

Minutes



Coastal Open Space System (COSS) Advisory Committee

Date: 21 September 2021

Time: 2.01pm – 4.15pm

Location: Microsoft Teams

Chairperson: Luke Sulkowski, Unit Manager Environmental Management

Coordinator: Luke Sulkowski, Unit Manager Environmental Management

Attendance

Members:

John Andrews

David Holland

Deb Holloman

Paul Links

Douglas Williamson

Barbara Wills

Gary Chestnut

Status:

Present

Absent

Present

Present

Present

Present

Present

External Agencies:

Steve Atkins, NPWS

David Green, LLS

Present

Present (left 2.29pm and re-joined at 3.22pm)

Staff:

Scott Cox, Director Environment and Planning

Luke Sulkowski, Unit Manager Environmental Management

Larry Melican, Section Manager Natural Assets and Biodiversity

Peter Sheath, Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning

Parissa Ghanem, Team Leader Floodplain Management

Rochelle Lawson, Senior Ecologist

Joe O'Connor, Commercial Property Manager

Sharyn Styman, Environmental Management and Projects Officer

Kelly Drover, Meeting Support Officer

Present (joined 2.48pm)

Present

Present

Present

Present

Present

Present

Present

Present

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Coastal Open Space System (COSS) Advisory Committee

1 Introduction

2.01pm

The chairperson welcomed the group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

There were no apologies received.

The chairperson called for any disclosures of interest.

In regard to Item 2, Action Item 127, Gary Chestnut declared a significant non-pecuniary interest as he has submitted a Comparison of the COSS Report and Council's Biodiversity Strategy to the Unit Manager Environmental Management.

Action: The Comparison undertaken by CEN of the COSS Report and Council's Biodiversity Strategy to be circulated to Committee Members. Unit Manager Environmental Management to investigate the option of an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss the report.

2 Previous business

2.03pm

The group confirmed the minutes from the previous meeting as noted below, which were distributed to members via email and uploaded to Council's website:

[9 June 2021 Coastal Open Space System Committee Meeting Minutes](#)

The action log was reviewed with updates recorded (see page 11).

3 Update on Biodiversity Strategy (standing agenda item)

2.09pm

Rochelle Lawson (Senior Ecologist) provided an update on the Biodiversity Strategy including the following:

Action 1.2.1 – Implement Site management plans to rehabilitate degraded bushland and coastal ecosystems

Bush regeneration works include:

- Bush regeneration on Council reserves (multiple sites)
- Mt Alison Reserve PVP site
- 97 Berkeley Road PVP site
- Mark Foster Reserve PVP site
- Wadalba Wildlife Corridor Reserve
- Winney Bay Reserve Management Plan and Boneseed removal
- Avoca Dr Wetlands planting (grand funded LLS)

Other projects and programs:

- Fling-fox camp heat mitigation (grand funded LLS)
- Hollow-bearing tree relocation Porters Creek Wetland (grant funded LLS)
- Encroachment management on Council reserves
- Pest species management in Council reserves
- Waterways and coastal management program

Action 1.4.2 – Establish conservation agreements

- Candidate natural assets for Conservation Agreements and Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements have been identified.
- Discussions and assessments with Biodiversity Conservation Trust well underway to establish new conservation agreements for reserves over 20 hectares (Porters Creek Conservation Agreement on hold)
- Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements for reserves identified for biodiversity credit generation:
 - o Glenning Valley two reserves (Bomaderry Cres R0345, Bundeena Road Reserve R0346). Complete July 2021
 - o 13 TfNSW reserves. Not proceeding

Rochelle advised that she has a Journal of Environmental Management paper being published next month titled *“Land use planning to support climate change adaptation in threatened plant communities”*. The paper identifies how climate refugia for threatened vegetation communities in an urban matrix can be used to support management decisions by local government authorities under the dual pressures of urban expansion and climate change. The Central Coast LGA was used as a case study.

Action: A copy of Rochelle’s Journal of Environmental Management paper to be provided to Committee Members once available and added to the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

Action: A copy of the Biodiversity strategy PowerPoint presentation to be circulated to Committee Members.

