

Managing Mollymook Beach's Sand Dunes

Fact sheet

Mollymook Beach

Mollymook Beach is one of Shoalhaven's iconic beaches, popular among locals and visitors alike. The two kilometres of beach is backed by properties and roads located immediately behind the sand dunes. These dunes have a history of being reshaped and modified dating back to the early development of the Mollymook township. Hard protection structures, such as the gabion rock wall at the southern end of the beach in front of Mollymook Golf Club, have been built on the dunes.

Unfortunately, the dunes at Mollymook Beach have become devoid of vegetation over time. This has been largely from historic clearing for development, exacerbated by storms, informal beach access tracks and an expansion of garden vegetation. Removal of native vegetation degrades the dunes, reducing their shoreline protection functions. This makes properties behind the dunes more vulnerable to erosion and damage from storms. To mitigate coastal erosion, Mollymook Beach has been nourished in the past using sand sourced from beach scraping techniques in the intertidal zone, and further afield, which helps to reinforce the existing dunes.



Natural dune system at Mollymook Beach, October 2021



Dune system at Mollymook Beach, October 2021.

How does Council manage Mollymook Beach's Dunes?

Council strategically manages sand dunes and occupying native vegetation by using both 'soft' and 'hard' solutions. Soft techniques such as beach scraping or Nature Assisted Beach Enhancement (NABE) to help manage erosion and enhance the natural resilience of the coast with lower costs and lower environmental impacts. Hard engineering solutions, such as groynes or rock walls, may have a higher impact on beach amenity, the surrounding environment and require a more detailed environmental due diligence process. These structures are only implemented when necessary and designed using modern and environmentally conscious coastal engineering techniques.

Council is currently undertaking the following actions to manage and improve the natural resilience of Mollymook Beach's dunes and beach:

- Dune vegetation management including removing weeds and replanting native species.
- Investigation to construct tripper walls on creek banks to control meandering and reduce dune erosion.
- After storms, Council may assist dunes in their natural recovery by undertaking NABE or beach scraping. NABE involves moving sand from the lower part of the beach onto the higher part of the beach to help protect dunes from erosion in the short-term and expedites a dunes natural recovery process.
- Investigation to construct a seawall at the southern end of the beach to prevent on-going erosion.
- Monitoring the condition of the beach and ensuring appropriate maintenance and risk mitigation measures are in place along the foreshore.
- Collaborating with adjoining property owners on erosion prevention measures.

How can I take care of sand dunes?

With over 85% of the population living within 50 kilometres of the Australian coastline, human activities can have a major impact on dune systems and their ecology. Everyone can contribute to dune protection and the health of our shorelines by:

- Using the formal beach access tracks maintained by Council instead of informal accessways.
- Do not mow, prune or landscape coastal vegetation areas.
- [Disposing of garden waste](#) in red-lid bins to avoid spreading weeds. Council offers [green waste collection services](#) for excess amounts of garden waste.
- Disposing of plastics and litter in bins to leave our coastal spaces pristine. You can [report littering](#) or [illegal dumping](#) to the NSW EPA
- Staying clear of nesting shore bird areas.
- Walking your dog in designated off-leash areas only, avoiding areas designated as prohibited.
- Joining a [local community Bushcare Program](#) to protect and plant native coastal vegetation.
- [Reporting vegetation vandalism](#).



Beach scraping at Mollymook Beach, December 2022.



Find out more

getinvolved.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/foreshore-protection-management
Or search "**Foreshore**" on our website.

Contact Us

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