

# Coastal Communities Protection Alliance – Wooli Situation update – Easter 2012



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## Background Information:

- CCPA was formed as a community group in response to the issuance of the Draft Wooli Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) in Sept 2010
- The draft CZMP was prepared by Worley Parsons on behalf of Clarence Valley Council (CVC)
- The draft CZMP recommended that “planned retreat” be investigated as a preferred option – this would involve the progressive abandonment of much of the old Wooli village
- CCPA rejected the draft CZMP and embarked on a strategy of engaging with local and state government
- We believe that decisions on the future of our communities must be based on extensive community consultation and diligent, best practice planning
- With the appropriate research and planning, “planned retreat” should not be presented as a viable option

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## What has been done?:

- A position paper was prepared and presented to CVC and state government (including Minister Robyn Parker)
- A preliminary study of Wooli beach processes was commissioned from ASR, an international marine consultancy firm
- Approx 1500 petition signatures have been gathered
- A community meeting was held in February 2011, where ASR presented their findings to representatives of the then NSW opposition
- The Wooli DuneCare group has been re-established
- Links have been established and maintained with other coastal “hot-spot” community groups in NSW

*For copies of both the CCPA Position Paper, and the ASR report, please refer to [www.protectwooli.com.au](http://www.protectwooli.com.au)*

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## Key recommendations from ASR report?:

- Many defensive options are available for the Wooli situation, but there is very little information from which to select the best protection strategy
- Get the data, analyse it to understand the beach – then choose the solutions
- CCPA has embarked on a strategy to commence the necessary research and data collection process – see [www.protectwooli.com.au](http://www.protectwooli.com.au)
- This has been done with the support of CVC staff – who have indicated they will not be proceeding with the planned retreat option

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## What has been achieved?:

- CCPA has worked productively with CVC staff to enable the following research activities to commence:
  - On-beach survey – the first comprehensive survey has been completed thanks to the work of expert volunteers (surveyors, engineers) from Wooli
  - Beach photography – a camera system has been erected on the Wooli water tower
  - The Dune Care group has experimented with different planting and sand trap mechanisms – with the result that a solid secondary dune is forming.

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## Next steps?:

- Underwater research is planned to commence in May/June of this year
- The Wooli case study is being presented as an example of how community engagement can result in a positive outcome – one of our steering committee members, Kristin Stubbins, has been appointed to the state wide “expert” panel, advising a group of NSW state government ministers on the management of coastal risks and hazards in NSW.

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## A final word on funding:

- CCPA believes that research must be conducted regarding appropriate solutions for the Wooli situation, without funding limitations
- We presented three potential funding ideas (minimal taxpayer impact) in the February 2011 Position Paper, assuming a very costly solution was identified (eg offshore structure)
- The cost of any proposed solution will be less than the cost of planned retreat
- The proposed solution might be expensive, or it might just be an evolution of the current dune care process
- We won't know the answer to this until our research is concluded.