

LANCELIN COASTAL EROSION HISTORY

Coastal erosion has been occurring in Lancelin Bay generally and the vicinity of Grace Darling Park in particular, for approximately 20 years following the maximum level of sand deposit being reached. Interestingly, Grace Darling Park was created and infrastructure was placed on the reserve some time after this point. Over time the amount of infrastructure placed on the reserve has expanded to include a gazebo, public toilets, barbecue area and seating, reticulation, parking and the Volunteer Marine Rescue building.

Following development of the area erosion activity has worked to remove the deposited sand. In more recent years large sections of the Park have been lost, with infrastructure either being lost or subject to forced relocation further back into the block.

Last year a community meeting was held in Lancelin, which was attended by most Elected Members and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), where the community in general called for action to save Grace Darling Park. Council took this recommendation on advice and formed an internal working group to look at how this community call for action could be progressed. In the interests of clarity, the initial focus of investigations was the protection of a sufficient area to preserve infrastructure on the reserve and to protect the Lancelin Caravan Park and the southern portion of the Lancelin townsite from future inundation.

The working group held meetings with key stakeholders to discuss what action was to be taken so that these stakeholders could keep the community in general informed as to progress.

Shortly after the public meeting, the CEO wrote to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services requesting that they consider making Emergency Services Levy (ESL) funding available to assist Council to fund a proposed sea wall, as the largest piece of infrastructure on the site subject to protection was the Volunteer Marine Rescue building. However, after regular calls and emails for



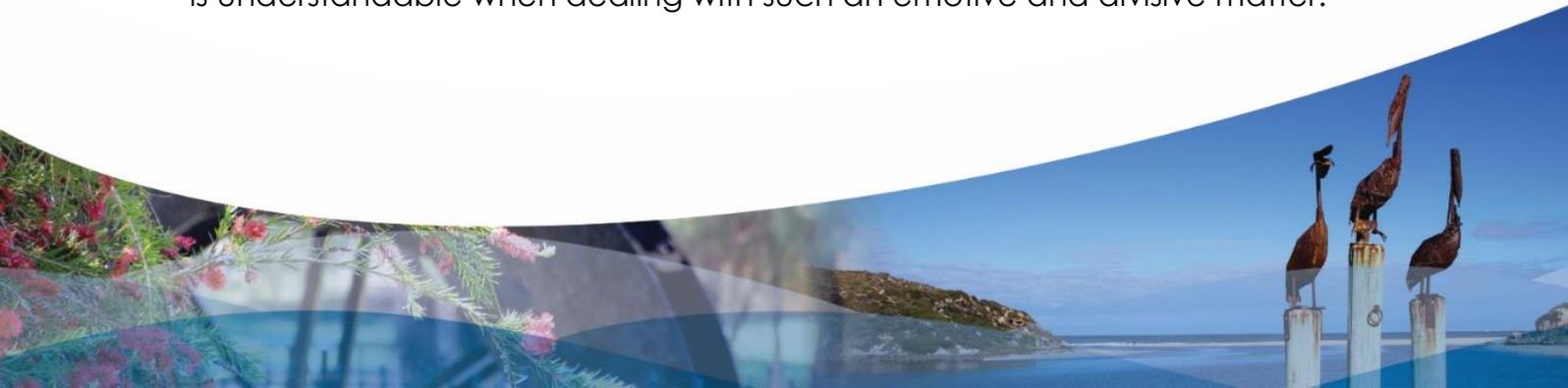
updates, some seven months later the Department advised that the Minister for Emergency Services was not prepared to release ESL funding for this purpose but instead had directed the Shire to seek disaster relief funding. In accordance with this advice, the CEO contacted the State Disaster Relief Coordinator and was advised promptly that this matter clearly did not meet the minimum requirements for funding either now or in the future.

At this stage Council was back to funding any works entirely from its own resources. During this time several more storms hit Lancelin and caused further erosion on site and Council undertook sand re-nourishment to back fill the areas affected. However, the erosion line grew to the point that it is now affecting the Edward Island Point track and is placing the Shire's leased caravan park at potential risk.

As such, Council, through its consultations with the working group, engaged coastal engineers MP Rogers to prepare a proposal for remedial action to construct protection works in the Grace Darling Park area to safeguard the Shire's caravan park and the southern section of the Lancelin town site.

The resulting report provided by MP Rogers identified a number of options which were considered by Council at its meeting on 16 July 2019. Ultimately, Council's preferred option was the construction of a geo synthetic textile sand bag sea wall from north of the Volunteer Marine Rescue building in a southerly direction to protect the Shire's caravan park and the access track to Edward Island Point. This recommendation was presented to the Working Group and the Stakeholders and general acceptance of this action was received by the majority.

As most would understand, there have been many in the community who have advocated for and accepted the outcome for the sea wall. On the other hand, there have been sections of the community that have criticised the decision and recommended other potential actions. This difference of opinion is understandable when dealing with such an emotive and divisive matter.



In accordance with Council's decision, MP Rogers was then engaged to undertake the necessary design work and the Shire continued to pressure the State wherever possible for funding. It should be noted that the Shire had already applied for five grants from the State that included:

1. Financial Contribution to construct the sea wall in Lancelin;
2. Sand re-nourishment at Seabird;
3. Inundation Study for the Shire;
4. Assessment of existing and proposed groynes; and
5. Coastal Management Plan grant.

The CEO also met with coastal engineers from the City of Wanneroo to inspect works including a very large geo textile sea wall recently undertaken within the City district area. This meeting alerted the CEO to the additional issues that Council could face if a sea wall was constructed, specifically the need to continually undertake sand re-nourishment in front of the wall to maintain a beach. This concern was subsequently raised with Council.

In September 2019 the Department of Transport and Planning arranged a meeting to explain why the Shire of Gingin was only successful with one grant application, being the Inundation Study for the Shire. It was advised that should Council want the State to seriously consider assisting with erosion issues in Lancelin or elsewhere in the Shire, then an inundation study would need to be completed. In essence, if Council proceeds with the construction of the proposed Lancelin sea wall then the State will not fund infrastructure works to save a government owned reserve, a park or the infrastructure on it or provide assistance in the future. What Council representatives took from this meeting was that because the sea wall construction is not supported by Council's adopted Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Plan (CHRMAP), then if the Shire proceeds with the construction of a sea wall based on the information at hand, it would effectively be on its own. Any further issues that may arise as a result of the construction would have to be addressed using Shire resources.



The Department suggested that since funds for the preparation of an inundation study had been approved this project should be completed to determine where the risk really lies within the Shire. This could then be used as a guide in directing potential infrastructure works instead of acting in response to currently occurring erosion. It was also suggested that Council apply for a Coastal Management Plan Assistance Program Grant as this will also provide information that can be used to look at relocating assets when required and prepare for where they are to go.

Both of these reports would then be incorporated into the CHRMAP and this document updated on the basis of the new information contained in the reports. Any changes to the CHRMAP will be dependent on this new information. However, if the inundation study shows significant risk to the Lancelin town site then serious consideration must be given by the State to how private landowners' land and property risk is to be managed.

A completed inundation study will also allow Council to lobby the State to take positive action with respect to the three Category 2 "hotspots" (refer www.transport.wa.gov.au/mediaFiles/marine/MAC_P_CoastalErosionHotspotInformationSheet.pdf) within the Shire of Gingin in the form of a comprehensive study into why erosion is occurring, how it is expected to develop in the future, what possible short term and long term actions can be taken (if any), how these actions are to be funded and (if no action is to be taken) how the State and Federal Governments will deal with affected landowners who will be forced to retreat.

