


# Coastal Open Space System (COSS) Committee Meeting Record 30 April 2020



Location:	Skype Meeting	
Date:	30 April 2020	
Time	Started at: 3.00pm	Closed at: 5.15pm
Chair	Councillor Jane Smith	
File Ref	F2018/00099	

## **Present:**

Councillor Chris Holstein, Councillor Jane Smith, Councillor Sundstrom (left 4.45pm), David Holland, Deb Holloman, Paul Links, Douglas Williamson, Barbara Wills

## **External Representatives present:**

Steve Atkins – NPWS Central Coast Area Manager, David Green – Local Land Services (Greater Sydney), Joel Stibbard – Biodiversity Conservation Trust

## **Council Staff present:**

Scott Cox – Director Environment and Planning, Luke Sulkowski – Unit Manager Environmental Management, Elizabeth Knight – Section Manager Treatment Plants and Catchments, Larry Melican – Section Manager Natural Assets and Biodiversity, Dr Anumitra Mirti – Section Manager Environmental Strategies, Rochelle Lawson – Senior Ecologist, David Lemcke – Senior Planner Natural Assets and Biodiversity, Chris McLean – Principle Strategic Planner Environmental Strategies, Elise Verhoeven – Green Grid Project Officer, Donna Payne – Advisory Group Support Officer

## **Item 1 Welcome, Apologies and Acknowledgement of Country**

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Apologies received: John Andrews

The Chairperson, Councillor Jane Smith declared the meeting open and completed an Acknowledgement of Country and Connection to Land Statement.

## **Item 2 Disclosures of Interest**

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The Chair called for any declarations of interest.

No disclosures were noted.

### **Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record**

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The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record from 13 February 2020.

The Advisory Group reviewed the Action Log and the following points were noted:

Action 66:	The map showing NEA and shading of COSS land has not been distributed to the Advisory Group members as there is a scaling issue.
Action 73:	Councillor Smith advised she received a response from Director Environment and Planning regarding the COSS land Section 149 Certificates. Cllr Smith will circulate the response to the Advisory Group.
Action 80:	Councillor Smith to follow up on the information relating to the bonus lot provisions for the 7(c)2 rezoning (Beaufort Rd, Terrigal) and provide to Advisory Groups to distribute to the Advisory Group.
Action 84:	Staff are continuing investigations regarding land at MacMasters Beach
Action 85:	Site visit to COSS land on hold due to COVID 19.
Action 91:	Biodiversity Strategy is due for consideration with Council in late May 2020.
Action 93:	Remains Pending – the link will be provided to the committee after the draft Biodiversity Strategy goes to Council in late May 2020.

### **Item 4 Land Acquisitions and Prioritisation (Standing Agenda Item)**

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It was noted that there are no further acquisitions at this time, and negotiations with potential vendors are continuing.

### **Item 5 Update on Invitation for Council Lands to be added to National Parks Estate**

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Larry Melican – Section Manager, Natural Assets and Biodiversity provided an update on the National Parks Estate land identification.

It was noted that information has been received from Andrew Bailey and the Land Assessment team. This has since been referred to the Central Coast Council Area Team who are looking at aspects of the feedback and drafting a formal response.

Councillor Smith mentioned that she attended a meeting with National Parks staff to discuss this matter. It was noted that National Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers are out 'ground truthing' over the next week or two.

### **Item 6 Green Grid Program and Koala Monitoring Project (Action Item 87)**

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Chris McLean – Principal Strategic Planner, Environmental Strategies provided information on the Green Grid Program and photos were shared on-screen for visual effect.

The Green Grid Program came about 5 years ago by means of the Government Architects Office where a plan was produced for Sydney. This time last year (around May 2019), the Central Coast was approved a \$200,000 grant to develop a Green Grid Plan for the LGA.

A model was produced that looked at sports fields, bowling clubs and other recreational facilities. This model also took into consideration ecological surveys (conducted by an external contractor) that studied the native animals' peak corridors and the whereabouts of their natural habitats, location of threatened tree species, conservation areas and if these current areas are sufficient to support native flora and fauna.

