

# FUTURE PROOFING OLD BAR

**“AN EROSION PROTECTION MODEL FOR AUSTRALIAN COASTAL COMMUNITIES”**

## THE CHALLENGE

Old Bar beaches are eroding as sand from along the Old Bar “embayment” between Wallabi Point and Urana Bombora reef moves northward but is not fully replaced from sand flow from the south.

**OUTCOME: Public & private infrastructure will continue to be lost**

## ECONOMIC THREAT

Old Bar is a beach front community of Taree with a unique character. The community and the economy are centred on its high quality surfing beaches.

**OUTCOME: Economy and jobs driven by tourism:**

- ~\$14.8 million per year
- ~300 full time-equivalent jobs
- ~1/4 Old Bar workforce.

Numerous reports have been prepared and these have identified that the coastal processes are very complex and variable. The standard protection approaches proposed have been very costly resulting in the perception that there are:

- No simple or cheap fixes

In this context the current NSW State Government preferred position is that it has a preference for:

- Retreat options to reduce direct Government costs.

The risk of retreat is that it will result in narrow poor quality beaches with loss of local businesses, jobs and amenity.

**OUTCOME: Retreat will negatively impact on Old Bar, Greater Taree City Council and NSW economies.**

## RESPONSE

The community is actively seeking solutions and Council has prepared a flexible Coastal Zone Management Plan that encourages innovative “informed adaption” by the community.



## Do Nothing and Retreat looks like this



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## GLOBAL PROBLEMS

Globally, coastal managers are looking for practical adaption and / or mitigation solutions for coastal communities threatened by beach erosion. Standard solutions often fail or are too large and expensive. The key coastal management problems are invariably: RISK & FUNDING.

## Smart Local Solutions

ICM and EcoCoast are involved worldwide in master-planning and implementation of innovative design & construct coastal projects at resort, island, city and regional scales. Many of our successful projects had been previously deemed impossible or too expensive. Invariably, few projects are technically impossible but it is funding the high cost that is considered as impossible. Innovative approaches often result in significant cost and risk reductions. Innovation does not need to mean something untried and risky – often we apply a tested technology in an innovative way using local contractors and staged implementation. Staged implementation not only spreads the costs but provides additional local data, development of local skills and an informed community to facilitate future stages, as required.

The key to the solutions at Old Bar will an **INFORMED COMMUNITY** empowered by **GTCC's flexible Coastal Zone Management Plan** to drive site specific innovative solutions with the following key features:

- Low risk, robust and flexible strategies for long term sustainability
- High benefit to cost ratio that is easily staged to funding.
- Protects the coastal environment and grows local economy
- Staged development benefitting from local University R&D providing local data and knowledge to further develop and fine tune the best long term strategies.
- Developing business cases to tap into a wide range of funding sources.

## The Benefits of Working with Nature

Embayed beaches have the greatest resilience to sand losses and erosion. Old Bar area has natural rocky reefs and headlands that act as control structures creating a semi-embayed condition with sand leaking out to the north. The local natural features can be enhanced to protect the Old Bar Beaches using the principals of IENCE [*Infrastructure to Enhance the Natural Capacity of the Environment*].

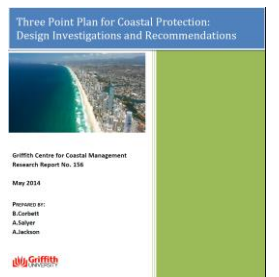
Understanding and “working with nature” leads to a number of practical, low risk and robust options to compartmentise and protect the beach environment in the diverse range of conditions experienced in nature. These options can be combined into a long term integrated management scheme for Old Bar that can be funded in stages to create a more resilient beach and beach economy.

### Key features:

- Beaches and surfing amenity protected and future proofed.
- Protects and catalyses high value public and private beachfront land for long term economic development
- Consolidates community lifestyle and secures increased local employment.
- Embeds revenue streams for ongoing asset management and maintenance.
- Provide a viable technical and funding model that can be exported to other coastal communities.



Old Bar Beach Sand Replenishment Group Inc



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## IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING

Having a great project to protect and grow your community is a good start but....

### “How do you get your project funded?”

Since the Global Financial Crisis, government budgets have tightened and the need for broadening investment partners in economic development initiatives has only grown stronger. It is becoming more evident that any sense of entitlement and dependence on government funding as the only form of financing transformative economic development is unsustainable.

### Crowdfunding Economic Growth

With the development of internet based platforms, Crowdfunding has emerged as an innovative way to facilitate *collaborative investment* of great ideas. Until recently, this new financing innovation of “Collaborative Investment” has been on the periphery of mainstream commerce and public sector financing. But, Collaborative Investment provides new options for the implementation of catalyst infrastructure projects.

### Benefits of a New Investment Paradigm

The emergence of Collaborative Investment Platforms enable governments to expand investment partners in projects that have been traditionally fully financed by the public sector. It also taps the pent up desire of local communities to invest in their future from donation, micro funding, low return social investing and traditional commercial investment.

### Collaborative Investment helps:

- Local investors to invest locally
- Broaden project investment partners
- Increase local stakeholder support
- Deliver catalyst projects stalled by funding shortfalls.

### Regional Opportunity

Regions have a passion for the future of their local community and for a long time there have been few ways for passionate locals to invest in their communities. Collaborative Investment enables the development of business cases for critical catalyst infrastructure projects. Particularly those that support place-based economic development where government funds are limited and commercial markets deem these communities too risky for traditional financial investment.

### How to Get Started

The secret to tapping into collaborative funding is to develop projects that reflect local values with a business case that maximises engagement across the business, education, health and lifestyle sectors. These type of multi-dimensional catalyst projects maximise the potential collaborative investors.

**Communities with local leaders that are “innovation ready” are best placed to secure the benefits of this new approach to facilitating local economic development and employment growth.**

For more information on Catalyst Projects visit: [www.vitalplaces.com.au](http://www.vitalplaces.com.au)

For more information on Collaborative Investment visit: [www.regionalsolutions.net.au](http://www.regionalsolutions.net.au).

