



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK REPORT

Coastal Adaptation Plan – Phase Two Engagement

Coastal Adaptation Options Analysis

September 2023

## Introduction

### Coastal Adaptation Study

The City of Onkaparinga (council) has a long history of proactively managing changes in its coastline. In 2021, a Coastal Adaptation Study was prepared to bring together all previously undertaken studies about the coast, provide a baseline understanding of how the coast operates and assesses the coastal risks and vulnerabilities from sea level rise.

The Coastal Adaptation Study shows how people, the natural environment, and built assets might be impacted by rising sea levels and other coastal changes. This will help council and other stakeholders, such as State Government and private landowners plan now for any future changes. In recognition that the coast is different from place to place, the study divides council's coastline into 12 distinct regions or "coastal cells".

The Coastal Adaptation Study was completed in 2021. Information about the Study was shared with the community and stakeholders on a Your Say page including background information, the full Coastal Adaptation Study, reports for each coastal cell, fact sheets and a pre-recorded video.

### Coastal Adaptation Options Analysis

Earlier this year, the City of Onkaparinga started preparing a Coastal Adaptation Plan to develop the best approaches to implementing the recommendations of the Coastal Adaptation Study. Consultants BRM Advisory and Integrated Coasts are supporting council with this project.

A key part of preparing the Coastal Adaptation Plan is to identify, evaluate, screen, and prioritise adaptation options that respond to the risks identified in the initial Coastal Adaptation Study. This process is referred to as the Options Analysis.

Between March and May 2023, the consultants and council staff undertook an initial assessment of the risks that were identified in each of the twelve coastal cells along council's coast. This process included a review of all sections along council's coastline, where each section was placed into one of three categories:

1. General monitoring – where no further options analysis is required, but the coast will be actively monitored.
2. Focused monitoring/investigation - where no further options analysis is required, but there is a need for a specific monitoring focus or additional investigation. This is because sea level rise projections identify specific risks that need closer review, or further investigation is required about a particular coastal adaptation issue.
3. Options analysis – where detailed coastal adaptation options analysis is required now because of the higher levels of current or future risk.

The options analysis identified:

- Sixteen (16) locations that do not require further analysis at this stage. These sites will be actively monitored over time (general monitoring).
- Eight (8) locations that do not require further analysis at this stage, but require a specific approach to monitoring changes in the coast, or further investigation of a particular issue. This is because specific risks are expected to present as sea levels rise, or because further investigation is needed about a particular coastal issue (focussed monitoring/investigation).
- Eight (8) locations that require a detailed adaptation options analysis now because of the higher level of current or future risk (options analysis).

The outcomes of this work were summarised in a Progress Report, and a summary map is provided in Attachment A of this report.

## Community Engagement Approach

In October 2022, Council adopted a Community Engagement Plan for the Coastal Adaptation Study and Adaptation Plan around the following four phases:

Phase	Timeframe	Goal	Lines of enquiry
1	July-August 2021  <b>Complete</b>	Inform	Inform - the general community to build understanding about the results of the complex technical study  Advise about next steps, including future community engagement.
2	June-August 2023  <b>Updated to June-September 2023</b>	Inform and Consult	Consult - about how communities understand, use and value their coastline.  Inform - the general community about possible coastal adaptation options.  Consult - about community members' preferred adaptation options.  Advise about next steps, including future community engagement.
3	October-November 2023  <b>Updated to February-March 2024</b>	Inform, Consult and Active Participation	Inform - community members about the Draft Coastal Adaptation Plan (the draft plan).  Consult - seek community member feedback on the draft plan.  Active participation - invite community members to participate in citizen science as part of the Coastal Monitoring Program.  Advise about next steps, including future community engagement.
4	March-April 2024  <b>Updated to May-June 2024</b>	Inform	Inform- community members that the Coastal Adaptation Plan has been finalised and released.

This report relates to the engagement activities undertaken during **Phase 2** of the Community Engagement Plan, which aimed to update the community on the work that has been undertaken and seek feedback on the coastal adaptation options.

