRRA Webinars were placed on both the have your say page and Council’s website pages. In early 2023 they were removed following the replacement hazard mapping videos created during early Stage 3 to avoid confusion.
Online mapping tool	An online mapping tool was provided for people to record commentary particularly from the webinar series.	Nov – Dec 2020	This tool was not promoted heavily and was used ad hoc to capture information. Only 10 responses were provided.
Young people	Youth Week event ‘Pizza for the planet’	April 2021	Part of a planned Youth Week events to provide a focus on environmental concerns including climate change. Survey from Stage 1 used to gather youth input. Youtube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Px0ShAXx1Nk

Engagement Methods	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Catch up with key community groups	TRRA, EcoNetwork	8 Sep 2021	Part of regular communications commitment for Stage 2
Water Quality workshops with SRG	Online workshops x 2 with key stakeholder reference group reps	15 Nov 2021	Part of regular communications commitment for Stage 2

Stage 2 Key findings

One of the primary objectives of Stage 2 was to increase broader community understanding of the key coastal hazards as well as the CMP in general.

The webinar series delivered during November 2020 were developed to help provide a basis to increase broader community understanding of the key coastal hazards. The promotion of the webinar series included an introductory video which remained featured on Council's Facebook page for an extended period. This introductory webinar remains on Council's website page.

The feedback from the webinar attendees was positive and questions were answered during the webinar. These webinars remained publicly on Council's website until the beginning of Stage 3 (March 2023) where they were replaced with a new series of videos that were specifically designed to more clearly articulate the hazard mapping.

While Stage 2 was predominantly a technical data gathering stage there were opportunities to build in community engagement during this phase to help continue the conversation around coastal processes and hazards. This is evidenced during Youth week events in April 2021 which focused on environmental issues including climate change and further direct catch-ups with key community interest groups in September 2021.

5.3 Stage 3

A range of communication and engagement methods were developed based on the requirements of the CM Act and CM Manual, the engagement and communications objectives (**Section 2**) and the level of consultation identified for each of the stakeholders (**Table 4-2**).

Stage 3 Communication and Engagement objectives were:

- Increase community awareness of the Coastal Management Program
- Inform the key stakeholders and community about the hazard mapping in particular affected landholders
- Seek feedback on potential management options
- Identify and report on the preferred management options

Stage 3 was the primary stage for gathering input from the stakeholders and community on the potential management options. However, the provision of a community review of the mapping from Stage 2 was considered important particularly due to the time that had elapsed between Stage 2 and Stage 3. Therefore, drop-ins to learn more about the hazard mapping as well as workshops to gather feedback on potential management options were scheduled. These drop-ins and workshops were primarily face to face however there were online options available.

The communications and engagement approach for Stage 3 centred on the delivery of a bulk mail-out to over 4,500 people whose property was impacted by the coastal hazard mapping (2020, 2040, 2070 or 2120). The addressed letter to rate payers invited recipients to attend a drop in and/or workshop. The letter was accompanied by an information flyer.

A description of the communications and engagement methods is provided in **Table 5-5** and **Table 5-6**, respectively, together with a summary of the key outcomes.

Table 5-5 Stage 3 Communication Methods

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Webpage updates	<p>Inform the broad community about the project and develop a list of stakeholders that would like more tailored / detailed project updates or invitations to community events.</p> <p>Improvements to the page during this stage included creating flip books for the hazard mapping: https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program/hazard-mapping</p>	Community engagement launched 1 March 2023	<p>1,446 webpage visits as at August 2023.</p> <p>Public downloads of the Stage 1 and Stage 2 reports.</p> <p>92 people have signed up to the CMP mailing list.</p> <p>Provided the community with access to project updates, a project email address, and fact sheets.</p>
Videos	<p>A new video was created to help explain the Coastal Management Program and specifically the coastal hazards mapping: https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program/hazard-mapping or https://youtu.be/Vi0650o3skw</p>	March 2023	Video views included as part of the webpage visits above.
Factsheets	Preparation of fact sheets to provide information on key topics of interest to the community.	Ongoing	<p>Three fact sheets have been prepared in Stage 3 and shared on the project webpage and at the community drop-in sessions and workshops. Copies of the fact sheets can be found on this website page: https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/coastal-management-program/key-documents</p>

