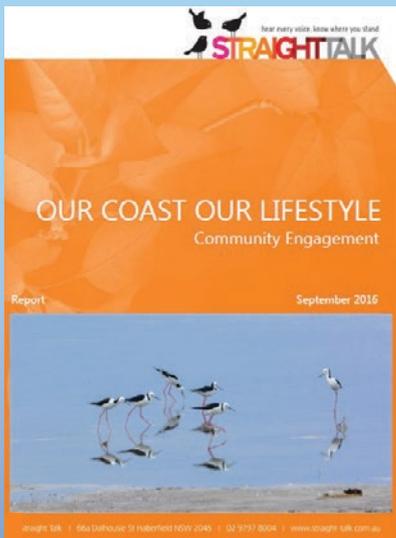


The Frontline News

Special Edition
OUR COAST OUR LIFESTYLE

Shoalhaven
City Council

ISSUE 6 • MARCH 2017 Catch up on previous editions [here](#)



**READ
THE FULL
REPORT
[HERE](#)**

STRAIGHT TALK

Was engaged by Shoalhaven City Council to deliver a suite of communication and engagement activities relating to coastal management.

The purpose of the engagement was to:

- Educate the community about the risk of coastal erosion and the coastal management options that are available to respond to that risk
- Understand community preferences and the factors Council should be considering when making decisions in response to coastal erosion risks and storm damage.

The engagement was active from mid-March to mid-July 2016. It attracted the involvement of over 1,650 participants and provides robust evidence of the community's views about coastal management.

A significant feature of this evidence was the consistency of views expressed across all the engagement activities and across different sectors of the community.

Key findings are that the community

- Is concerned about coastal erosion
- Is unaware of Council's coastal management role
- Strongly values the natural environment
- Supports Council prioritising community assets and infrastructure when spending taxpayers' money on coastal management
- Expect Council to take a long-term, cost-effective approach to managing the risk of coastal erosion, based on scientific evidence and expert advice
- Supports soft protection options, and particularly dune management, over hard options, to protect existing assets except in specific circumstances
- Would support other management options for existing assets if they are the most effective option in the long term
- Is strongly concerned about new development in areas known to be at risk and does not support Council approving it, especially if it will require protecting in the future
- Considers that environmental impact and community safety are important considerations for coastal management
- Supports the cost of coastal management being shared across the whole community via rates, or levies if necessary, but Council also considering other revenue sources.

How did we gather community opinion?

There were 5 main activities – telephone surveys (1603), on-line survey (344), street surveys (245), five focus groups and three community workshops.



Intercept surveys being undertaken in Jelly Bean Park, Nowra. Surveys were also collected by roaming the streets and going into cafes to ask people if they'd like to participate. Most people were very willing to fill in the survey.
From right: Isabelle Ghetti, Manager - Natural Resources & Floodplain Unit, Jacob Williams - work experience student.

Sample questions from the engagement activities

- How concerned are you about damage from storms and erosion, using a scale of 1-5?
- In what circumstances, if any, would you support the use of 'soft' protection options (beach nourishment, using dredged sand and dune management) for protecting existing community buildings and facilities from erosion and storm damage?
- In what circumstances, if any, would you support Council relocating existing buildings and facilities out of areas at risk?
- In what circumstances, if any, would you support Council not approving new development in areas at risk?

The Our Coast Our Lifestyle website is still live, although not interactive. The factsheets, videos and other resources can still be viewed [HERE](#).



Vincentia workshop underway.

What's next?

Straight Talk recommended that Council

- Continue to educate the community about the risk of coastal erosion and coastal management options
- Educates the community about Council's role in coastal management

Frontline News will continue to provide information about coastal management and the risks associated with coastal erosion. If you know of anyone who may be interested in receiving Frontline News direct by email, they can send a request to council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au.

- Provides ongoing access to the educational material developed for this engagement

The Our Coast Our Lifestyle website is still available and will soon appear on Council's website as an interactive site for all things coastal. There is also a treasure trove of information available on Council's website - use the Environment tab on the home page and then choose Coastal Care.

- Seeks opportunities to increase community participation in coastal and bush management programs, such as Dunecare and Bushcare

If you are interested in joining or forming a Bushcare or Dunecare group, please contact Alasdair Stratton on 4429 3592 or alasdair.stratton@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

- Informs the community of the outcomes of this engagement program and how they have been used to influence Council's decision making about coastal management

The outcomes of Our Coast Our Lifestyle will be incorporated into Council's new Coastal Management Program which will replace the 2012 draft Coastal Zone Management Plan. And this issue of Frontline News will be used as an ongoing means of informing the community about the outcomes of the project

- Provides further opportunities for community members to give Council feedback on coastal management

We will use the new 'Get Involved' section of Council's website to seek community feedback on specific projects and utilise the Our Coast Our Lifestyle site when it's live and interactive. We will also continue to communicate directly with relevant Community Consultative Bodies.

For further information contact Penelope Lumb, penelope.lumb@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au 4429 3623.