The time-frame on the Green Grid's first stage, that is a high-level draft plan submitted to the DPIE, is targeted for December 2020. The exhibition date for Council is aimed for February – March 2021.

Elise Verhoeven – Green Grid Project Officer, Environmental Strategies provided an update on the regional koala study. The current technology of acoustic recorders that have a range of 50-100 hectares were mentioned, they have been in use for the last five (5) years and have made it easier to detect koalas.

Koalas are normally found in Grey Gum areas such as the Yarramalong Valley and Mogo Creek (just out of the LGA). The research being conducted is due to conclude mid-spring 2020 with the results to determine where koalas are situated on the Central Coast expected in early 2021.

Councillor Sundstrom asked if there are any programs or grants to assist in protecting these areas. It was noted that the main threats to the koala population are from foxes, wild dogs and cars. David Green mentioned an online reporting program (Feral Scan) where community members can report sightings of feral animals such as rabbits, wild dogs, deer and foxes.

Councillor Smith mentioned the re-introduction of koalas in the Pearl Beach area. It was noted that there has not been a sighting within a 10km radius of the area since 2005.

## **Item 7 Bushfires and Hazard Reduction (Action Item 89)**

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David Lemcke – Senior Planner, Natural Assets and Biodiversity gave a presentation on hazard reduction works in progress. It was noted that this is the same presentation given at the recent Councillor Briefing.

The following points were noted:

- More money is being invested in bushfire hazard reduction works. The five types of work being undertaken are:
  - Asset Protection Zones
    - Physical reduction of fuel between bushland and house
    - Canopy connection
    - Normally a 10m minimum defensible space
  - Fire Trails
  - Arson Management
  - Prescribed burning / Hazard reduction
  - Community engagement (to increase individual preparedness)
- New RFS standards were gazetted in 2017. Bush fire Planning for Existing Development (BPED) is likely to be adopted in early 2020/21 for the next fire season and phased in further across several years.

**Action:** Advisory Group Support Officer to forward a copy of the presentation given by David Lemcke to Advisory Group members.

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**Item 8                    Issues at Mangrove Dam during the Bushfires (Action Item 90)**

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Elizabeth Knight – Process Engineer, Treatment Plants and Catchments discussed the effect the 3 Mile Fire had at Mangrove Creek. It was mapped that 80% of the weir and 20% of the dam areas were burnt out during the fires.

The amenities block at Mangrove Creek Dam was the only Council building lost to the fires. Subsequently the Picnic Area has been closed to the public.

**Action:** Advisory Group Support Officer to forward a copy of the Mangrove Creek Catchment Bushfire Presentation Dec 2019 to the Advisory Group members.

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**Item 9                    Update from External Representatives (Standing Agenda Item)**

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David Green – Local Land Services (Greater Sydney), advised that LLS are still dealing with landholders of Fire and/or Flood affected areas. There is a fencing program available on their website for fire affected properties with a current approximate total of \$500,000 of on-ground projects.

Steve Atkins – NPWS Central Coast Area Manager advised that their offices are closed due to COVID-19. High visitation and picnic areas have also been closed. National Parks and Wildlife Service are continuing animal control works, fox control and dog baiting.

It was also noted that an upgrade to the Bouddi Coastal Walk is planned over the next 12-18 months along with an upgrade of the Koolewong Fire Trail in Brisbane Water.

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**Item 10                    General Business and Close**

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- a) The Advisory Group commended the presentations provided during the meeting.
- b) Doug Williamson asked if the COSS Advisory Groups comments have been put in the Biodiversity Strategy. It was advised all comments are considered in the draft report to go to Council.
- c) Paul Links questioned how the Bonus Lot Provisions have previously been used and for it to be placed on a future agenda for discussion.

**Action:** Previous use of Bonus Lot Provisions to be placed on future agenda for discussion.

The meeting closed at 5.15pm

**Next Meeting:            Thursday 25 June 2020**  
**3pm – 5pm**  
**Location TBC**