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Media releases	Council have sent out 2 media releases relating to the Port Stephens CMP during Stage 3.	24 Apr 2023	<p>‘Council calls on the community to contribute to the protection of our coastline’ https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/news/2023/council-calls-on-community-to-contribute-to-protection-of-coastline</p> <p>Related 3 media stories in News of the Area (NOTA) https://www.newsofthearea.com.au/community-invited-to-provide-feedback-on-coastal-management-program https://www.newsofthearea.com.au/sea-shelter-encourage-community-to-engage-with-coastal-planning https://www.newsofthearea.com.au/consultation-on-port-stephens-coastal-issues-welcomed</p>
		29 May 2023	<p>‘Community called to workshop Coastline management options with Council’ https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/council/news/2023/community-called-to-workshop-coastline-management-options-with-council.</p>
Social media	Project updates are also provided by Facebook and Instagram. Increased public awareness of the CMP and directed interested community members to the project website and drop-in sessions.	1 May 2023	<p>There have been four social media updates via Facebook and two via Instagram, with a reach of 4,130 community members.</p> <p>Promotion of the CMP in general and the upcoming hazard mapping drop-ins</p>
		25 May 2023	<p>Promotion of the CMP in general and the upcoming management options workshops</p>
		22 June 2023	<p>Directed interested people to provide feedback on management options using online mapping tool</p>

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
		27 June 2023	Reminder that period of feedback was ending plus a provision of an online tutorial to help people use the mapping tool following direct public feedback during
Addressed bulk mail outs	A mail out was undertaken at this time to advise owners of land located within the coastal hazard area that their properties were subject to risk.	March 2023	Over 4,500 letters were issued to directly affected landholders.
	Within the above mail out selected residents and property owners from known sensitive areas were invited to attend an additional round of on-site meetings to discuss management of key coastal sites	April 2023	Meetings were held in Tanilba, Conroy Park/Corlette, Salamander Bay and Soldiers Point, with a total of 49 landholders attending
Notifications	Section 10.7(5) notifications for properties affected by coastal hazards were also issued by Council.	June 2023	Notification were issued on request.

Table 5-6 Stage 3 Engagement Methods

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Steering Group Meetings	An initial meeting was held with the consultants (Rhelm and Bluecoast) to kick-off Stage 3 of the project.	October 2022	Presentation of the proposed project methodology to the Steering Group and a small number of additional staff. The engagement plan and program were refined. Attendees discussed key issues and existing management plans to be considered in the CMP.
	In addition, monthly Steering Group meetings were held throughout the project.	Ongoing	Monthly meetings were used to provide updates on progress with the CMP and discuss key issues.
Presentation 1 to Councillors	A two-way presentation to provide an overview of the work completed to date, overview of the CMP process and what the next steps will include for Stage 3.	November 2022	Presentation used to provide update on progress with the CMP and provide an opportunity to answer any queries and to gather any particular feedback from the community via the elected representatives.
Presentation 2 to Councillors	A two-way presentation to seek approval of the CMP Stage 3 Communications & Engagement Plan and public release of the hazard mapping.	February 2023	The Stage 3 Communications & Engagement Plan was approved, and the mapping was approved for release.
Workshop 1 with PSC staff - Asset prioritisation	A workshop to present the BMT (2022a) coastal hazard results and discuss priority assets at risk and preferred management approach.	February 2023	<p>The key coastal risks discussed were coastal and tidal inundation of key access roads, notably those that are the sole access to certain parts of the study area. It was agreed that some roads may need raising to provide access during a coastal inundation event.</p> <p>For those locations particularly affected by tidal inundation, it was agreed that a more strategic approach was required via preparation of adaptation plans. This is in recognition that the tidal inundation risk will increase in future but is not necessarily an issue at present.</p>

