

Mallala Coastal Settlements Adaptation Study Community Engagement Strategy



Active, meaningful and genuine engagement with the community will help us to understand the impacts on coastal communities from rising sea levels and develop options to assist Council and the community adapt to the risks of future flood events.

1.0 Project Background

Community engagement will assist the Coastal Settlements Adaptation Study currently being undertaken by the University of South Australia (UniSA) on behalf of Council. The researchers will use feedback from the community to prepare both the *State of Play Report* and also the *Draft Framework Report*. These documents will be used by the community, Council and the State Government to plan for the long term future of the towns of Thompson Beach, Webb Beach, Parham and Middle Beach which have been identified as vulnerable to inundation from rising sea levels.

There are significant economic and social implications for property owners and residents of these towns, in particular the owners and occupiers of private dwellings which are identified in the study as being directly threatened by flooding. The identification and prioritization of adaptation options such as whether to protect, accommodate or retreat will have a significant and direct impact on these key stakeholders. For this reason, it is essential that the community engagement is genuine, transparent and above all -meaningful.

2.0 Purpose of Community Engagement

The purpose of the engagement will be to:

- Provide the community with early information about the Coastal Settlements Adaptation Study and the process of planning for change
- Understand the impacts to affected communities of rising sea levels
- Reach an understanding of the key concerns of the community to coastal adaptation
- Provide the community with a realistic expectation about future development patterns in the affected townships
- Gauge community preferences and expectations for management options and decision-making considerations

3.0 Approach to Community Engagement

In working with the community, Council seeks to create a participatory environment, where the community will have a significant role in shaping Council's response to the risks from rising sea levels. To make participation and engagement really work, sensitive to the project budget, we need to be flexible and creative in selecting engagement and participation methods that encourages the community to become involved.

Community engagement will provide residents and property owners of the affected towns with an opportunity to participate in identifying risks, evaluating and prioritising options for adapting to

rising sea levels. Effective engagement can strengthen communities, and improve decision making by increasing the likelihood those decisions will be supported in the long term.

Our community and participatory approach will concentrate on:

- Early engagement with community representatives
- Providing an opportunity for face to face discussions with the community and stakeholders (including two workshops)
- Use of modelling and visual aids to make the research and adaptation options easy to understand
- Employing a variety of engagement methods to reach a cross section of the community
- Bringing creativity and a relaxed atmosphere into the community engagement
- Ensuring the data collected is useful to the UniSA research team for completion of their reports

Community engagement will include a range of people and organisations from the affected coastal communities. The list of key stakeholders shown in Appendix A is based on the following groups:

4.0 Stakeholder Groups

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	ADDITIONAL NOTES
COMMUNITY	
Elected Members	Particularly local ward Councillors
Residents	Living in the Council and non-resident property owners
Community groups and associations	Any organised community associations and resident groups (for progress associations, environment groups)
Business /industry owners	Own and rent out business premises which service the affected coastal communities
Other coastal users	Recreational fishers, boat owners, bird watchers
Community facilities users	Users of non-commercial community facilities and services (e.g. boat ramps)
PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS	
State Government partners	Coastal Protection Board, emergency services
Media	Relevant local newspapers

5.0 Proposed actions

The proposed actions are consistent with Council's Community Consultation Policy and the Local Government Association's Framework for community engagement. Level 3 – *A single high impact issue affecting the wider community* is considered the relevant level of engagement for this issue. Our approach involves a range of activities designed to provide information, collect and compile input and bring people and ideas together. The community will be given a range of options to provide responses, particularly for online feedback which can be done remotely by property owners who do not live permanently in the area. There are four key stages of community engagement: providing information, bringing people together, community responses, evaluating and reporting.

5.1 Providing information

The initial stages of the community engagement process will be focus on raising awareness of the project, establishing communication channels and identifying community representatives. Information about the Coastal Settlements Adaptation Study and community engagement process will be distributed through:

- information sheet a dedicated page on council's website and Facebook page
- direct mail to community groups and representatives
- advertisement in the local press and other media
- public information displays at key Council locations - offices and libraries

A media release has already provided advice about the commencement of the study. The UniSA research team has also visited the community and talked informally with residents about past flooding events.

