



By the community. For the community.

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The Hon. Anthony Roberts, MP  
52 Martin Place  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

14/12/2022

Dear Minister Roberts,

**Subject: Stockton Beach CERMP Project Delay**

We are writing to you today from the Stockton Community Group Inc. regarding the recent award of a Commonwealth Coastal Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program grant to your department for Stockton Beach Nourishment (Phase 1). The grant application was submitted in June 2022 by Dr Phil Watson and funded for \$6.1 M in October 2022. The grant was awarded to NSW DPIE, to be delivered by the City of Newcastle and project managed by the Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation. The NSW Deputy Premier's Stockton Task Force also strongly endorsed the urgent facilitation of this project in 2022.

While initially overjoyed to hear about the grant and its potential to solve some of our critical coastal erosion problems here at Stockton, we have learned that, so far, there has been no work done on the project. No progress has been made by HCCDC on signing an MOU with the City of Newcastle or appointing an HCCDC Project Manager (initial milestones identified in the project management plan). This is despite this project being time critical due to the arrival of the next season of East Coast Low erosion events beginning in May 2023. So far 2 months (or 30%) of the time to next May has already elapsed before the next loss of beach, caravan park, Returned Soldiers Monument, roads and sporting facilities occurs without any sand being delivered, or studies commenced.

This is an unacceptable situation for the local community. There appears to be a disagreement between HCCDC and the City of Newcastle regarding commencement of the project. This disagreement has no relation to any future work regarding offshore mining licences, but solely to management of the CERMP project. As you are responsible for HCCDC operations, the project application originated from your office, and both organisations (DPIE, and HCCDC) signed off on the project, we believe you are responsible for delivering a speedy solution on any dispute. **The project management services of HCCDC were identified as a key component of your project application, an integral element of the project, and to facilitate the project from inception to completion. We**

therefore request that in your role as Minister for Planning and Environment, you request HCCDC to comply with the existing Project Management Plan and engage with the City of Newcastle immediately to sign an MOU and set up a project manager to get this project back on track and deliver a much-needed result before May 2023. This is especially relevant given the HCCDC mission statement to **“work in collaboration with government agencies, councils and key stakeholders to understand how we can best deliver outcomes that benefit and enhance the communities”**.

This issue is of critical importance to our community as we cannot survive another season of coastal erosion without significant loss of our local landmarks and facilities (the erosion hazard lines have already exceeded the 2025 predictions). We feel strongly enough regarding this problem to issue a media release highlighting the lack of action on commencing the project and the potential of sustained risk and damage resulting from any further project delays. Before making such a media release, we would appreciate your response, hopefully including a resolution of the issue.

Yours Sincerely

Ron Boyd SCG Inc. Member, Alison Rigby, Melanie Taggart SCG Inc. Co-Presidents

Cc Lord Mayor CN, Councillor John Mackenzie, Councillor John Church, Councillor Declan Clausen, State MP Tim Crackanthorp, Federal MP Sharon Claydon, State MP Paul Toole, Premier of NSW Dominic Perrottet, Leader of Opposition Chris Minns, Shadow Minister for Planning Paul Scully.