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
			Coastal erosion was considered to present a lower level of risk when compared to coastal or tidal inundation. It was noted that the lack of erosion hazard mapping for the Inner and Outer Port will constrain understanding of the level of risk from coastal erosion to assets in these areas.
SRG Workshop 1 – Coastal hazards	Presentation of the BMT (2022a) coastal hazard results and discussion of interfacing management plans and strategies.	March 2023	Several SRG members identified the need for clear communication and understanding of what the BMT hazard mapping is showing. The discussion focussed largely on hazards and the need to consider the impacts of levees and floodgates on coastal/tidal inundation when considering options that address these threats. Also noted was the need to consider risk arising from events (i.e. coastal inundation) from permanent impacts (i.e. tidal inundation).
Workshop 2 with PSC staff – Planning controls for coastal hazards	A workshop was held with Council planners to present the outcomes of a review of the existing controls relating to coastal hazards in the State legislation and in Council’s Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan.	March 2023	Council determined not to proceed with mapping and a planning proposal for a Coastal Vulnerability Area for the LGA, but to manage the risk from coastal hazards through the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan.
Workshop 3 with PSC staff – management options	To present the initial long list of management options developed by Rhelm and Bluecoast for discussion.	March 2023	<p>The workshop included discussion of coastal protection options from previous plans of management for the coastal zone and their effectiveness and relevance for consideration in the CMP. In addition, other options were discussed with respect to their feasibility and relevance.</p> <p>Feedback was provided by attendees for Council’s Project Manager, Rhelm and Bluecoast to consider through the options development and evaluation process.</p>

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
SRG Workshop 2 – Management options	To present the initial long list of management options developed by Rhelm and Bluecoast for discussion.	March 2023	<p>Opportunities to coordinate management activities were identified by several attendees, including across Council boundaries and on the Worimi Conservation Lands.</p> <p>The Traditional Owners in attendance highlighted the importance of access to Country and consideration of intangible values and cultural activities as well as tangible values when proposing management options.</p> <p>The SRG members were also contacted via telephone and email after this meeting to discuss potential interactions between their management initiatives and the CMP and potential management options.</p>
Initial engagement with Traditional Owners	Initially Council presented to the Worimi LALC and the WCLB to provide an overview of the CMP. Initial emails and telephone calls with the Karuah LALC were unsuccessful in progressing engagement.	March & April 2023	<p>10 board members were present at the initial Stage 3 presentation to the Worimi LALC; and</p> <p>20 board members were present at the initial Stage 3 presentation to WCLB.</p>
Presentation 3 to Councillors	To provide updates on the CMP, including discussion of potential management options, and communications and engagement update.	April 2023	Presentation used to provide update on progress with the CMP and provide an opportunity to answer any queries and to gather any particular feedback from the community via the elected representatives.
Presentation to Birubi Point Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee	Presentation to discuss what a CMP is, the work undertaken for Port Stephens CMP to date, and the proposed activities under Stages 3 and 4.	April 2023	19 representatives attend the Birubi Point Cultural Heritage Advisory Panel including representatives from NPWS, Worimi LALC and WCLB. NPWS expressed interest in the hazard maps and requested the data.

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
Community drop-in sessions – coastal hazards	Four drop in sessions were held to present the BMT (2022a) coastal hazard mapping and provide community members the opportunity to ask questions.	3-4 May 2023	<p>37 community groups were emailed invitations to attend the drop-in sessions and options workshops.</p> <p>Four drop-in sessions were held over two days and were attended by 155 people. The community members were able to seek further information on specific locations. Attendees were also keen to ensure that other threats to the coastal zone were to be considered in the CMP (e.g. water quality, biodiversity) and to see what management options would be considered.</p>
Community workshops – management options	One virtual and three face-to-face workshops were held to discuss potential management options with community members.	7-8 June 2023	<p>Four workshops were held over two days and were attended by 55 people. Coastal protection works for specific locations was a key focus of discussion with attendees, although several attendees also noted the need for a balanced approach that considered public benefit and public access for the whole community.</p> <p>Nature-based coastal protection works were more popular for the Inner Port and a mix of nature-based and traditional hard engineering approaches were suggested for the Outer Port.</p> <p>Landholders present supported the provision of guidance on managing coastal hazards on private land and repairs to seawalls.</p> <p>Water quality and maintenance of public access to and through the coastal zone were also important issues discussed.</p>
Online mapping tool	In addition an online mapping tool was made available for people to provide notes on	7-30 June 2023	The online mapping tool was made available until the end of June 2023 and a total of 18 comments were received.

