



**COASTAL OPEN SPACE SYSTEM**  
**Extraordinary meeting**

**27 March 2023**



# COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST IS THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP) FOR THE CENTRAL COAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST DEFINES THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND IS OUR ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE**

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST BRINGS TOGETHER EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TO SET KEY DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES**

One - Central Coast will shape and inform Council's business activities, future plans, services and expenditure. Where actions are the responsibility of other organisations, sectors and groups to deliver, Council will work with key partners to advocate on behalf of our community.

Ultimately, every one of us who live on the Central Coast has an opportunity and responsibility to create a sustainable future from which we can all benefit. Working together we can make a difference.

## RESPONSIBLE

**WE'RE A RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY, COMMITTED TO BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND DELIVERING A GREAT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN ALL OUR INTERACTIONS.**

We value transparent and meaningful communication and use community feedback to drive strategic decision making and expenditure, particularly around the delivery of essential infrastructure projects that increase the safety, liveability and sustainability of our region. We're taking a strategic approach to ensure our planning and development processes are sustainable and accessible and are designed to preserve the unique character of the coast.

 **Good governance and great partnerships**

**G2** Engage and communicate openly and honestly with the community to build a relationship based on trust, transparency, respect and use community participation and feedback to inform decision making

There are 5 themes, 12 focus areas and 48 objectives

### COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028 FRAMEWORK

All council reports contained within the Business Paper are now aligned to the Community Strategic Plan. Each report will contain a cross reference to a Theme, Focus Area and Objective within the framework of the Plan.



# Extraordinary Meeting Notice

**The Coastal Open Space System  
of Central Coast Council  
will be held Online,  
on Monday 27 March 2023 at 3:00pm,**  
for the transaction of the business listed below:

## **1 Procedural Items**

- 1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies, Disclosure of Interest..... 4

## **2 Reports**

- 2.1 Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund..... 5

Luke Sulkowski  
**Chairperson**

**1.1 INTRODUCTION: WELCOME, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY,  
APOLOGIES, DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Chairperson – Luke Sulkowski

**Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Receipt of Apologies**

*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play.  
We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging and recognise their continued  
connection to these lands and waterways.  
We acknowledge our shared responsibility to care for and protect our place and people.*

**Item No:** 2.1  
**Title:** Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund  
**Department:** Corporate Affairs

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27 March 2023 Coastal Open Space System

Reference: F2018/00099-002 - D15595234  
Author: Lisa Martin, Civic Support Officer. Civic Support

### **Report purpose**

To provide information to the Coastal Open Space System (COSS) Committee

### **Background**

The role of the Coastal Open Space System (COSS) Committee is to advise Council on all matters relating to strategic biodiversity conservation land management (including the COSS) for the Central Coast.

The Advisory Group is responsible for providing advice and feedback to Council on:

- Providing advice and feedback to Council on the development and implementation of a revised COSS Strategy for the Central Coast including the review of the objectives
- Championing biodiversity conservation outcomes with the broader community of the Central Coast.
- Providing advice and feedback to Council on a revised COSS Assessment process

Theme 1: Belonging

**Goal A: Our community spirit is our strength**

B-A4: Enhance community safety within neighbourhoods, public spaces and places.

**Attachments**

- 1 Presentation - Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund D15595336



# Central Coast Conservation Fund – Policy Development

Presentation to Catchments to Coast Committee, Davistown Progress Association and COSS Committee  
December 2022

## Council Resolution 22 November 2022

- 1. That Council note the resolution of 13 April 2021 that Council discontinue any negotiations to purchase by agreement the land known as the Davistown Wetlands.***
- 2. That Council note the balance of the internally restricted funds held in the Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund was \$1,436,039 as of 21 October 2022.***
- 3. That Council instruct staff to develop a draft policy, in consultation with the Davistown Progress Association, Coastal Open Space System Committee and the Catchment to Coast Committee, for a Central Coast Conservation Fund in accordance with Action 2.2.1 of the Central Coast Council Biodiversity Strategy adopted by Council on 28 September 2020 and that the draft policy be placed on public exhibition for not less than 28 days.***
- 4. That following the exhibition period a report be brought back to Council on the outcomes of the community consultation, which is to include recommendations in relation to the draft Central Coast Council Conservation Fund Policy and the formal adoption of the Central Coast Conservation Fund.***
- 5. That subject to the adoption of the Central Coast Conservation Fund, given that Council no longer seeks to acquire Davistown Wetlands, consideration be given by Council to derestricting the Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund and reallocating the balance of that fund along with other appropriate environmentally related funds, such as those generated from Council's participation in the NSW Government's Biodiversity Offsets Scheme, to the Central Coast Conservation Fund.***
- 6. That expenditure of Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund on environmental management activities within Davistown be considered in the design of the Central Coast Conservation Fund Policy.***