This engagement process is just one part of an ongoing conversation with the community and stakeholders, with further consultation and information sharing to occur over the coming months as the Coastal Adaption Plan is prepared (Phase 3) and then finalised (Phase 4).

## Community engagement purpose

The purpose of the Phase 2 community engagement was to:

1. Provide information about the Coastal Adaptation Study and adaptation options analysis.
2. Support stakeholders and community to understand how the coast operates, current/future risks and coastal adaptation options.
3. Gain feedback around values and priorities for the coast in the context of the adaptation study, current/future risks and proposed adaptation options.

## Engagement techniques

Technique	Details	Timeframe	Participation
Director Group Workshop	Support Directors to understand the adaptation options, and community engagement strategy.	22 June 2023	City of Onkaparinga Directors
Elected Member Workshop	Support Elected Members to understand the adaptation options, and community engagement strategy. Encourage Elected Members to promote and participate in community engagement.	4 July 2023	City of Onkaparinga Elected Members
<a href="#">Your Say</a>	Provide information about the project and opportunities to provide feedback through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project updates</li> <li>- FAQs</li> <li>- Progress Report</li> <li>- Details about drop-in sessions and webinar.</li> </ul> Seek feedback on the adaptation options and coastal adaptation more generally through a survey. These Your Say updates were promoted via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stakeholder emails sent to 786 people on the Community Group register, and stakeholders identified in the Community Engagement Plan for this project</li> <li>- Your Say newsletter sent to 5,928 Your Say members and/or followers of the project.</li> </ul>	18 July – 8 Sept 2023	877 visitors to the page 420 people interacted with the page 27 survey responses 1 written submission
Social media	Three (3) posts to the City of Onkaparinga Facebook (which has 29,000 followers). Nine (9) posts to the Sustainable Onkaparinga Facebook (which has 4,400 followers).	18 July – 4 Sept 2023	Across all posts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 70 likes/reactions</li> <li>- 10 comments</li> <li>- 16 shares</li> </ul>

Technique	Details	Timeframe	Participation
Onkaparinga Now article	Article published on City of Onkaparinga's online news source: <a href="https://www.onkaparinganow.com/News-listing/Have-your-say-on-coastal-adaptation-plan">https://www.onkaparinganow.com/News-listing/Have-your-say-on-coastal-adaptation-plan</a>	18 July 2023	
Drop-in session - Aldinga	The drop-in sessions provided an opportunity for an in-depth engagement with the community about the project.	17 August 2023	31 attendees
Drop-in session – Christies Beach	The sessions began with a presentation that covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coastal adaptation concepts</li> <li>- Coastal Adaptation Study findings</li> <li>- Coastal adaptation options being considered</li> <li>- Possible approaches to coastal monitoring, including opportunities for citizen science.</li> </ul>	23 August 2023	3 attendees
Drop-in session – Moana	Following the presentation, there was an opportunity for Q&A, and for people to chat with the consultant team and council staff. People were encouraged to provide feedback on the adaptation options via hard copies of the survey available at the sessions, or informally to members of the project team.  At the drop-in sessions, participants could also view hard copies of the Progress Report, FAQs and Fact Sheets for each cell.	5 September 2023	18 attendees
Webinar	Delivery of the same presentation as the drop-in session via webinar format, followed by Q&A. Webinar participants were encouraged to complete the online survey.  Webinar was recorded and uploaded to Your Say to enable viewing at any time.	17 August 2023	5 live attendees 30 views of the recording
Workshop – Southern Montessori School	These workshops aimed to provide an opportunity for young people to understand council's approach to planning for sea level rise and other changes in the coast, and help young people to understand the options being considered.	23 August 2023	43 students from Years 7-9
Workshop – Tatachilla Lutheran College	At the workshops, students completed activities focused on understanding what is important to them about the coast (values) as well as to identify what they consider to be appropriate adaptation options for different locations along council's coastline.	31 August 2023	15 students from Years 7-12
Workshop – Youth and Community in		4 September	14 people between the ages of 7 and 17

Technique	Details	Timeframe	Participation
Conservation Action – Willunga		2023	
Workshop – Cardijn College		7 September 2023	16 students from Year 9
Workshop – Tatachilla Climate Ready Schools group		25 September 2023	40 students from Year 6

## Summary of community engagement outcomes

Feedback from the community was received via the survey (27 responses) and one written submission, as well as through the drop-in sessions and webinar (87 attendees across the 4 sessions) and workshops with young people (128 attendees across 5 sessions).