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
	management issues and suggest management options.		
Stage 3 engagement with the LALCs	Council and Rhelm spoke to the Worimi LALC and Elders about the preferred engagement approach.	October 2022	<p>The second meeting between the PSC and Rhelm project team and the Worimi LALC was attended by four representatives, including two board members of the LALC and two Elders, one of whom is also a WCLB board member and both of whom sit on the Worimi Knowledge Holders Group. Some existing management issues were identified, including access to Country and traditional resources (e.g. fishing), ability to undertake cultural activities, and opportunities for First Nations businesses.</p> <p>The Worimi LALC and Elders indicated that they had limited time to engage on the CMP due to the large number of projects and programs to which they are currently providing input. Given the constraints on their time, the LALC subsequently indicated they did not wish to be directly involved in the CMP preparation.</p> <p>The lack of compensation for the input provided by Elders and Knowledge Holders and other Traditional Owners to the CMP was also a key issue, noting the time and other expenses that would be incurred by the community in order to participate in the CMP process.</p> <p>The final list of management options will be provided to the Worimi LALC for their comment and noting also the LALC's role as a Native Title claimant.</p>
Meeting 2 with WCLB –	A second meeting was held to discuss management options.	August 2023	<p>The meeting was attended by five members of the board.</p> <p>Key issues raised by the WCLB included:</p>

Method	Description	Timing	Outcomes
management options			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implications of the CMP for Native Title and Future Acts • Implications for leases on the Conservation Lands • Proper consideration of impacts to tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the Stockton Dunes through CMP and CZEAS • Opportunities for First Nation businesses and community development through the CMP • The impacts of major projects on the coastal zone (e.g. declaration of offshore renewables zone) and consideration of impacts on the study area. <p>Some potential management options were identified for the CMP to reflect the inputs received during engagement.</p>
Presentation 4 to Councillors	To provide updates on the CMP and engagement undertaken to date.	July 2023	Presentation used to provide update on progress with the CMP and provide an opportunity to answer any queries and to gather any particular feedback on the engagement process from the community via the elected representatives.
Presentation to WCLB on management options	PSC presented to the full board on the viable management options.	August 2023	Council's project manager presented the proposed approach to the CMP and the outcomes of the options assessment.

Stage 3 Key findings

One of the primary objectives of Stage 3 was to seek feedback on potential management options that could be included into the CMP.

Utilising Council's resources to directly target impacted residents with a bulk mail out was a useful, though costly, approach as it helped ensure that the people who were impacted had been advised. This approach was supported by videos, traditional and social methods to help ensure interested residents were provided an opportunity to learn more about the CMP and to provide input.

The targeted drop-ins (49 attendees), the hazard mapping drop-ins (155 attendees) and the management options workshops (55 attendees) were reasonably well attended. We also have 92 people who have signed up to the mailing list to keep up to date with the project.

In summary, we heard for the inner port area (west of Soldiers Point) that people would like to see:

- Nature based management solutions including mangrove establishment and living shorelines, more education
- Improvements to water quality
- Mixed feedback for seawall or hard solutions

For the outer port area (east of Soldiers Point) we heard that people would like to see:

- Focus on a mixture of nature based management solutions and hard engineering solutions
- Repairs to existing sea walls supported and included provision of better public access
- Guideline for coastal protection works on private land supported

For the open coast we heard that people would like to see:

- Improved access ways to popular beach spots

A visual snapshot of the engagement for Stage 3 is provided in Attachment 1.

6. References

BMT (2021) *Port Stephens Coastal Management Program - Stage 2*. Prepared for Port Stephens Council.

BMT (2022a) *Port Stephens CMP Stage 2 and 3: Detailed Risk Assessment Report*. Prepared for Port Stephens Council.

BMT (2022b) *Port Stephens Coastal Management Program Stage 2-3 Report: Estuary Plan Audit – Water Quality*. Prepared for Port Stephens Council.

OEH (2018) *Our future on the coast NSW Coastal Management Manual*. State of NSW and Office of Environment and Heritage.

PSC (2020) *Coastal Management Program Stage 1 – Scoping Study*. Prepared by Port Stephens Council.

PSC (2022) *Port Stephens Communication and Engagement Strategy 2022 to 2027*. Prepared by Port Stephens Council.

Attachment 1

Summary Report for Stage 3 engagement



Coastal Management Program

Engagement snapshot November 2023

This engagement snapshot covers the majority of engagement for Stage 3 of the Coastal Management Program (CMP). Information gathered during this stage of the CMP is being collected to help draft the management options within the Port Stephens coastal zone.

