

Minutes

Minutes of the Tweed Coast Waterways Committee Meeting held Wednesday 14 October 2020

Venue:

Virtual Meeting

Time:

9.00am

Present:

Cr Chris Cherry; Rhonda James (Chair); Peter Comerford; David Cranwell; Robert Quirk; Ben Fitzgibbon (left meeting 10:00am); Jonathan Yantsch; Bill Hoskins; Tom Alletson; Jane Lofthouse; Marama Hopkins.

Apologies:

Cr Katie Milne; Lindy Smith; Sam Dawson; Hamish Brace; John Harbison; Bill Fenelon; Carl Cormack; Ian Berger.

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Moved: Robert Quirk

Seconded: David Cranwell

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Tweed Coast Waterways Committee meeting held Wednesday 11 March 2020 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Business Arising:

BA1. Letter sent to Minister for Local Government (20 May 2020) noting delays in provision of comments on Draft Tweed River Estuary Coastal Management Program.

Tom advised that there had not been a response to the letter and Ben advised that, to his knowledge, a letter had been forwarded to Council.

Update: It is now noted that a letter had been sent by the Minister on 23 July 2020, however there was no record of it having been received by Council. A replacement letter was provided by Ben and subsequently registered in Council's records

Outstanding Matters:

OM1. Gold Coast Airport Ecological Monitoring

Tom advised that despite several attempts he has been unable to discuss this matter with the Gold Coast Airport Environment Officer.

Update: As of 9 November 2020, contact has been made with the airport and a formal request for a number of monitoring reports has been made. The Airport Environment Officer is seeking clearance from management to release the information.

Agenda Items:

A1. Tweed River Estuary Coastal Management Program Update

Tom advised that Council has still not received comments from Environment Energy Science group on any changes required to be made to the CMP.

Ben Fitzgibbon apologised for the time taken to complete the review and advised:

- Comments are being finalised and are to be issued to Council within two weeks.
- Minor edits are required but there are no outstanding issues or the requirement to undertake additional investigations.
- Document length is an issue and the appendices will need to be removed to create a supporting volume.
- The editorial changes required do not, in the opinion of the Agency, require the CMP to be re-exhibited.

Tom sought clarification on whether there is any new advice on Coastal Vulnerability Mapping. Ben advised that there is no guidance currently available on what timeframes and probability to use in mapping tidal inundation hazard within Coastal Vulnerability Area. It is up to Council to choose what scenarios to use based on:

- Land use type
- Risks associated with the hazard
- Timeframes suggested being current; 20; 50; 100 years.

Robert Quirk declared an interest and raised the issue of McLeod's Creek being mapped as a Coastal Environment Area as an anomaly in the Coastal Management SEPP mapping. In Roberts's view, to be consistent with other modified floodplain creeks, it should be mapped as a Coastal Use Area.

Tom confirmed that the mapping had been completed by the state government but Council could request a review through a planning proposal process. This would be best done when a number of changes are required due to the resourcing required.

A2. Tweed Coastline Coastal Management Program Update

The Stage 1 Scoping Study for the Tweed Coastline CMP has been accepted as adequate by the Minister.

Next steps are a review of the Coastal Hazards Study. There will be a range of additional studies required, including planning for, and management of, recreational access. The submission on this matter from the Pottsville Community Association was acknowledged.

An entrance opening protocol for Mooball Creek is also being developed, and has been submitted in draft form to both DPIE Fisheries and Environment, Energy, Science.

A3. Ecological Assessment for Christies Creek

The report on this matter was forwarded to the Committee. The report documented very serious water quality issues in Christies Creek, with consequent significant impacts on the creek's aquatic ecosystem.

Tom noted that there are discussions underway with a landholder on Christies Creek with the hope that remediation of Acid Sulfate Soil runoff can be achieved.

Rhonda James (chair) left the meeting due to problems with the conference software at this time, Tom Alletson took over chairing the meeting.

A4. Hastings Point Headland Plan of Management

Tom introduced this item noting that it had originally been requested as an agenda item by Cr Katie Milne.

Cr Cherry suggested that a plan of management for Hastings Point Headland should be developed, noting that it is a fragile area with high environmental, social and cultural values. A plan of management should focus on protecting these values with a focus on better ways of managing public use.

After some discussion on how best to progress the matter, the committee requested staff to prepare draft terms of reference for a Hastings Point Headland Plan of Management, to be brought to the TCWC December meeting. The terms of reference should consider the spatial area to be included, and the range of issues.

Action: *Sustainability & Environment officers to prepare draft terms of reference for a Hastings Point Headland Plan of Management, to be brought to the TCWC December meeting.*

A5. Mooball Creek Entrance Management Strategy

Tom advised that he is working with Council's environmental assessments team and DPIE Fisheries and Environment, Energy, Science on a strategy to guide decision making and approvals for management of Mooball Creek mouth, in the event of its closure by sand shoals. Cr Cherry requested that a draft be sent to the TCWC for review.

Jonathan Yantsch spoke on the matter and highlighted that the development of an entrance management strategy needs to be well justified and consider the full range of geomorphological and ecological factors associated with creek closure and artificial opening.

Jonathan noted that estuary entrance training has been identified as a high priority threat in Marine Estate Management Strategy threat and risk assessment.

The discussion expanded to include reference to the repairs to the Mooball Creek training walls, and the type of environmental assessment that would be required to support this. Jonathan noted that there will be a need to assess and justify the impact that training walls are having on the estuary ecosystem, and entrance shoaling, rather than assuming they are entirely beneficial structures.

It was agreed that the entrance management protocol and entrance training walls are both matters that will need to be incorporated into the Tweed Coastline CMP, but that Council has identified funding to allocate to the Mooball Creek training wall repairs, subject to the availability of NSW Government funding, and that works to repair them may be initiated prior to the finalisation of the CMP.

A6. Pottsville Community Association matters

David Cranwell raised a number of matters that have been submitted to Council in writing by the Pottsville Community Association. A detailed written reply has been provided by Council to the Association. Both the Pottsville Community Association and Council's reply have been provided to the committee.

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Specific matters included a site for a surf club, repairs and improvements to access from the Tweed Coast Road to the training walls and parking regulation.

Tom noted that the Mooball Creek training wall repair project is not fully funded at this time and that to his knowledge the environmental assessment and approval process had not been initiated. Noted that NSW Fisheries would need provide a permit for any proposed works.

General Business:

GB1. Dead Whales

There have been two dead whales washed up onto Tweed beaches in September/October 2020. Council is using the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Guidelines for Management of Whale Carcasses, which includes a decision-making chart and checklist for action. Given the populated nature of the Tweed Coast, it is considered that removal and burial offsite in a waste disposal facility will be the fate of all future carcasses.

GB2. Sustainable Home Living Expo

The Sustainable Home Living Expo will be held on 1 and 2 December as a virtual event. A number of speakers and discussion groups have been organised.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Tweed Coast Waterways Committee will be held Wednesday 9 December 2020.

The meeting closed at 12.00pm.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS: