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Thames Coromandel District Council  
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Thames 3540  
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Dear Sir/Madam,

**Submission on Buffalo Beach Homeowners Assoc. Coastal defence Structure - consent applications WRC AUTH138330.01.01 & TCDC RMA2017/89**

I oppose the granting of consent for these two applications and request that Waikato Regional Council and Thames Coromandel District Council decline these applications.

I made a submission on the original rock wall consent and my reasons for opposition remain the same. Hard structures such as rock walls do not result over the long term in good outcomes for the public or our natural environment. It is not appropriate to allow for private gain over public loss which would be the result if these consent applications are granted.

We need to make the hard decisions now based on future sea level rise projections that best protect community assets and natural resources. This is going to require the retreat of inappropriately placed structures away from the Coastal Marine Area (CMA). Some vital structures/infrastructure cannot be relocated as there are no alternative sites e.g. necessary roading against steep cliffs. Housing however does not fall into this category. Protecting private property is not a cost the public should bear. Ratepayers are going to face an increasingly costly burden of protecting vital infrastructure at the expense of losing some of our naturally functioning, aesthetically attractive beaches with their associated biodiversity. This loss should not however be cumulatively added to by including defending private property. There has been ample warning that coastal property is not a safe long-term investment. The risk lies with the property owner.

The protection of the natural character (functioning), biodiversity and amenity values (including having high tide access along a beach) of our beaches is paramount. The proposed rock wall design severely affects the high tide beach and inland access is not

encouraged or provided for by the applicant. They actually suggest that TCDC should pay for any access costs. Not only does the rock wall degrade the functioning of the beach but also the coastal biodiversity associated with this Threatened Environment has been lost due to the interference with the natural coastal erosion processes. The wall is also negatively influencing erosion of the reserves at either end.

In contrast to the armoured foreshore at either end of Buffalo Beach, the Taputapuatea Spit provides an example of how our coastline should look when expressing its natural character and is not impacted by the poor location of built structures. This dune system is able to erode and accrete naturally. The reserve also allows for public access below and above high tide mark irrespective of the erosion state of the beach.

This application is contrary to objectives and policies of the NZ Coastal Policy Statement, Resource Management Act, Hauraki Gulf Protection Act and Waikato Regional Policy Statement.

A short term of consent for the original wall built under emergency has given property owners some breathing space. It is now time for these properties to relocate.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on this application. I wish to be heard in support of my submission.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Meg Graeme". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Meg Graeme

cc. Planners Plus  
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