Engagement focus areas:

Four focus areas for engagement:



Internal
stakeholder
engagement



External
stakeholder
engagement

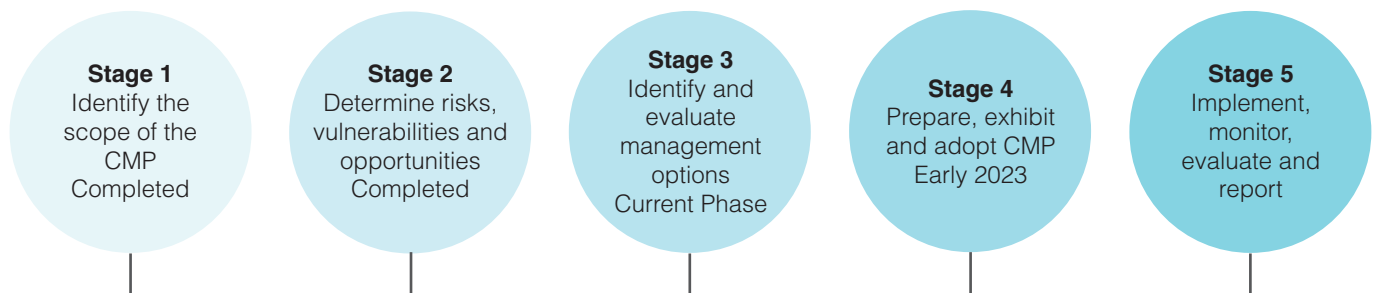


Traditional
owner
engagement



Community
communications
and engagement

Project milestones



Internal stakeholder engagement

What we did

- 4** Formal presentations to Councilors (also known as two-ways)
- 6** Organisation wide meetings/workshops with teams around project, issues, management options
- 10** Monthly project committee steering meetings
- 12** Regular updates in weekly Councillor newsletter
- 2** Staff learning opportunities
- 5** Regular updates in group weekly newsletter

What we heard ...

- Feedback from our community is important
- A number of ongoing issues across the Port Stephens Coastal zone needs to be addressed in this CMP
- Erosion within the estuary is one of our biggest concerns
- We need to prioritise the areas which our community value the most
- It is critical our community understand the studies we completed and what it means for them
- Important for the CMP to focus on the areas that are most prone to erosion and have an economic importance
- Emergency action plan is important to help mitigate immediate risks during emergency events
- Council needs to prepare a clear message for what residents can, or can't do, in regards to coastal protection works
- Adding coastal hazards to 10.7 certificates is important to inform residents

External stakeholder engagement

What we did

2

Meetings with stakeholder reference group around work to date and management options

4

Meetings with neighbouring Councils

1

Meeting with regulatory body

6

Regular meetings with DPE

What we heard ...

- Interested to see how we can collaborate with neighbouring Council's and agencies
- Existing agency partnerships include climate change resilience projects
- Support for water quality monitoring options in the CMP
- Consider NPWS threatened species plans of management
- Crown Lands are undertaking a breakwall Governance project
- Council to consider partnerships for compliance actions relating to the Stockton Sand Dunes

Traditional owner engagement

What we did

3

Formal presentations to key groups and boards

2

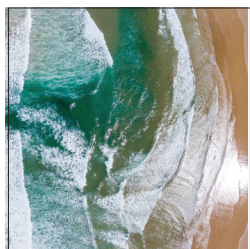
Meetings with key knowledge holders

What we heard ...

- Consideration of Native Title and how the CMP could impact current and future applications
- Must consider Country holistically including neighbouring councils, cultural landscapes - not just tangible cultural assets
- Preference for low impact options especially at culturally significant sites or areas for threatened species rather than hard engineering solutions

Community Communications and Engagement

What we did - Communications



Webpages

1446 visits



Bulk mail out

4500+ letters



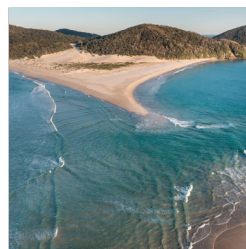
Social media

Facebook x 4
Instagram x 2
4130 reach



Targeted emails

37 groups



Flyers

x3

What we did - Engagement

49

Targeted area drop ins

49 attendees

155

Hazard mapping drop ins

155 attendees

55

Management options workshop

55 attendees

18

Online mapping tool

18 comments

91

Mailing list

92 sign ups

What we heard ...

For the inner port area (west of Soldiers Point)

- Nature based management solutions including mangrove establishment and living shorelines, more education
- A focus on improvements to water quality
- Mixed feedback for seawall or hard solutions

For the outer port area (east of Soldiers Point)

- Focus on a mixture of nature based management solutions and hard engineering solutions
- Repairs to existing sea walls supported and included provision of better public access
- Guideline for coastal protection works on private land supported



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