



Prof Bruce Thom  
Chair  
NSW Coastal Panel  
C/- Office of Environment & Heritage  
PO Box A290  
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1232

Dear Professor Thom

**Development Application CP 16-002 Rock Revetment at Wamberal**

The Office of Environment & Heritage understands that the NSW Coastal Panel has received a development application for the construction of a rock revetment in front of dwellings at 29, 31 and 33 Pacific Street and 23a, 23b and 25c Ocean View Drive, Wamberal. The revetment is proposed to be built partly on private land and partly on the public beach reserve and on Lot 3 DP524938, which is known as "The Ruins" and owned by Department of Planning and Environment. OEH further understands that the Land and Environment court has instructed the panel to exhibit and consider the application in the absence of land owner's consent for those parts not on private land.

OEH has reviewed the Statement of Environmental Effects that was prepared in support of the application and offers the following comments.

The primary armour stone is proposed to be 4 tonne 1300 mm nominal diameter basalt laid on a slope of 1.5H:1V. Whilst acknowledging that the design presented is a preliminary one, this is smaller than recent similar designs on the NSW open coast. This may result in significant damage in the design storm. In light of this, it is critical that adequate provisions for the maintenance and repair of the structure are in place prior to construction.

The proposed alignment of the revetment is consistent with the design prepared in 1998, which, as noted above, places the structure on both public and private land. OEH considers that it is desirable to revisit the planform alignment with a view to minimising encroachment on the public beach. This is especially important since a viable sand source for the large scale beach nourishment necessary to offset the long term impact of the structure on beach access and amenity has not been secured. Licenced sand sources, such as Stockton, are available for smaller scale nourishment campaigns. The alignment should not be dictated by the location of minor improvements such as decks, which have been approved on the basis of being sacrificial.

Wamberal Beach is not currently experiencing significant long term recession and so the immediate impact of the structure on beach access and amenity would be expected to be only temporary following storm events. However, in the absence of complementary nourishment, any beach recession resulting from the impacts of climate change will inevitably lead to progressively longer

periods for which access and amenity are affected. Accordingly, the proposal in its current form may not be considered to satisfy the requirements of s55M of the Coastal Protection Act, 1979.

The proposal does not deal comprehensively with the management of end effects beyond an offer to consider a consent condition to import sand to fill such erosion at the northern end as hasn't recovered within six months of a storm. Possible end-effects at the southern end of the wall have not been considered. Whilst it is acknowledged that the property to the south is protected by a revetment that was in place during the 1978 storm, it may not meet contemporary design standards. Even with careful transitioning, there is the potential for the current proposal to destabilise it.

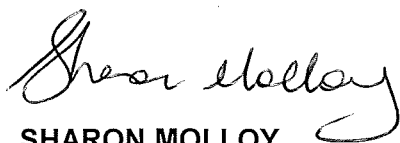
Whilst the desire of the applicants to protect their properties is understandable and their proposal for a properly engineered structure, generally consistent with council's 1998 design, is commendable, OEH considers that it is far more desirable that an embayment wide design be prepared and implemented. This would avoid the end effect issue, would enable a consistent alignment that minimises the impact of public beach access and amenity, allow appropriate consideration of maintenance arrangements and of nourishment to preserve beach amenity in the longer term.

However, OEH is cognisant of the immediate threat to the dwellings and of the history of council's inability to implement an embayment wide protection strategy. Should the panel decide to support the application, OEH would suggest the following conditions of consent:

- The proposed alignment of the structure be revisited to minimise encroachment onto the public beach.
- The final design of the structure to ensure that damage in a design storm is limited to acceptable levels.
- The proponents enter into a legally binding agreement to the satisfaction of the relevant land managers, to restore the beach or land adjacent to the beach, if any increased erosion of the beach or adjacent land is caused by the presence of the works.
- The proponents enter into a legally binding agreement with the relevant land managers, to their satisfaction, to maintain the works over the design life to a suitable standard.

I trust that the above information is of assistance. If you have any further questions, please contact Mr Peter Evans, Senior Team Leader, Water Floodplains and Coast, Hunter Central Coast Region on 4927 3107 or at Peter.G.Evans@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



**SHARON MOLLOY**  
**A/Director**  
**Hunter-Central Coast Branch**

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