Many participants, especially those at the drop-in sessions and webinar, took part because they were eager to learn more about the project and potential approaches to coastal adaptation. Some participants did not offer specific feedback on the adaptation options, but their interest in the project aligned to the engagement goal of keeping people informed.

Other participants offered their perspectives on the proposed adaptation options, as well as general feedback about the overall approach to coastal adaptation and/or expressed values around what is important to them about the coast.

The following sections summarise the feedback received through all engagement activities.

### Overall support for council's approach to coastal adaptation

Across all engagement methods, many participants provided feedback that they support council's overall approach to coastal adaptation. In particular, participants supported the evidence-based approach that is based upon detailed historical investigations as well as future projections, and the pragmatic adaptation options that will be triggered by future coastal monitoring.

Participants at the drop-in sessions commented that the approach gives them confidence that council is proactively planning for the future, and making decisions based on detailed research and investigations. In the survey, comments included:

“I think the work the council is doing is a strong basis for managing the risks”

“Monitor and manage is best for a long term solution”.

### Adaptation Options for the higher risk locations

The survey asked respondents to indicate their level of support and/or comments around the proposed adaptation options for the higher risk locations. These adaptation options were also discussed during the drop-in sessions, webinar and through the workshops with young people.

Key themes are summarised in the following table:

Cell	Feedback themes
Cell 2.2 Christies Beach	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (hold the line).</p> <p>It will be important that sea level rise is considered as part of any upgrades to the rock revetment.</p> <p>Consider the use of groynes to build up and maintain sand levels on the beach.</p> <p>Concern about loss of beach and/or beach retreating to a 'rubble coastline' if rates of sea level rise increase.</p> <p>Sand blow-out onto the road has been experienced at the northern end of the cell.</p>
Cell 3.1 Witton Bluff North	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (hold the line).</p> <p>Consider upgrading the rock wall before progressing with the Witton Bluff trail project.</p> <p>It will be important that sea level rise is considered as part of any upgrades to the rock wall.</p> <p>Although not directly connected with the proposed adaptation option, participants noted that the new Bluff trail will need to be able to withstand the impacts of storms and sea level rise. Others indicated that they did not support this particular project.</p>
Cell 4.4 Port Noarlunga Township	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (hold the line).</p> <p>Unsure whether there is a need to take action at this point in time.</p>
Cell 5.3a Seaford Cliffs (Gulf St)	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (hold the line), with additional comments around the importance of progressing the implementation.</p> <p>Unsure about the effectiveness of the proposed option, and suggest that we need to consider the limits of our ability to 'try and stop nature'.</p>
Cell 5.3b Seaford Cliffs (Tiller Drive)	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (managed retreat).</p> <p>The work that has already been done in this cell is supported.</p> <p>Unsure about the effectiveness of the proposed option, and suggest that we need to consider the limits of our ability to 'try and stop nature'.</p>
Cell 5.3b Seaford Cliff (walking trail)	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (managed retreat), with participants connecting their support with the desirability of maintaining the walking trail.</p> <p>Support for the work that has already been done in this cell.</p> <p>Support the concept of moving the trail away from the cliff-top edge, but suggest that installing a safety rail may be a cheaper alternative.</p>
Cell 6.1 Moana (SLSC)	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation options (combination of accommodate and hold the line).</p> <p>Support the minimum amount of action required to protect the SLSC.</p> <p>Any changes to beach access should consider improving accessibility for people in a wheel chair (e.g. ramps instead of stairs).</p>
Cell 6.1 Moana (foreshore)	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (hold the line).</p> <p>A balance needs to be found between maintaining beach access while also protecting the beach environment.</p>