4 Land acquisition and prioritisation (standing agenda item)

2.16pm

Larry Melican (Section Manager Natural Assets and Biodiversity) advised that there is currently nothing to report on Environmental Land Acquisitions.

5 Potential land transfer Council to National Parks

2.17pm

Larry Melican (Section Manager Natural Assets and Biodiversity) provided an update on potential land transfer to National Parks.

Correspondence was received from Minister for Energy and Environment 11 October 2019 seeking advice on land acquisition proposals that would add value to the local national parks system.

At the 9 December 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting, it was resolved:

- 1350/19 *That Council note the correspondence and commend the Hon Matt Kean MP, Minister for Energy and Environment for his recent announcement of his intention to add lands to the National Parks Estate and calling for proposals.*
- 1351/19 *That Council note that staff have commenced a process for identifying potential land that could be included as part of a proposal.*
- 1352/19 *That Council request the Chief Executive Officer provide all Councillors with the opportunity to contribute to the process of identifying suitable lands.*
- 1353/19 *That Council request the Chief Executive Officer submit a proposal by the end of January 2020.*

A workshop for Councillors was held on 14 January 2020.

A response was received from Minister Kean 15 March 2021 requesting NPWS to discuss the outcome of the initial assessment with Council and develop a comprehensive proposal for his consideration for the following nominations:

- Selected lots adjoining Wambina Nature Reserve
- Selected lots adjoining Bouddi National Park. The private lots nominated are not recommended for addition
- One lot adjoining Munmorah State Conservation Area

The other proposals submitted by Council will not be progressed at this time.

Council wrote to the Director of the Conservation Branch at NPWS on 24 August 2021 requesting information about which properties were of interest for potential transfer. An acknowledgement letter was received.

In the three areas that Minister Kean has expressed a potential interest in, Council had put forward:

- 10 Council owned land parcels at Oak and Matcham Rd, Matcham and various streets at Wamberal
- 28 Council owned land parcels adjacent to Bouddi National Park
- 1 property at Pacific Highway

Council wrote to the Director Conservation Branch in early August requesting information about the particular properties of potential interest to NPWS. An acknowledgement letter has been received, however there is no further information to date. Updates will be provided at future meetings.

The Committee expressed concerns that they hadn't been provided with maps or information regarding the proposed properties identified for potential transfer.

The Committee requested a copy of the letter sent from Council to National Parks.

Action: Luke Sulkowski to confirm whether the letter sent from Council to National Parks is able to be distributed and will review what information has previously been provided to the COSS Committee regarding this matter.

6 Sale of land at Thompson Vale Road, Doyalson

2.35pm

Joe O'Connor (Commercial Property Manager) joined the meeting at 2.18pm and left at the conclusion of Item 6.

Joe O'Connor provided the Committee with an update on the listing of sale of land at Thompson Vale Road, Doyalson. The land was identified for inclusion in the Business Recovery Plan, being operational and surplus to Council need. The land was reviewed by Council's Executive Leadership Team on 17 November 2020 who endorsed the list of Tranche 1. This was then reported to Council on 30 November 2020 and the sale was resolved.

At the 9 June 2021 COSS meeting, the Committee expressed concerns and made the following recommendation to Council:

The Committee would like to reinforce the conservation values of the land at Thompson vale Road Doyalson and request that Council consider removing it from the asset land sale program. If the land is to be sold, the Committee request that Council consider that the E2 zoned land be subdivided and removed from sale.

The concerns of the COSS Committee have been conveyed to the Administrator.

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Joe confirmed that the request for E2 zoned land to be subdivided was not considered as part of the sale.

Further information is unable to be provided to the Committee as it is pending sale.

Barbara Wills expressed concern that Council is ignoring these important parcels of land and it may be time for the media to do a write up on this particular property.

7 Porters Creek Presentation

2.53pm

Peter Sheath (Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning) advised that Council are carrying out a revegetation project for land upstream of Porters Creek Wetland. A presentation by Cardno was provided to the Committee on the Porters Creek Wetland and Catchments Stormwater Modelling, Revegetation Plan and Monitoring Plan.

