

Sunshine Coast Council Special Area Adaptation Precinct Planning– Community Assets Case Study

Introduction

Sunshine Coast Council (Council) released its Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy (CHAS) 'Our Resilient Coast. Our Future' in May 2021. This long-term strategy seeks to proactively manage risks from coastal erosion and storm tide inundation, now and in the future under rising sea levels.

Special Area Adaptation Precincts are areas identified for further exploration of site-specific adaptation measures. Adaptation needs to consider the unique attributes of each location, which involve a complicated mix of public and private interests.

As there are community owned or managed assets within areas of public parkland, Council is undertaking an engagement and coordination role with key stakeholders to progress further investigations and planning to better understand options to address the coastal erosion risks within these precincts.



Project Overview

Located on the Sunshine Coast, the adaptation precinct directly adjoins the Beach and is centered on community parkland.

The parkland precinct is home to a popular Surf Life Saving Club as well as an important cenotaph maintained by the local Sub-branch of RSL Queensland. In combination with playgrounds, recreational assets such as walking/cycling paths and basketball courts, public amenities and parking, this precinct is heavily used by both the local community and visitors.

The interconnectedness and intensive usage of the beach and the parkland means that coastal erosion can not only threaten park assets, but also safe and reliable access to the beach.

Planning for adaptation in this area seeks to maintain and improve the beach and park precinct for all stakeholders under the influence of beach erosion and a changing climate.

Drivers

- *There are several locations on the Sunshine Coast where surf club facilities co-located with public beach access points and parkland, highly valued areas which are at high risk from coastal erosion.*
- *The site was selected as representatives of the Surf Club had actively engaged with the CHAS and expressed a desire to further explore adaptation responses at their site. This was in light of their upcoming lease renewal, intent to redevelop the ageing clubhouse building and existing safety concerns over beach access conflicts.*

Process

- *Developed a framework to inform a coordinated approach to long-term infrastructure siting, design, and service delivery*
- *Established a transparent approach for identifying and assessing potential adaptation options*
- *Identified an initial recommended adaptation pathway for further consideration*
- *Identified detailed actions to support further adaptation planning within the precinct*
- *Recognised that this is the first part of a longer process that will require broader community engagement and further detailed assessments*

Benefits

- *Strategic adaptation considering all stakeholders guides consistent, cost-effective and timely site-based adaptation that avoids emergency works*
- *Supports risk-aware decision-making on long-term infrastructure that improves safety and usability of the broader area*
- *Seeks to retain usage of the beach and parkland which are popular recreational destinations.*

Engagement



- *Built on CHAS engagement*
- *Clear communication that this is a learning experience for Council too*
- *Project website provided stakeholders with more information, including 'questions and answers', fact sheets and project updates*
- *Conducted two workshops and surveys focussing on values and options with directly impacted stakeholders*
- *Solidified strong and respectful relationships with key stakeholders*
- *Optioneering workshops with internal Council stakeholders*
- *Established a clear understanding of issues between directly impacted stakeholders before going to the broader community*

Community events and activities that take place near the coast, such as surf lifesaving competitions, nippers and outdoor events can bring people together and promote a sense of community.

Problems / Challenges

- *Recognition that adaptation project timeframes cannot be compressed at the expense of meaningful engagement with stakeholders – scope renegotiation with funding bodies was required*
- *Delayed recognition internally that adaptation is a Council-wide project*
- *Need for a clear program of priority sites to support sequencing with engagement processes and maintain project momentum – especially as these projects may have protracted delivery timeframes*
- *Clear and consistent internal signoff processes*
- *There was significant debate on the value of open space and its role in the context of whether it should be used to accommodate erosion hazards at the expense of other assets*
- *The proximity of alternative suitable sites for relocation of highly valued community assets, and the impacts of relocation on placemaking, social/political and economic perspectives*
- *Addressing safety concerns surrounding the lack of visibility of the beach from the surf lifesaving tower and conflicts between vehicular beach access and the coastal pathway.*

Outcomes / Conclusions

- *Transition of the surf club building to a safe location outside the immediate risk area was perceived as providing the club with certainty and opportunity to address current issues around constrained space and the inability for the club to expand services.*
- *The detailed appraisal of options over time using multi-criteria analysis and cost benefit analysis techniques identified that landward relocation of built assets was the preferred adaptation approach in the short to medium term, followed by beach nourishment.*
- *Further policy development is required around the role of open space in hazard mitigation and desired standards of service in light of coastal erosion.*
- *No formal decision will be made as a result of this project – broader community engagement and evolution of option design is required*

Key Stakeholders

- *Sunshine Coast Council*
- *Surf Club*
- *Surf Lifesaving Queensland*
- *RSL Queensland*
- *Utility and service providers
(Telstra, Optus, EnergyQ /
Energex, Unity Water)*

For more information

Please contact us

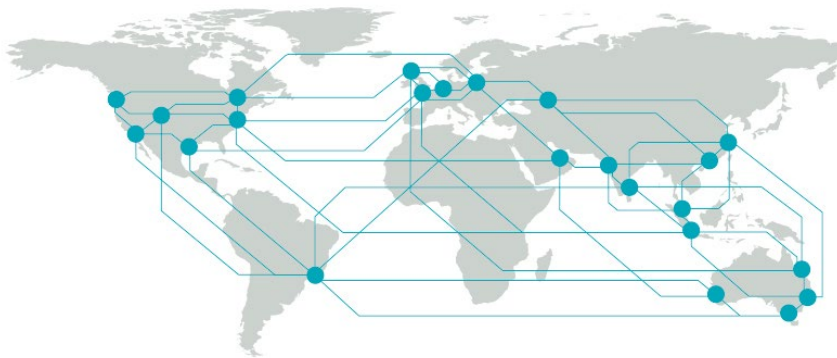
Name (position): Biodiversity and
Waterways Team, Environment and
Sustainability Policy

Email: [ourresilientcoast@
sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au](mailto:ourresilientcoast@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au)

Project Team

- *BMT*
- *Meridian Urban*
- *Place Design Group*
- *C Change Sustainable Solutions*





BMT is a leading design, engineering, science and management consultancy with a reputation for engineering excellence. We are driven by a belief that things can always be better, safer, faster and more efficient. BMT is an independent organisation held in trust for its employees.

Level 5
348 Edward Street
Brisbane
QLD 4000
Australia
+61 7 3831 6744

Registered in Australia
Registered no. 010 830 421
Registered office
Level 5, 348 Edward Street,
Brisbane QLD 4000 Australia

For your local BMT office visit www.bmt.org

Contact us

enquiries@bmtglobal.com

www.bmt.org

Follow us

www.bmt.org/linkedin



www.bmt.org/youtube



www.bmt.org/twitter



www.bmt.org/facebook