Cell	Feedback themes
	<p>Consider the need for sand replenishment as it appears that sand levels have declined over the past 35 years.</p> <p>Although not directly related to the adaptation options, feedback was provided around the need to stop vehicles accessing the beach. Others provided feedback about the importance of cars being able to continue to access the beach.</p>
Cell 8.1 Maslins Beach	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (managed retreat).</p> <p>Some participants noted that the current car park is much larger than requirements and thus support a reduction in size if it is retreated, while others stated that alternative car parking would need to be provided if the existing car park is retreated.</p>
Cell 10.2 Aldinga Reef	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (hold the line).</p> <p>Participants would like to better understand what the proposed solution would look like, and potential impacts on natural sand movements. Participants also noted the environmental significance of the Aldinga Reef Conservation Zone and the importance of ensuring that sediment (or any other land based activities) do not impact the sensitive reef ecosystems.</p> <p>Although not directly related to the adaptation options, concerned that a tree has sprung up. and concern that this will exacerbate erosion when it eventually falls over.</p>
Cell 11.1 Aldinga Beach	<p>General support for the proposed adaptation option (hold the line), with participants noting that this will support resident and tourism activity on Aldinga Beach.</p> <p>Participants would like to better understand what the proposed environmental based solution would look like, and potential impacts on natural sand movements.</p> <p>Concern about the proposed sand drift fencing impacting vehicle access on the beach, and scepticism that it would be an effective adaptation strategy.</p> <p>Suggestion that removal of the Lower Esplanade road is an alternative option.</p> <p>Although not directly related to the adaptation options, feedback was provided around the need to stop vehicles accessing the beach. Others provided feedback about the importance of cars being able to continue to access the beach.</p>

## General feedback to inform the Coastal Adaptation Plan

In addition to the specific feedback on the adaptation options for each cell, the following feedback was received that is relevant to the overall development of the Coastal Adaptation Plan:

### Sea level rise risk

A number of comments were made during the drop-in sessions and through the survey emphasising the importance of properly and proactively considering the sea level risk. Participants noted that many climate projections are materialising as expected or ahead of forecasts, which means that we need to be ready to act promptly to address the unfolding risks. As survey respondents put it:

“We're already in trouble. In the next decade, we'll need to decide how to support those who will lose their homes due to sea level rises and how we'll replace essential infrastructure”

“In the last 20 years we've seen every modelled outcome come to pass sooner and worse.



There is no reason to think that will change. Under such a scenario what exactly would holding the line give us?"

At the drop-in sessions, there was particular interest around the impact of sea level rise on the Aldinga Washpool, and the pebble banks at Aldinga and Sellicks Beaches.

#### Rivers, creeks and estuaries

At the drop-in sessions, questions were asked about how estuarine environments at Onkaparinga River, Pedler Creek and Port Willunga Creek will be impacted by changes in the coast. A particular point of interest is the likelihood, and consequence, of a sea flooding event correlating with high rainfall events/riparian flooding.

#### Coastal ecosystems and environments

Participants identified the importance of looking after coastal environments as part of the overall approach to coastal adaptation. It was noted that the Coastal Adaptation Study and options analysis appears to have a strong focus on built assets, and it needs to more fully consider how protecting and enhancing ecological assets can support adaptation to the impacts of sea level rise.

Participants noted that practical actions, such as maintaining and improving coastal vegetation, limiting activity in vegetated areas and strengthening beaches' ability to function as an ecosystem are important long-term strategies.

The one written submission received suggested that cars on beaches are having a material environmental impact on Onkaparinga beaches, and this should be considered through the adaptation options analysis process.

#### Financial responsibility

Comments were made about the importance of financial responsibility, and only spending ratepayers' money when required.

#### **Community values about the coast**

Coastal adaptation should aim to maintain and strengthen community values associated with the coast. In other words, coastal adaptation planning and action should aim to preserve and enhance those things that are important to the communities of Onkaparinga against the threats presented by sea level rise and other coastal changes.

