

Coastal Adaptation Study Consultation



Murray Estuary (Hindmarsh Island) Community Workshop Summary 27 October 2020

The Alexandrina coastline is of significant cultural, social, environmental and economic value to the local community, Ngarrindjeri nation and visitors to the region.

The Coastal Adaptation Study aims to understand how people, the natural environment and built assets might be impacted by rising sea levels so that Council and other stakeholders, such as State Government and private landowners, can plan for the future.

From 12 October to 27 November 2020 Council engaged with members of the community about the findings of the study and to hear how the impacts of climate change might affect our coast into the future, and to learn about the possible adaptation options for Alexandrina's coastline. As part of this consultation, Council held a number of face to face workshops and online webinars.

This report provides a summary of the feedback received at the workshop held at 6.30pm to 8.30pm on 27 October 2020. This workshop was by invitation only and was attended by 39 people comprising members of the community as well as the Mayor, Elected Members, the CEO and staff from Alexandrina Council.

Format of the workshop

Mark Western from Integrated Coasts provided a comprehensive presentation of the Coastal Adaptation Study with a focus on its findings for Hindmarsh Island.

Attendees at the workshop were able to ask questions and seek clarification during the presentation as well as at key points dedicated for questions and discussion. The workshop was independently facilitated by Nicole Halsey from URPS.

In addition to comments recorded by Nicole during the workshop, attendees were also able to provide feedback by completing a feedback form and returning it prior to leaving the workshop.

Feedback received via both of these methods is summarised below:

Whiteboard notes

- "Have lived experience of flooding of large volumes of water coming through barrages
- Planning implications – will old houses be able to be replaced?
- Regarding the Study's assumptions
 - » What about advancement of technology e.g. drones for emergency management
 - » Generational change re attitudes to emissions

reduction – future may not be what projected

- Property rezoned to nature conservation
 - » Have an emotional connection to land and what to care for it
 - » Restricted what can do to influence/manage impacts of inundation due to the zoning
 - » As evident on land that has been developed with homes, people who are able to build on their land, they take care of their property and protect it
- Won't be around in 100 years given leasehold – need land to be made freehold
- The changes are rapid – how do we keep up?
- Strong desire to continue to enjoy/improve property but can't due to Council planning restrictions and this study
 - » Study shows places where less erosion has occurred is associated with sites that have been developed
 - » Community is best asset
- Frustration regarding Council's position regarding freeholding land – wastewater should not be the issue as land at Sugars Beach has been freeholded which is in the same situation

- Question impact of levee height on outlook/views
 - » Interface of planning policy which may limit building heights and mean homes are looking out onto levees rather than views of water
- There has been a lack of discussion with locals about local knowledge/issues/changes in preparing this Study
- What about the impact of drought on river flows?
- Question mid-range outlook of 30 years used in Study
 - » Should be 5 to 15 years
- What is timeframe for needing levy to protect Mundoo Channel?
- Who pays for protection works? Land is leasehold not freehold, therefore is Government responsible?
- NPWS land – how impacted by projections?
 - » Planting/biodiversity on land
- What is likelihood of planning of levee bank/s by Council?
 - » This is all up in the air – help alleviate concerns if community has certainty

From feedback forms

13 completed feedback forms were returned at the end of the workshop.

How do you think you will be personally impacted by sea level rise and the adaptation proposal above?

Of the feedback forms returned, the majority of people identified that they are personally concerned about sea level rise and the adaptation proposal for Hindmarsh Island. Many are concerned about the impact of levees in terms of cost, effectiveness and impact on land value/amenity.

Other comments expressed a desire for free-hold leases and a collaborative approach to planning. Some people do not believe they will be impacted on a personal level due to the elevation of their property or their own age.