The vulnerable wetland ecosystem is at risk of further deterioration with increased development proposed within the catchment. Central Coast Council has a strong desire to future proof Porters Creek Wetland. The present Water Management Strategy funded by development contributions was based on the assumption that Council would be capturing, storing and reusing stormwater to manage the stormwater impacts associated with further redevelopment. But since the bulk water supply has been secured on the Central Coast, this strategy is no longer supported, or cost justified. There is a need for an alternative strategy to be used to demonstrate how increased stormwater impacts from further catchment development can effectively be managed by revegetation works.

Gary Chestnut noted that whilst it is a great plan, the ongoing costs aren't identified, and the two conservation areas are large areas to be revegetated however they are under development.

Action: Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning to obtain more information regarding the two Conservation areas and provide feedback to Gary Chestnut.

Peter Sheath and Parissa Ghanem left at the conclusion of this item.

8 Council owned COSS land to be zoned to E2 Environmental Conservation (Action 135)

3.31pm

There was an action from the 9 June 2021 COSS meeting as follows:

Advice to be provided to the group at the next meeting on Council owned COSS land to be zoned to E2 Environmental Conservation including how this affects the bonus lot provisions scheme.

The following response was circulated to Committee Members on 31 August 2021:

The Central Coast LEP is with DPIE and will likely be gazetted by the end of 2021 and will rezone all Council owned land that was identified as deferred matter lands. Of the 422 parcels of land identified, 408 of them will be rezoned E2 Environmental Conservation. The zoning of these lands through the CCLEP will not affect the operation of the bonus lot provisions of IDO 122 as the provisions will copy across to the CCLEP.

It is worth noting, at its meeting of 27 April 2021, Council resolved to commence the preparation of a Planning Proposal to rezone those lands that will remain as DM after the gazettal of the CCLEP, essentially land not owned by Council. As part of this project, staff will be reviewing the operation and application of bonus lot provision. This project will take place during 2022, and will commence once the CCLEP is gazetted.

9 Unauthorised trails natural reserves

3.33pm

Sharyn Styman (Environmental Management and Projects Officer) joined the meeting at 3.30pm and left at the conclusion of this item.

Sharon discussed the number of encroachments and unauthorised trails which are an ongoing management issue. During Covid the use of many council reserves, including natural reserves has increased. Up until June this year there were 20 natural reserves that had unauthorised tracks and trails in them. Since lockdown Council have been notified of a further 16 reserves where there are unauthorised tracks and trails.

When reports of new tracks are received, they are inspected and a risk assessment is undertaken. Track remediation works have been undertaken at Bradleys Road Bushland at North Avoca and Cockrone Lagoone Reserve at Copacabana. Community Safety Officer will undertake patrols of those two sites as well as Kincumba Mountain Reserve.

The Committee discussed concerns regarding mountain biking at Kincumba Mountain (of a possible Commercial nature) and staff advised that options are being explored in consultation with the Compliance team.

Steve Atkins confirmed that National Parks are experiencing similar issues, especially since the beginning of COVID there has been an increase in damage and impacts to the parks and reserves and they are trying to respond (with limited resources) including engaging more with local mountain biking groups.

Work is underway on the Mountain Biking Strategy Consultation Report and will be reported to Council hopefully by the end of the year.

10 Update from external representatives (standing agenda item)

3.46pm

Steve Atkins – NPWS

- NPWS are currently preparing a new cycling strategy and policy for the whole of the agency and this will go out on public exhibition shortly.
- Last month took the opportunity to undertake hazard reduction burns through the spring program while conditions were favourable. There were 5 burns during that time with a number of other planned burns ready to go subject to appropriate weather conditions.
- Stage 3 of the Bouddi Coastal Walk project has been completed and Stage 4 has commenced which will take place over the next couple of months. There is another section of the track closed whilst works are undertaken and this is expected to be finished by December 2021.
- There are other tracks in Bouddi where NPWS are looking to do some maintenance upgrade works this financial year.
- Piles Creek in Brisbane Waters National Park has had some major work completed as part of that same program and is now reopen to the public.
- Gap Creek in the Watagans has some major works about to commencing with materials being lifted into there today and work will be underway over the next few months.
- Currently planning to undertake the next aerial 1080 baiting program. This was completed in the Watagans a few months ago and now planning for the Watagans again as well as sections of Popran and Brisbane Water once restrictions allow.
- There have been continued impacts due to COVID over the last few months. Skeleton staff has meant only critical works have been able to be completed. Once the Central Coast was removed from Greater Sydney and was included in Regional NSW this has made things a little easier with staff able to return to depots and workplaces.
- Currently liaising with community group regarding the upgrade of the Half Tide rocks track which is expected to be completed this financial year.
- Aware of the Feral Deer situation however there is nothing proactive happening at this time.