Through conversations at the drop-in sessions and the workshops with young people (see Attachment B for example outputs), community values about the coast have been distilled into the following themes:

- Coastal identity – Coastal 'way of life' that is shared by council's coastal communities.
- Natural beauty – Visual appeal and the scenic qualities of our sandy beaches, clear waters and dramatic cliffs.
- Recreational and leisure - Ability to access beaches and the coast to meet with friends and family, and enjoy activities such as swimming, surf life saving, surfing, fishing and snorkelling.
- Open space – The coastal trails, parks and open space reserves along the coast, and the space and fresh air these provide.
- Environmental sites - Protecting coastal ecosystems and areas of environmental significance, such as sand dunes, nesting sites (including for Hooded Plovers) and estuaries.
- Cultural significance - Preserving places of cultural significance to First Nations people.
- Local economies - Supporting tourism, local businesses and other economic opportunities associated with the coast.

- Infrastructure - Coastal infrastructure that 'fits in' with traditional coastal landforms.
- Safety – Keeping people as safe as possible along our coastline, especially around our cliffs.

### Interest in Citizen Science

Citizen science is when members of the community volunteer their time to partner with researchers to increase scientific knowledge through observation, data collection and discovery.

At the drop-in sessions, there was discussion around the potential role of citizen scientists in assisting with the collection of local data around changes in our coast, as part of the overall Coastal Monitoring Program.

Fifteen (15) of the attendees at the drop-in sessions and 13 survey respondents expressed an interest in being involved in future citizen science initiatives associated with coastal monitoring.

### Evaluation

This engagement process had dual aims around informing people about the project and coastal adaptation approaches, as well as capturing feedback on the coastal adaptation options to inform the development of the Coastal Adaptation Plan.

Anecdotal feedback received at and following the face-to-face engagement sessions indicated that participants valued the engagement opportunity and in particular the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of how council's coast has operated over time, and how it is expected to change in the years ahead.

The following table summarises the results of the engagement based on council's key metrics of aware, informed and engaged.

Indicator	Number	Description
The number of people who are <b>aware</b> of the project	877	Visits to Your Say
The number of people who are <b>informed</b> about the project	635	Interacted with Your Say (eg downloaded a document) or attended a drop-in session, webinar, or workshop.
The number of people who are <b>engaged</b> about the project	28	Completed a survey or provided a submission

### Sign off

All feedback reports are to be reviewed by the Engagement Unit  
([engagement@onkaparinga.sa.gov.au](mailto:engagement@onkaparinga.sa.gov.au))