# Davistown Wetlands (private land) - location



[centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)

## Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund Background

- Established by former GCC in 1996
- Internally restricted fund
- Revenue generated from sale of residential land at Davistown deposited into the Fund
- Purpose of purchasing wetland properties in Davistown and Saratoga
- Wetland properties identified in the former GCC Wetland Management Study, 1990
- Balance at 21/10/2022 was \$1,436,039

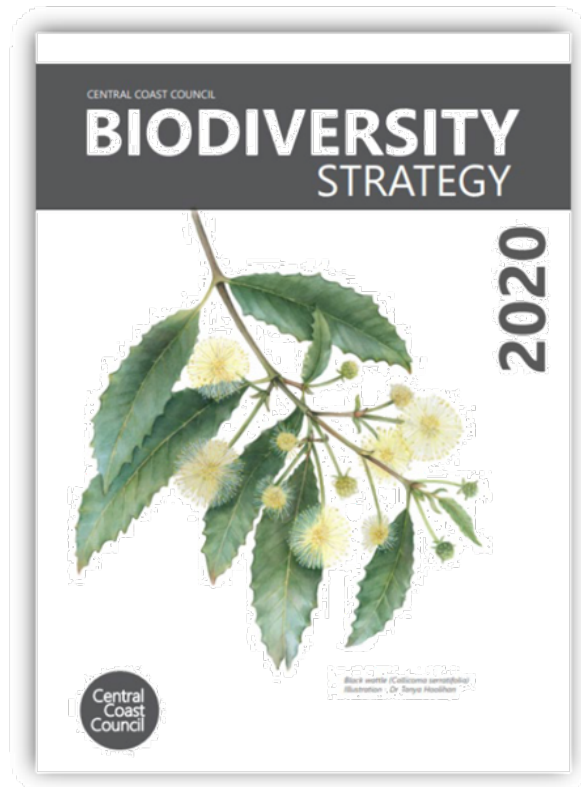


## Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund Background

- On-going community support for the protection of the ecological values of the wetland parcels
- Multiple attempts at purchase of several properties have failed to reach an agreement on a sale price
- Wetland parcels are constrained in terms of development, including by the Resilience and Hazards State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 2021
- The private lots and part lots that make up the Davistown Wetlands Complex remain in a relative natural state



# CCC Biodiversity Strategy



- Outlines Council's administrative and policy framework for responding to the actions identified to progress and implement on-ground change
- The Biodiversity Strategy guides Council's own actions and informs the actions of the community and a wide range of other organisations who together will shape the future of the Central Coast



# Themes, Goals, Actions and Targets

Themes have associated goals, actions and targets

**Theme 2** – Ensuring adequate resourcing to enable Council to effectively manage its natural areas and expand the conservation estate