David Green – LLS

- The Porters Creek National Tree Day event that was planned for 1 August (a Council function held with LLS support) was postponed due to COVID.
- The cultural burn planned for 12/13 June at Baines Road Mangrove Mountain was postponed due to wet weather. It was then planned for 11/12 September however was postponed due to COVID so is now scheduled for Autumn 2022. COVID has definitely impacted public events planned and reduced the level of engagement with landholders and rural client base.

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- A face to face seminar on the Swift Parrots and Regent Honeyeaters needed to be held as a webinar due to COVID which ended up being very successful and well received. Nick Carson, Council's Environmental Education Officer was one of the expert speakers and over 100 people participated. LLS are looking for rural landholders on the Central Coast who are looking to improve habitat for the Swift Parrots and Regent Honey Eaters.
- LLS are involved in the National Landcare Conference which is being held on 5/6 October.
- Baiting program is kicking off next week, targeting foxes and dogs. Deer numbers are increasing dramatically. A shooting program was undertaken due to impacts of deer moving onto the M1 Freeway. Everyone is encouraged to report any animal sightings through Encourage anyone to report feral animal sightings through www.feralscan.org.au which provides a strong database of sightings of all pest species.
- During the 2020 lockdown LLS were considered an essential service and could still visit landholders and undertake work however this year are not considered an essential service so it has been a much harder lockdown for staff this time around.

11 General business

4.03pm

Barbara Wills raised the issue of the handling of the proposed possible purchase of 20 James Norton Road. The standard of the letter that was sent out was not sufficient and would not entice anyone to sell their property to us. Luke indicated further discussions have been had with the owners since that letter was sent out (approximately 18 months ago). Barbara requested a sub-committee meeting to talk about purchasing.

Barbara Wills asked the question of one of the COSS blocks of land sold in Kariong recently and was hoping this had been purchased by Council. Scott Cox was unaware of this property but is happy to look into it if details of the property can be forwarded on to him. Barb raised concerns that we are aware of these properties and that Council are getting desktop valuations, but we aren't participating in the possible purchase and Coastal Open Space land is disappearing.

Action: Staff to provide a presentation to the Committee at a future meeting on the way these property sale negotiations are carried out and possible new ways of thinking for Council negotiating on land that has high environmental values.

Action: Staff to provide an update to the Committee on the sale of 71 Debenham Road.

12 Close

Next meeting: Thursday 9 December 2021
2pm – 4pm
Microsoft Teams / Gosford Committee Room

Meeting closed at 4.15pm

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Coastal Open Space System (COSS)
Advisory Committee

Central
Coast
Council

Minutes finalised and endorsed 28/9/2021 by
Luke Sulkowski
**Unit Manager Environmental Management
Coordinator/Chairperson**



Action log

Coastal Open Space System (COSS) Advisory Committee



Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
27	25/7/2018	The Advisory Group requests that time be allocated in future meetings for external agency representatives to share updates from their relevant area.	Meeting Support Officer	Ongoing - to be included on future agendas	Standing agenda item
33	26/9/2018	The Advisory Group requests that as the Land Acquisition and prioritisation process matures, staff provide updates to the Committee at future meetings.	Natural and Environmental Assets	Ongoing - to be included on future agendas	Standing agenda item
73	1/8/2019	Mayor Smith to seek further clarification from Director Environment and Planning regarding Section 149 Certificates in relation to COSS land when considering planning proposals and development applications.	Mayor Jane Smith / Luke Sulkowski	Response circulated to members via email 1/7/21 and 31/8/21.	Complete
109	20/10/2020	The action plan from the Biodiversity Strategy to be included as a standing agenda item.	Meeting Support Officer	Ongoing - to be included on future agendas	Standing agenda item
124	2/3/2021	The Advisory Group seek clarification from DPIE and LLS on opportunities for strengthening of policy and legislation to enable better regulation of tree and vegetation removal and clearing activities on Deferred Matters zoned land in order to avoid the	Environmental Management Staff / DPIE / LLS	Included in letter sent to Premier (see Action 125) requesting this be sent to the relevant Ministers. Awaiting response.	Pending