#### Officer who prepared the document

Name: Michael Arman

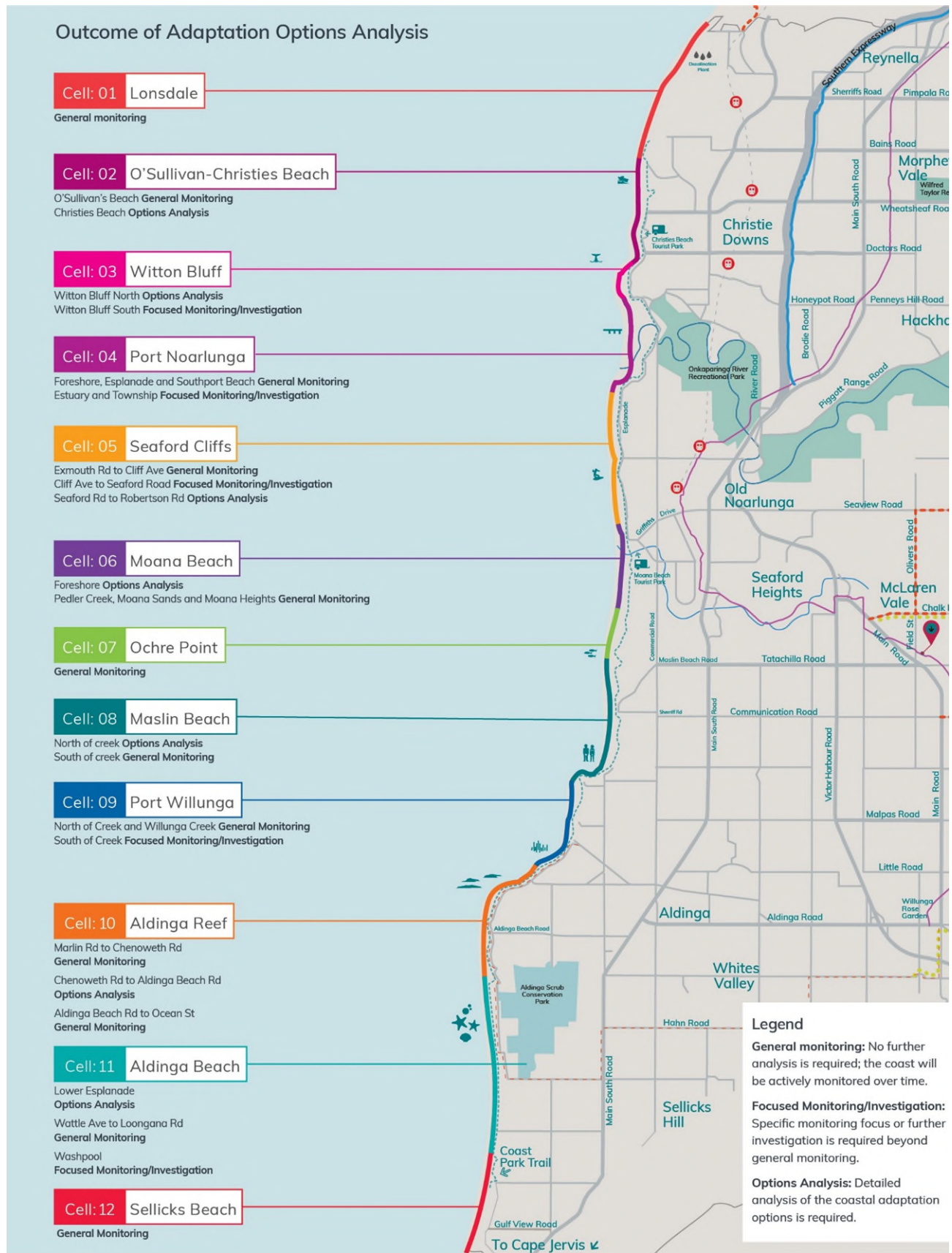
Position Title: Director BRM Advisory (consultant)