**Goal 2.2** – Implement a finding program for land management and acquisition

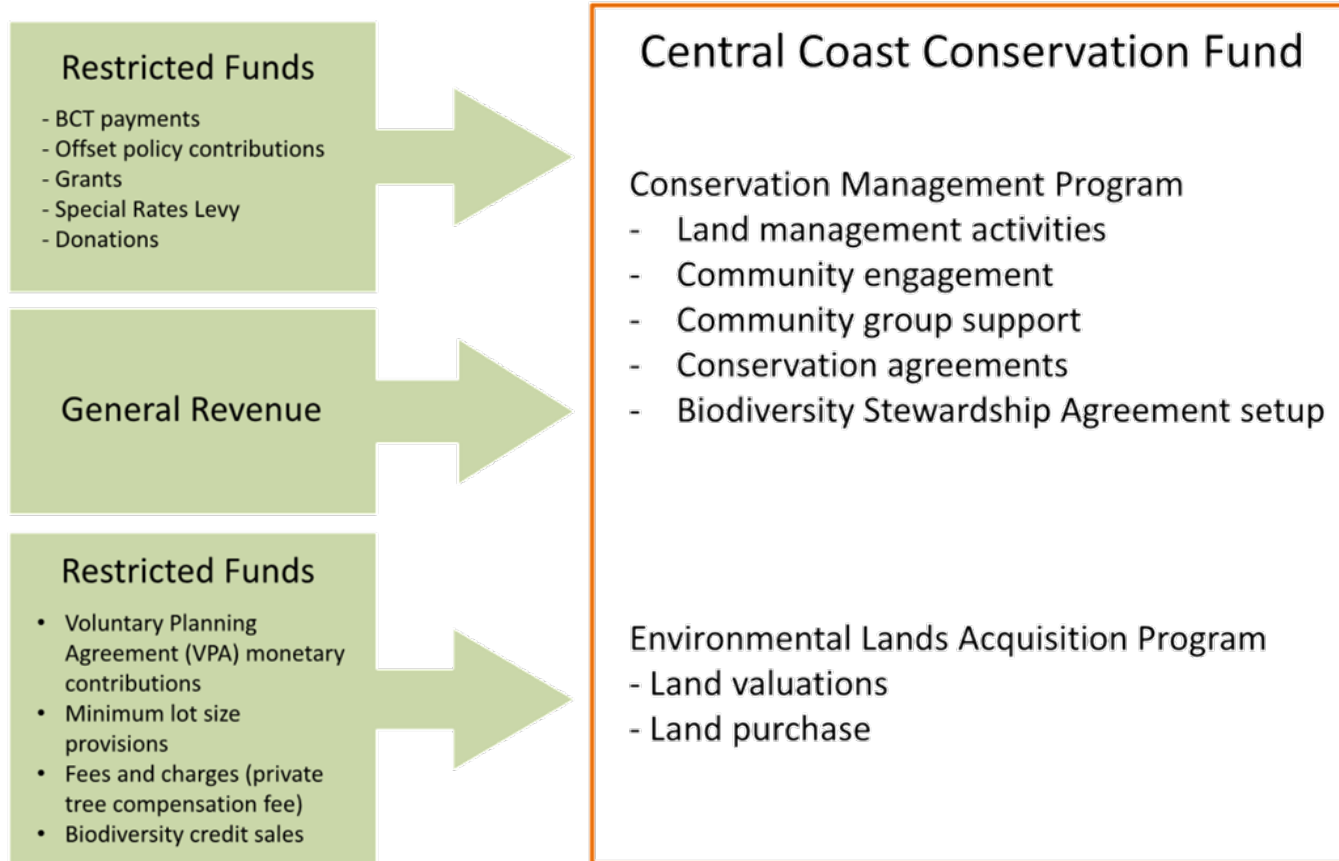
**Action 2.2.1:** Establish funding for the management and acquisition of land identified by the Conservation Management Program and Environmental Lands Acquisition Program

**Target:** Commencement of a Central Coast Conservation Fund by the end of 2021/22.

**Action 2.2.2:** Investigate other funding options for the Environmental Lands Acquisition Program

**Target:** By the end of 2021/22, the feasibility of other funding options has been assessed





[centralcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://centralcoast.nsw.gov.au)

## Precedence in former Gosford and Wyong - COSS and Clause 14 restricted funds

Under planning instruments of the former Wyong and Gosford Council's funds were collected through what was referred to as 'bonus lot provisions'.

This enabled land zoned 7(c2) to be subdivided where:

- (i) the person dedicates land as a public reserve
- (ii) the person agrees to contribute funds to Council for the purchase of public reserve land or for the improvement or embellishment of any public reserve owned by Council.



## COSS and Clause 14 restricted funds

- The former Wyong scheme was not brought through to the new LEP in 2013, and the former Gosford scheme will finish once the deferred lands are zoned in the CC LEP 2022. The balance of these funds are restricted and are still used to acquire land where opportunities arise.
- A fund that allows for monies to be collected through the mechanism approved under the CC LEP 2022 is required.





