



Central Coast Council
Coastal Open Space System
Held Remotely - Online

27 March 2023

MINUTES

Attendance

Members

Paul Links
Deb Holloman
Daniel Keating
John Andrews
Andrew Bayley/Stephen Atkins
Peter Draper
Barbara Wills
Douglas Williamson arrived 3:20pm

Status

Present
Present
Apology
Present
Apology
Apology
Present
Present

Staff

Luke Sulkowski – Unit Manager, Environmental Management
Larry Melican – Section Manager, Natural Assets and Biodiversity
Andrew Robinson – Technical Officer, Environmental Infrastructure
Rochelle Lawson (optional) – Senior Ecologist – Natural Assets and Biodiversity
Lisa Martin – Civic Support Officer, Civic Support

Status

Present
Present
Present
Apology
Present

Guest

Gary Chestnut

Status

Present

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies, Disclosure of Interest

The Chairperson, declared the meeting open at 3:01PM

The Chair read an Acknowledgement of Country statement.

Apologies received were noted.

The Chair called for any disclosures of interest. No disclosures were received

REPORTS

2.1 Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund

Recommendation: That the committee have reviewed the presentation of the Central Coast Conservation Fund Policy Development and provide feedback.

Presentation by: Larry Melican

Background provided by Luke Sulkowski:

Attendees flagged that there may be alternative opportunities to fund the acquisition of the wetlands other than through Council. The chair advised that he understood that the negotiation for the purchase of the Davistown Wetlands did not fail due to not enough money, but that purchase was being pursued in accordance with Council's Policy for Land Acquisition, and that independent valuations for the land, which Council's offers were based on, were not accepted by the vendor. Ultimately the vendors expectations for sale price of the land did not align with how much Council was prepared to pay.

Council staff advised the Committee that if the Davistown Wetlands Acquisition funds were to go into the new proposed Conservation fund that theoretically there will still be an opportunity for the money to be spent on the Davistown Wetlands, but that application of that fund towards specific projects, tasks and actions, would ultimately be prioritised based on net benefit regardless of location within the LGA. This would include the approach taken in regards to Council's Environmental Land Acquisition Program (ELAP).

There has been a meeting with the Davistown Progress Association to obtain their input.

Luke Sulkowski (Unit Manager Environment Management) asked the following questions to the group to gain their feedback:

1. **What should the funds be spent on?**
2. **Should the funds stay restricted only for Davistown or should it be spent more productively and go into the conservation fund?**

Gary Chestnut (non-voting member) requested for the interest generated by the Conservation Fund to be quarantined within it, and not the general fund. Also requested that the funds remain separate in its own account.

The committee agreed that alternate application of the funds within Davistown could be for such projects as habitat enhancement and protection for the Bush Stone Curlew and other threatened species in the area. It was understood that Council staff had engaged an ecologist to undertake further studies in regards to conflicts between off leash dog exercise areas and wildlife habitat at Pippi Point, and pending the outcome of those studies and further Council decisions in relation to the site, that the funds may be applied at that location for more beneficial conservation outcomes.

Some other feedback from the Committee members included:

- Would like to see the funds used at Davistown on other Conservation Outcomes where possible. Stating that it would be a good environmental use and it would keep the people of Davistown happy.
- Other advice also said that they would be happy to have the funds go into a general conservation fund.
- Another suggestion was that funds could be used for Wetlands within a certain radius, feels it is too restricted just using Davistown. Possible future developers may think it is only for Davistown.

Action: The Chairperson requested any additional feedback to be sent to Advisory group inbox by 11 April 2023.

The Meeting concluded at 3.53pm