5.2 Bringing people together

Members of the affected communities will be invited to attend two community workshops following the release of the *State of Play report* and the *Draft Framework Report*. The community workshops will invite members of the community to provide local knowledge about the history of coastal flooding to assist the research team to options to address future flood events. The workshops will have a relaxed format in which participants are encouraged to share their knowledge of living in the area and explore their views about the risks from coastal inundation.

The workshops should be held in convenient locations close to the coastal settlements.

Workshop 1

The purpose of the first workshop is to inform the community about rising sea levels and the steps council is taking to plan for flooding events in the future. Participants will be invited to contribute their knowledge and records of past flood events.

The format of the workshop will involve participants sitting in groups around tables which are 'hosted' by a member of the project team. There will be a presentation by Mark Western from UniSA about his research into sea level rise and the implications for the coastal settlements. The

groups will then be asked to discuss and record their answers to a series of questions which may include:

- Why do you live where you live?
- What is your experience of past flood events? What was the impact of the 1999 flood?
- If sea levels rise as they are predicted, what will this mean in your community?

Workshop 2

The purpose of the second workshop will be to present options for adapting to rising sea levels and seek feedback from the community. Participants will be invited to discuss the recommendations made by the research team. The outcomes of this workshop will provide direction for future policy and planning by Council.

The workshop may utilize a 'World Café format in which each table group discusses a question and then participants move to another table where another question will be discussed. When a new group arrives at a table the host provides a summary of the conversation with previous groups that can be built upon. This format is useful for drawing out areas of common ground within a range of different viewpoints. The discussion may include the role that different parts of the community can play in responding to rising sea levels:

- What can Council do?
- What can each community do?
- What can individuals do?

5.3 Community responses

Individuals and groups will be invited to provide responses through a range of different media. Participants can provide a response by post or in text or pictures through the internet and social media. An opportunity for residents to provide a submission over the phone is also considered important for residents who wish to write in or attend a community workshop.

A list of key stakeholder groups has been drafted and meetings with community representatives from each of the settlements may be scheduled to explain the project and seek feedback on the consultation process itself. Elected members will also be directly consulted during this phase of work.

5.5 Evaluation and reporting

URS will provide a summary report for the consultation on the *State of Play* report and subsequently, the *Draft Framework Report* for use by the UniSA research team to incorporate into the final documents.

6.0 Schedule of Activities

	Consultation Activity	Timeline	Responsibilities
Site History and Data Collection	Site visit to coastal communities	25 July	Council staff, UniSA research team, URS
	Stakeholder Mapping	25 July	URS and Council
	Develop Community Engagement Strategy	Draft to Council 16 August	URS and Council
	Strategy and report to Council	26 August	Council officers
	Prepare public notice and press release for local newspaper	27 August	Council
Consultation on State of Play report	Direct mail letter to stakeholder database	Friday 30 August	Letter drafted by URS with review and mail-out by Council
	Release 'State of Play' report	Monday 2 September	Council
	Information and fact sheet on council's website Information display at Council library	From Monday 2 September	Council with input from URS
	Meetings with key stakeholder groups eg. Resident's groups	On-going from Monday 2 September	Council and URS (roles to be determined)
	Receipt of community submissions by mail, email, phone and social media (if desired)	Monday 2 September – Monday 2 October	Council
	Workshop 1	10 th September The New Dublin Hotel	Community led by URS with input and attendance from Council officers and UniSA research team.
	Compile feedback for use by UniSA to produce final report	27 September	URS in discussion with Council officers
Consultation on Draft Framework Report	Workshop 2	9 th October The New Dublin Hotel	Community led by URS with input and attendance from Council officers and UniSA research team.
	Compile feedback for use by UniSA to produce final report	18 October	URS in discussion with Council officers
	Presentation of results to Council	28 October	Council
	Feedback to community and stakeholder groups	November	Council

Appendix A Mapping of Stakeholders and Key Issues

MALLALA COASTAL STUDY KEY STAKEHOLDER LIST

Organisation / Association	Name	Phone Contact	Address / email	Comments
Elected members				
Individual community members				
Community Groups				
Specific Interest Groups				
Government agencies				

STAKEHOLDER ISSUE AND RESPONSES ASSESSMENT SHEET

Issue	Council's evaluation of the level of impact	Stakeholder Group	Stakeholder level of concern / expectations	Response