

27 February 2016

Coastal Reforms Team
Office of Environment and Heritage
PO Box A290
Sydney South
NSW 1232

Dear Coastal Hazards Team,

This submission is occasioned by my involvement in trying to stop the development in South West Rocks known as 'Saltwater' (Reference 2015NTH002 DA/T6-14-62 South West Rocks). My main reason for wanting it stopped is that the low-lying site is virtually certain to flood (frequently and possibly permanently) during the remainder of this century (i.e. during the life of homes that might be built on it).

One of my major arguments in favour of stopping the development derived from information I found on the website for the Federal Department of the Environment. In the section entitled 'Sea level rise' it says,

- "A study of 29 locations in Australia found that for a mid-range sea level rise of 50cm, extreme sea level events that happened every few years, now are likely to occur every few days in 2100."
- "On average, Australia will experience a roughly 300-fold increase in flooding events, meaning that infrastructure that is presently flooded once in 100 years will be flooded several times per year with a sea level rise of 50 cm."
- "With 50 cm of sea level rise, the frequency of extreme sea level events is estimated to increase by 100 to 10,000 times."

These alarming predictions, plus the fact that a 50cm sea level rise by 2100 is only half that predicted by the IPCC, suggest to me this issue is being handled very differently at the State and Federal levels.

If the situation is actually as depicted by the Federal Department of the Environment, then I would hope the new SEPP reflects this far more serious outlook than the one that has been guiding decision makers for proposals like 'Saltwater' in South West Rocks. It and any similar ones should be taken off the table forthwith as the likelihood of flooding is all but certain.

The JRPP decision to refuse to approve the DA for 'Saltwater' was appropriate, but didn't go far enough as it still holds open the prospect of approval at some later date if certain conditions can be met. Perhaps for some issues that would be appropriate, but, with the near certainty of flooding on the site, surely there is no remedy. The new SEPP needs to create greater resilience rather than more vulnerability in regard to future development on the coast. In addition, I would urge the Team to include in their deliberations a genuine effort to stop, once and for all, the inappropriate 'Saltwater' proposal in South West Rocks.

Sincerely,

Bob Wolcott,

South West Rocks