#### Reviewed by Community Engagement Advisor

Name: Lisa Kemp

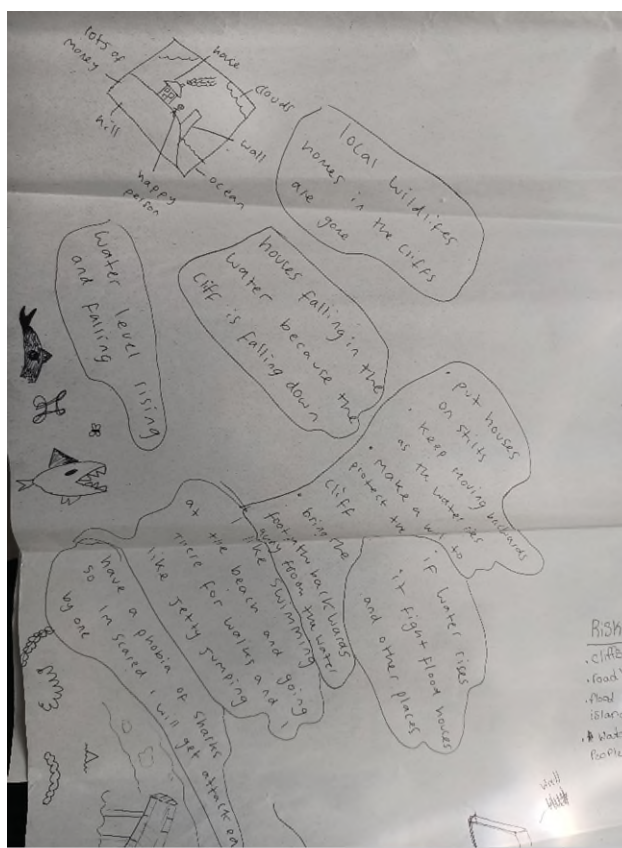
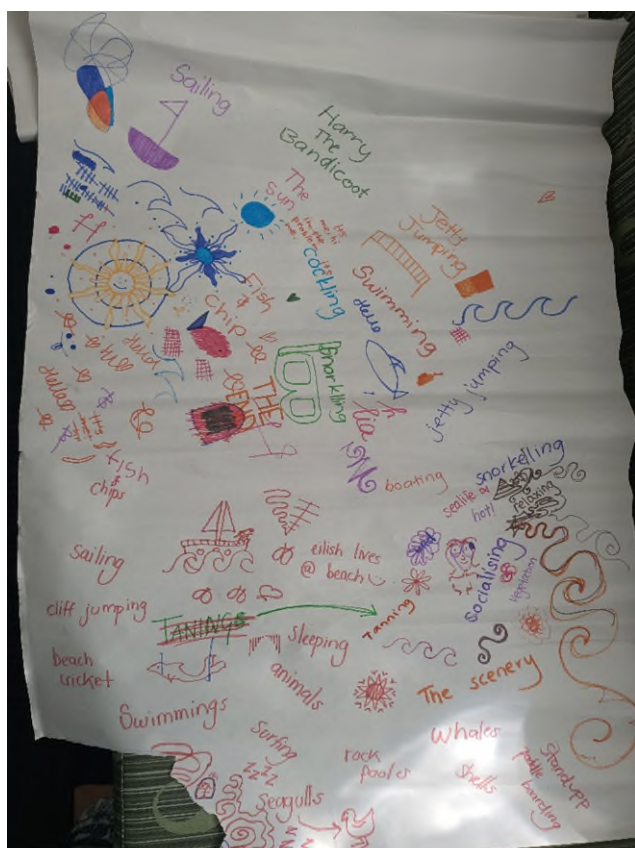
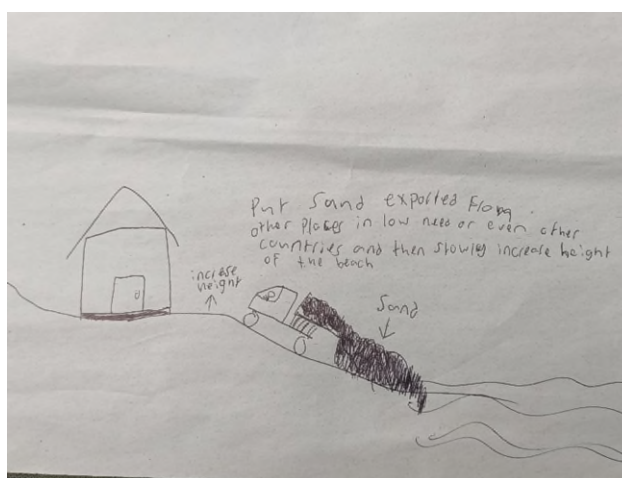
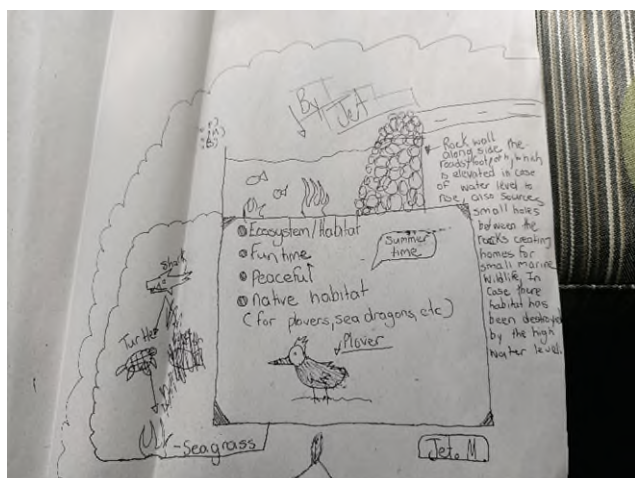
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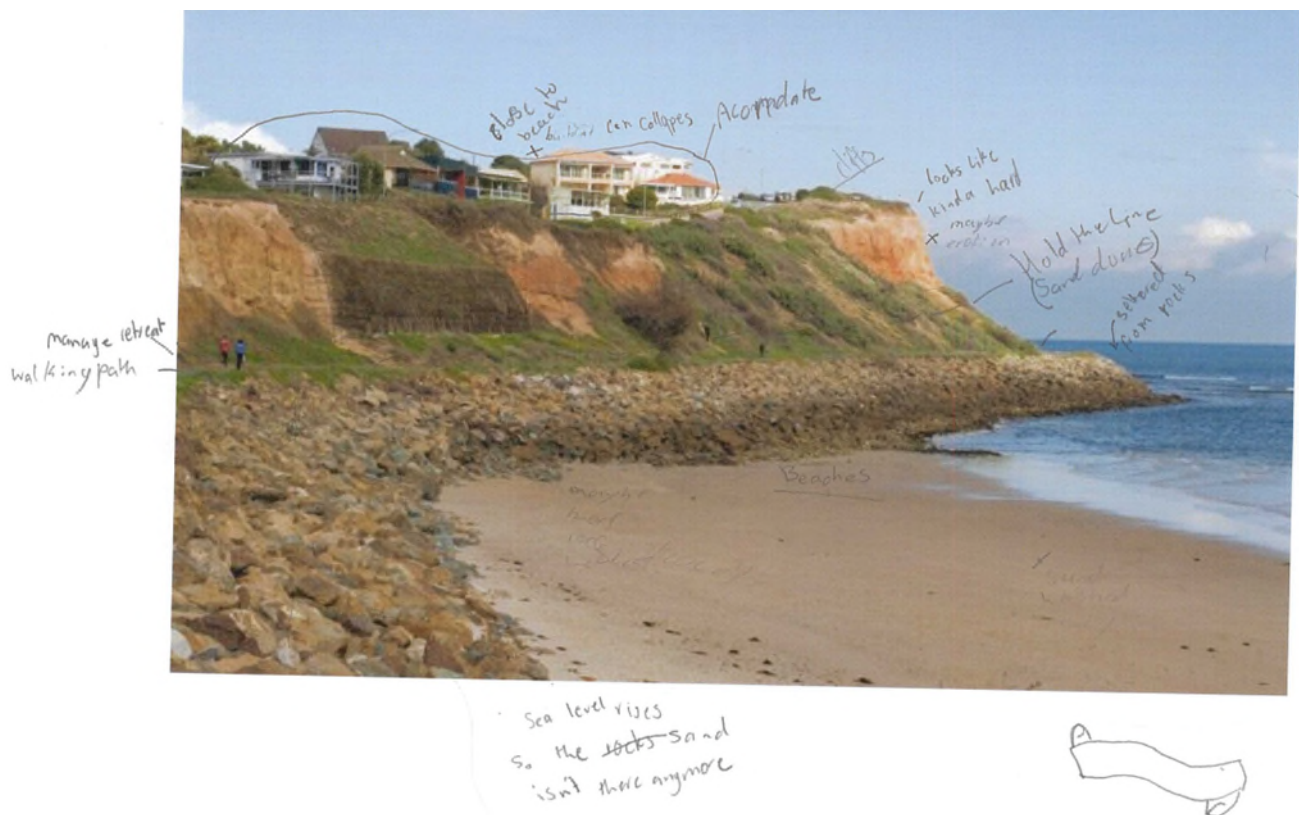
## Attachment A – Summary of proposed coastal adaptation options





## Attachment B - Example outputs from student engagement sessions









Car park (erosion & sea level)

Dunes (sea level)



man made things  
+ buildings close to  
shore

Cliff

accommodate

hold the line

defer  
&  
monitor

if rocks weren't there  
erosion could be a possibility