

Scamander coastal hazards and pathways adaptation plan – submissions review report

Break O' Day Council

March | 2026



Independent
insight.



moffatt & nichol

© SGS Economics and Planning Pty Ltd 2026

This report has been prepared for Break O' Day Council. SGS Economics and Planning has taken all due care in the preparation of this report. However, SGS and its associated consultants are not liable to any person or entity for any damage or loss that has occurred, or may occur, in relation to that person or entity taking or not taking action in respect of any representation, statement, opinion or advice referred to herein.

SGS Economics and Planning Pty Ltd
ACN 007 437 729
www.sgsep.com.au

OFFICES IN CANBERRA, HOBART, MELBOURNE, AND SYDNEY ON THE COUNTRY OF THE NGAMBRI/NGUNNAWAL/NGARIGO, MUWININA/PALAWA, WURUNDJERI, AND GADIGAL PEOPLES.

20250185_submissions review report_v2

1. Submissions review report

This report reviews submissions received during public exhibition of the draft Scamander coastal hazards and pathways adaptation plan. The draft plan was exhibited for a period of one month between February and March 2026. Overall, 9 submissions were received from 8 members of the Scamander community, with one resident responding twice.

The table below summarises responses to the draft report from the community, collected via online survey and email.

Table 1: summary of responses per question

Question	Summary of responses
<p>Qu1 What do you think of the three options, what they aim to do, how and their costs?</p>	<p>Agreement with conclusions of the report. Options 1 and 2 preferred for low impact and affordability. Option 3 considered costly and damaging to the character of the foreshore.</p>
<p>Qu2 Are there other treatments you'd suggest could be used for them or different mitigation actions that can reduce shoreline erosion and or inundation risks over time?</p>	<p>Range of intervention options proposed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rebuilding old training wall – More frequent mechanical opening of barway – Reconstruction of dunes north of Scamander SLSC building – Strengthening of dunes with rock bags, sand bags and vegetation – Buy back of Dune St and restoration as nature reserve <p>Most are already addressed in the report. Additional text added regarding mechanical opening of barway, rebuilding training wall.</p>
<p>Qu3 What do you think about the approach taken for this study: focussing on Dune Street shoreline, the cost-benefit evaluation of options to manage the risks and values affected and application to the other shorelines?</p>	<p>Generally agree with focus on Dune Street as this is the most highly exposed area with highest concentration of private property. One respondent is disappointed with recommendations, believing them to offer 'no real vision' for area; this responds to recommendations for managed retreat in particular. Clear desire for more explanation of what this looks like for residents – but this cannot be provided in this report.</p>
<p>Qu4 For the Dune Street shoreline (Section 5.1 in the report), what do you think of the assessment of risks, assets, 'do nothing' base case and the three potential adaptation strategies defined for it?</p>	<p>General agreement with approach – some minor misunderstandings, clarifications and corrections required and made in the report. One respondent</p>

	unhappy with options; clear preference for reconstruction of old rock wall.
Qu5 What do you think of the cost/benefit analysis of these options, the outcome, and implications for adaptation planning for Dune Street shoreline? Where have you doubts?	Agreement with CBA findings, though some preference for the 'harder' of the two supported interventions – Option 2.
Qu6 What do you think of the other adaptation options raised during the project and reviewed by the report - rebuilding a training wall, rivulet connection to Falmouth and planned retreat?	Strong views both for and against the reconstruction of the training wall. Agreement with planning responses to not intensify development in at-risk areas.
Qu7 The findings for Dune Street are related to the other hotspot shorelines: 'Pelican Sands' (northern mouth shore) and Bridge Esplanade, and two minor ones (Sections 5.2, 5.3 & 5.4). Have you any comments or suggestions for these other shorelines and applying the findings for Dune Street to them?	Agreement with directions identified for other hotspots. General preference for lower impact, soft interventions around the river mouth. Also preference for no intensification of development or encouragement to occupy hazardous locations
Qu8 Do you support the recommendations in the draft Plan?	Generally yes, one respondent disagrees with all recommendations except 'no regrets'
QU9 What is it about the recommendations you do or don't agree with? Have you different views on what the findings mean for managing coastal and flood risks at the River Mouth now and in future?	General support for recommendations, except for one resident who displays a clear preference for a much harder approach at Dune St.
Qu10 What ideas do you have for using the Pathways Adaptation Plan to reduce risks to properties, infrastructure and the environment from the complex coastal and flood risks over the long term at the Scamander River Mouth?	Most opposition is in favour of old rock wall. Also desire for more 'proactive' response from Council, particularly around more frequent opening of barway.
Qu11 Do you have any other thoughts or comments you'd like to add?	Gratitude for project, support for community consultations. One resident is very unhappy and would prefer a much harder approach. Some concern that risks from extreme weather events (especially storms) are under-represented.