## Proposed Central Coast Conservation Fund

- From the Biodiversity Strategy (Page 47): "The money would be held as restricted revenue, in a revolving trust account, which would have strict procedures for its management, auditing and expenditure, and only to be used in accordance with the Biodiversity Strategy objectives and the fund's purpose. Action 2.2.1 is to set up such a fund with appropriate accounting procedures, nominally named the Central Coast Conservation Fund
- Establishment of the CCCF would allow for funds generated through participation in the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme and other sources to be restricted for their use for defined purposes.
- A policy and rules need to be developed for the use and governance of the CCCF.



## Restricted Funds Policy (November 2022)

- The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework for the establishment and management of Council's restricted cash funds. The policy details those funds which Council recognises as external and internal restrictions.
- Additional internal restrictions may be created by resolution of Council which states how the funds will be collected and the permitted uses of the funds.
- Interest is not to be calculated and applied to internal restrictions. There may be individual circumstances where interest is applied to an internal restriction and this must be specified in the resolution of Council, including the interest rate to be used.



# Internal Restriction

Restriction Name	Restriction Description and Purpose
Davistown Wetland	<p>This is a former Gosford City Council internal restriction established in 1996 with funds from sale of surplus land parcels in Davistown for future wetland acquisition purposes.</p> <p>No additional funds are allocated to this restriction.</p>

Council resolution of November 2022:

- 5 That subject to the adoption of the Central Coast Conservation Fund, given that Council no longer seeks to acquire Davistown Wetlands, consideration be given by Council to derestricting the Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund and reallocating the balance of that fund along with other appropriate environmentally related funds, such as those generated from Council's participation in the NSW Government's Biodiversity Offsets Scheme, to the Central Coast Conservation Fund.***



# External Restrictions

Restriction Name	Restriction Description and Purpose
Biobanking	<p>This external restriction holds funds for Biobanking Agreement ID number 161, under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995, between former Gosford City Council and NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. The agreement was made on 13 April 2015. The biobank site that is the subject of this agreement is known as Rumbalara Reserve and the site consists of approximately 59.31 hectares.</p> <p>Contributions are received annually (in perpetuity) for conservation works at this site. The landowner agrees to undertake the management actions and implement the management plans to improve the biodiversity values of the biobank site.</p>
Coastal Open Space System (COSS)	<p>This external restriction holds restricted funds for Coastal Open Space System (COSS) land acquisition and management.</p> <p>COSS was initiated by former Gosford City Council in 1984 and is a network of non-contiguous reserves supporting native vegetation that are managed for a number of environmental and community values. The primary purpose of the COSS is to maintain areas of native vegetation and habitat for native animals on public land.</p> <p>Capital contributions for COSS are received into Council's general ledger account 770414.</p> <p>Interest is allocated to the balance in the COSS restriction on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Interest calculated on \$1.5M is transferred from this restriction to Protection of the Environment Trust (POET) on a monthly basis for COSS maintenance and operations.</p>



## Potential use of the CCCF

- Purchase, acquisition or transfer of land for the purpose of biodiversity conservation, the protection of wildlife corridors and landscape connectivity
  - Priority land that meets the criteria set out in the Biodiversity Strategy
- Capital rehabilitation and management of environmental lands
  - Fencing, gates, signage, walking track construction
  - On-going land management, weed and pest control, ecological burns, nest box installation, monitoring
- Improvement or embellishment of environmental lands, including costs associated with legal protection
  - Stronger mechanisms favoured (such as a conservation agreement or biodiversity stewardship agreement) over weaker mechanisms (such as Section 88B Instruments)
- Administration of the conservation fund
  - Ancillary costs associated with fund management, auditing, reporting, etc



## Feedback sought from the Committees and Davistown Progress Association

- The focus of the proposed CCCF is on land acquisition and management to achieve positive biodiversity outcomes across the Central Coast Council area
- Feedback is requested from the committees on the rules about what monies can be collected by the proposed CCCF and how the fund can be spent

Email feedback to 'Advisory Groups' by COB Tues 31 Jan 23



## Development of the CCCF policy

- Feedback from the committees and the Davistown Progress Association will be considered in the development of the policy. The draft will go through internal review, legal and financial review and approval by senior management before a report to Council endorsing it to be placed on public exhibition
- The final draft of the policy will be provided to the Davistown Progress Association, the COSS Committee and the Catchments to Coast Committee
- The results of the public exhibition will be included in a report to Council recommending adoption of the policy