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Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
		unregulated significant impacts as has been experienced in locations on the Central Coast.			
125	2/3/2021	The Advisory Group recommends to Council that the Administrator write to the NSW Premier requesting strengthening of legislation to allow prosecution of tree removal and land clearing on deferred matters lands.	Environmental Management Staff	Council resolved to write to Minister at 13 April 2021 meeting . Letter from Administrator sent 17/6/2021.	Complete
127	2/3/2021	Gary Chestnut to liaise with Luke Sulkowski to clarify the points of difference in the COSS report compared to the Biodiversity Strategy.	Gary Chestnut / Luke Sulkowski	9/6/21 Meeting held. Gary has provided a comparison report to Luke Sulkowski on the COSS Report and Council's Biodiversity Strategy.	Complete
130	9/6/2021	A map with the 7 parcels of DPIE land at Green Point and Erina that was transferred to Council's ownership to be circulated to committee members.	Section Manager Natural Assets and Biodiversity/Meeting Support Officer	Circulated with minutes 15/6/21	Complete
131	9/6/2021	The Committee would like to reinforce the conservation values of the land at Thompson Vale Road Doyalson and request that Council consider removing it from the asset land sale program. If the land is to be sold, the Committee request that	Unit Manager Environmental Management/Meeting Support Officer	This was included in the Meeting Record Council Report for 10 August which ended up being pulled by Administrator/Scott Cox.	Closed

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Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
		Council consider that the E2 zoned land be subdivided and removed from sale.			
132	9/6/2021	The Committee request the Project Manager provide a briefing on the airport masterplan, plan of management and subdivision plan at the next meeting.	Unit Manager Environmental Management	Deferred to December meeting. Unable to present to ELT at the moment so there is no information on the Airport Masterplan that can be presented to the group at this stage.	To be addressed at next meeting
133	9/6/2021	Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning to provide the group with the Porters Creek presentation that was provided to the Catchments to Coast Committee, at the next meeting.	Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning	Presentation provided to group at 21 September 2021 meeting.	Complete
134	9/6/2021	Staff to investigate whether a letter has been received from the Minister on land transfers/proposals.	Unit Manager Environmental Management	Discussed at 21 September 2021 meeting (see minutes).	Complete
135	9/6/2021	Advice to be provided to the group at the next meeting on Council owned COSS land to be zoned to E2 Environmental Conservation including how this affects the bonus lot provisions scheme.	Unit Manager Environmental Management	Response circulated to members via email 31/8/21 (see minutes for further information).	Complete
136	21/9/2021	The Comparison undertaken by CEN of the COSS Report and Council's Biodiversity Strategy to be circulated to Committee Members. Unit Manager	Meeting Support Officer / Unit Manager		Pending

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Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
		Environmental Management to investigate the option of an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss the report.	Environmental Management		
137	21/9/2021	A copy of the Rochelle's Journal of Environmental Management paper to be provided to Committee Members once available and added to the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.	Meeting Support Officer / Senior Ecologist		Pending
138	21/9/2021	A copy of the Biodiversity strategy PowerPoint presentation to be circulated to Committee Members.	Meeting Support Officer		Pending
139	21/9/2021	Luke Sulkowski to confirm whether the letter sent from Council to National Parks is able to be distributed and will review what information has previously been provided to the COSS Committee regarding this matter.	Unit Manager Environmental Management		Pending
140	21/9/2021	Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning to obtain more information regarding the two Conservation areas and provide feedback to Gary Chestnut.	Section Manager Flood Strategy and Planning		Pending

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Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
141	21/9/2021	Staff to provide a presentation to the Committee at a future meeting on the way these property sale negotiations are carried out and possible new ways of thinking for Council negotiating on land that has high environmental values.	Unit Manager Environmental Management		Pending
142	21/9/2021	Staff to provide an update to the Committee on the sale of 71 Debenham Road.	Unit Manager Environmental Management		Pending