Source: SGS Economics and Planning 2026

The table below summarises the implications of each response for the report and highlights where any concerns are addressed in the final report (page references in second column).

Table 2: summary of individual responses and changes to report

	Summary of response	Changes to report
1	Broadly agrees with conclusions and analysis in report. Raises buy-back of Dune St - would be a large cost to Council, but natural benefits could be material. Also raises relocation of assets including SLSC - this is factored into CBA.	Acknowledge buy-back option, this would be a large cost but could present benefits (unsure how much – it is not a big area that would provide huge habitat) (p. 40)
2	Wants to rebuild to training wall to the south of the river. The modelling shows that this is unlikely to justify the cost. Also wants restoration and revegetation of dunes, which is consistent with 'low' and 'medium' approach.	Additional discussion of how the second option mimics the old rock wall (p. 31, 39)
3	Agrees with approach to project and endorses analysis and recommendations, including recommendation of a softer, more dynamic approach to risk management. Wants additional information on best practice for adapting private structures.	Highlight planning response and include recommendation for Council to research and disseminate best practice on adapting structures (p. 53)
4	Wants to rebuild to training wall to the south of the river. The modelling shows that this is unlikely to justify the cost. The rivulet option is discussed in the report - such a major engineered intervention such as this would need significant and detailed investigation as a first step.	Additional discussion of how the second option mimics the old rock wall. (p. 31, 39). Add additional example to Table 1 row 1 to clear up confusion between that and value of Dune St properties in Chapter 5. (p. 20) Clarify that costing of options is indicative (proper consideration of geo-bags or rockbags would need to be separately costed. (p. 30)
5	Preference for more regular or permanent opening of barway. Wants more aggressive protection, thinks options 2 and 3 are the only viable option.	Address constantly opening barway in report. This could have an impact, but has significant practical and cost constraints and would not address wave run up and storm bite. Also would significantly affect ecological values, including beach use and amenity. As an ICOLL, Scamander River mouth should be closed sometimes. (p. 40)
6	Supports findings, makes some additional suggestions such as options including discrete access paths to beach.	Options should include discrete access paths to beach. (p. 30, 31). Agree managed retreat needs to be piloted - build on this recommendation. (p. 52-3)
7	Agrees with planning recommendations and assessment of costs and benefits.	No change

8	Supports findings, offers some clarifications (e.g. historical changes in river opening location), but has a preference for inclusion of the rock wall in option 1.	Added consideration of relative merits of soft protection (option 1) against hard protection and cost (option 2), which mimics the old rock wall. (p. 38)
9	Supportive of project and recommendations, displays strong preference for re-wilding and use of protection to improve biodiversity in the area.	Mention available species for revegetation in Pelican Sands. (p. 43) Additional emphasis on scope for quality ecological outcomes: The project offers a excellent opportunity to implement high quality ecological restoration outcomes. " (p. 53)

Source: SGS Economics and Planning 2026

Conclusions

The feedback received from the community broadly endorses the project and its findings. Responses have enabled additional nuance to some recommendations and analysis but do not materially change the conclusions of the report. While most endorse a softer approach, combining the ‘no regrets’ options with elements of a living shoreline, there is appetite from some community members for a harder approach, particularly the reconstruction of the old training wall. Council will need to address these concerns directly, and can use the findings of the report as support. There is also a clear desire for additional information and guidance on managed retreat and its implications for residents in Dune St. For example, some suggest a land buy-back as a component of managed retreat. There is firm support for the recommendations of using planning to disincentivise development in at-risk areas, advocating to State and Federal Government for additional support and using Scamander as a pilot project for managed retreat.

Council should be clear that this report is a first step in the ongoing process of management and adaptation to coastal hazards. Note also the value of the process that has been followed; even where responses disagreed with the conclusions of the report, they supported the extensive community engagement and information sharing that has occurred. The range of options and differences in support can be resolved over time as part of the dynamic adaptation pathways approach; at this stage nothing should be considered ‘off the table’.