Dear Professor Thom,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the NSW Coastal Council’s review of the implementation of the Newcastle Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) – Part A (Stockton).

I wish to express my thanks to Honorary Associate Professor Ron Cox for conducting this review on behalf of the Coastal Council in consultation with the City of Newcastle (Council) and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department).

I am pleased that the Coastal Council has found that the CZMP is being implemented and that Council is currently on track to satisfactorily complete the transition to a Coastal Management Program (CMP) under the new framework before 31 December 2021.

Regarding the Coastal Council’s specific recommendations in respect to actions beyond the CZMP, I can advise the following:

1. **Interim short-term coastal management**

   Council applied to the Coastal and Estuary Grants Program for funding to undertake short-term beach nourishment at the southern end of Stockton Beach. The Department and Council have already been working together to assess potential options for interim beach nourishment at Stockton, including inquiries into the cost and availability of sand from the Stockton Bight dune deposits and alternative potential sources.

   I have recently announced the award of $175,000 in grant funding to assist Council to place sand on the beach to the south of Lexie’s café prior to the summer holiday season. The Department is recommending that detailed monitoring of the success of any beach nourishment works be undertaken to inform the development of longer-term management options, which may include larger scale sand nourishment, through the Newcastle CMP.

   I strongly support this type of beach nourishment at Stockton Beach but believe that Council is best placed to continue to lead this work in consultation with their community. The Department is continuing to support Council with financial and technical assistance to ensure the proposed interim beach nourishment project and subsequent CMP will achieve the best possible outcome for the Stockton community.

2. **Matters of significance for the CMP**

   I understand that the City of Newcastle is making progress in preparing a Coastal Management Program (CMP) that will determine long-term management options for Stockton.
I am advised that Council has prepared a CMP scoping study on a whole of LGA basis and that the scoping study recognises that Stockton beach is part of the broader Stockton Bight embayment. I am also advised that Council is moving forward with Stage 2 CMP studies.

Council, with input from the Department and the Stockton community, has recently prepared a study brief to investigate sediment transport within the embayment of Stockton Bight based on the latest available information, including the 2018 bathymetric LIDAR survey.

The forward program from the CMP scoping study also identifies a study to determine potential sand sources that may be accessible for beach nourishment and I continue to support Council to consider all viable management options for the area, including further investigation of potential available sand sources including from both onshore and offshore sources. Furthermore, the Department has shared all available relevant data and will continue to provide technical support and guidance to Council throughout the CMP development process.

In terms of the aspects identified that may be hindering implementation of the CZMP and the development of the CMP, I have noted your recommendations and will await further detail and suggestions for improvement in your forthcoming review of the broader coastal management framework.

Lastly, in light of the recent coastal erosion at Stockton I am encouraging Council to submit a grant application under the planning stream of the Coastal and Estuary Grants Program to assist in applying more internal Council staff resources to help expedite the completion of the Newcastle CMP.

Thank you for your advice on this matter. I look forward to your next report.

Yours sincerely

0 9 DEC 2019

The Hon. Shelley Hancock MP
Minister for Local Government

cc: john.hudson@environment.nsw.gov.au