All comments recorded on the feedback forms are provided below:

- “Not a great deal as our home is at the highest point on Mundoo Channel Drive.
- Yes – planning permissions, lease-hold vs free-hold, levee construction requirements
- I would not be able to afford a levee. If the levee were 1 metre high, I would no longer be able to see the water from my house. I wonder what would happen if the sea comes in from the back? The road would be under. Now, when there’s a flood, the water seeps through the block from front to back and doesn’t pool
- I don’t think ‘low height levees to perimeters’ would be better than the existing solution. It would depend on where the ‘height levees’ would be placed. The wrong placement could make the situation worse. Also, if levees or barrier are too high it would negate the who reason for living where I live
- No
- Yes, I hope that I won’t have to worry about it due to my age
- Minimal impact personally regarding sea level. More concerned regarding land value, cost of protection, impact of Council decisions on water, height levels, building planning.
- Yes
- Not a great deal, house is raised and it will be on our kids to look after
- I may have to pay to implement flood mitigation works. This is ok so long as I am satisfied that the money is well spent
- We are currently developing a flood mitigation and erosion plan to ensure safety and minimise damage. Our approach is also to take note of the evidence provided in the model. We want to address our issues and develop a community, collaborative approach.

What are your thoughts about managing the impact of flooding of properties projected for beyond 2050?

Many people who completed a feedback form were concerned about the uncertainty of sea level rise and would prefer to either wait until a later date to put in place protection infrastructure, or to use a conservative, incremental approach. Others identified that action should be implemented immediately, with rezoning and free-hold leases applied to empower the community to protect their properties. Other suggested actions included holding the line and building low height levees.

All comments recorded on the feedback forms are provided below:

- “Hold the line
- Hold the line – should involve people being able to build up and develop their properties (free-hold) to withstand erosion. Proven efficiency in this study.
- Worried about cost and its impact on the view/lifestyle/boat/jetty etc.
- I am unsure as the increase in sea levels is so uncertain. Probably, decisions would need to be taken at a later time when the increase is better known.
- Wait and see what happens over the intervening period
- Very interested in a levee to protect the low properties
- Low height levees, management of erosion (rock walls)
- Protect as long as possible. Ascertain what the position is closer to the time.
- Incremental approach.
- Don’t believe that the flooding will increase that dramatically by then.
- 3 proposals (urgently).
 - » Zoning – change those currently zoned as conservation to holiday house/residential.
 - » Convert leasehold to freehold.

» Floor level of built environment not site level of development should be considered the determining factor. Just as is along the river.

- What are the options for managing flooding beyond 2050 and how much do they cost? And who pays?
- Action needs to be taken immediately to address storm surge weak spots to prevent water flowing through lots 17-21 to prevent water flooding our own property no. 25 and neighbour no. 27.
- Action taken to improve height of Goolwa Channel Drive, which is too low and regularly floods at the entry and our gate
- Note that Council recently addressed flooding at gateway of no. 29. Council should be actively promoting collaborative planning to address erosion along side of Goolwa Channel
- Raise the level of Goolwa Channel Drive which is already too low and poorly drained to cope with excessive rainfall.
- Build levee on 17-21 to prevent flooding into back of housing on Goolwa Channel Drive
- Waiting until 2050 would be far too late. Addressing immediate problems would be the best step. Please note that we will take action to protect our property and work with others in a collaborative way.

What criteria or principles should Council be thinking about when developing a plan in relation to this adaptation proposal?

Of those people who completed a feedback form, the majority of people identified that Council should continue to engage with the community, empowering them to protect their own properties, provide suggestions and remain informed. Other suggestions included using a collaborative approach, mitigating carbon emissions and ensuring appropriate cost/benefit approaches are used.

All comments recorded on the feedback forms are provided below:

- "Community engagement is actually essential and the only way to fully incorporate homeowners is if they can own and control their land
- I think it's extremely important that Council takes a leadership approach in MITIGATION of carbon – there is so much this Council could do to prevent climate change
- Involve the people concerned at an early date – do not leave their involvement until decisions have been made.
- Consultation with ratepayers as none of the residents of Cooida Ave have been notified about the workshops
- No regrets, cost/benefit ration, incremental approach
- Be open to suggestions and plenty of consultation with effected people.
- One of the key issues will be to enable the community to invest in their properties on a more stable long term future and this will assist in combatting future water changes.
- If levees are to be considered, how is it to be adapted. Leases for Mundoo all expire with Denver and coastal protection board in some 45-off years.
- Keep ratepayers informed and involved during the development of the plan – so far you're going ok.
- Public/private partnership across all levels and cost effective low impact solution to septics and levees. This area is a national treasure.

