

# Coastal Open Space System (COSS) Committee Extraordinary Meeting Record 3 September 2019



Location:	Central Coast Council Gosford Office Level 1 Committee Room 49 Mann Street, Gosford
Date:	3 September 2019
Time	Started at: 1.06pm Closed at: 2.59pm
Chair	Mayor Jane Smith
File Ref	F2018/00099

## **Present:**

Mayor Jane Smith, Councillor Jeff Sundstrom, John Andrews, Deb Holloman, Paul Links, Douglas Williamson, Barbara Wills, Gary Chestnut (non-voting)

## **External Representatives present:**

Andrew Bayley – National Parks and Wildlife Service, Mick Budden – Local Land Services (Greater Sydney), Jonathan Eccles – Local Land Services (Greater Sydney), Jaci Tebb - Local Land Services (Greater Sydney)

## **Council Staff present:**

Lisa Fox – Senior Advisor Policy and Projects, Luke Sulkowski – Unit Manager Natural and Environmental Assets, Dr Anumitra Mirti – Section Manager Environmental Strategies, Kellie Langford – Senior Natural Reserves Officer Bushfire, Rochelle Lawson – Senior Ecologist, Tina Nay – Advisory Group Support Officer

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

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Apologies received: Councillor Chris Holstein, Scott Duncan – Section Manager Land Use and Policy, Larry Melican – Section Manager Natural Assets and Biodiversity, Stephen Atkins, National Parks and Wildlife Services, Joel Stibbard – Biodiversity Conservation Trust

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

## **Item 2 Disclosure of Interest**

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

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

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The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record from 1 August 2019.

The Action Log was deferred to the next meeting.

#### **Item 4                    Draft Biodiversity Strategy**

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Rochelle Lawson (Senior Ecologist) provided the Advisory Group with an update on the draft Biodiversity Strategy. Advisory Group members acknowledged Rochelle's passion for the environment by congratulating her on the presentation.

The Advisory Group briefly discussed the impact on the natural environment at the current Rail Maintenance Facility at Kangy Angy, noting concerns that the E2 zone did not provide protection. This highlighted the need for an additional E5 zone as agreed to by the NSW Government.

The Mayor discussed the former Gosford City Council (fGCC) COSS Levy which historically applied a 0.003%\* of the rates of fGCC property owners in order to achieve COSS objectives. It was suggested that the equivalent percentage amount be applied as it was previously and set aside as a restricted fund specifically for acquiring priority conservation lands including those identified in the adopted COSS Strategy. The specific constraints about how the funds would be able to be applied would still need to be developed. Note the percentage was not intended to apply on top of existing rates, but rather be set aside from existing rate revenue generated

The Advisory Group discussed other suggestions for input into the Draft Biodiversity Strategy prior to adoption of the final strategy by Council including:

- stronger protection of COSS lands through an additional E5 zone as previously agreed to by the NSW Government
- identification of an action to determine how Corridor Mapping can better be considered in planning determinations
- a target of achieving "no nett loss of biodiversity" through the actions of the strategy – also include wording about "protect, maintain and improve" biodiversity
- Include an additional theme specifically for COSS lands – that is focused on acquisition of lands. Noted that reliance on biodiversity offsetting inherently means that biodiversity is lost through trade offs
- application of heritage listings to our natural environment as part of our areas 'Natural Heritage' as another potential protection mechanism

**Action:** Prior to consideration of a final Biodiversity Strategy by Council staff are to include as items for consideration during the exhibition of the draft Strategy the following matters for potential inclusion:

1. call for stronger protection of COSS lands through an additional E5 zone as previously agreed to by the NSW Government
2. identification of an action to determine how Corridor Mapping can better be considered in planning determinations
3. a target of achieving no net loss of biodiversity through the actions of the strategy – and also "protect, maintain and improve" biodiversity
4. Include an additional theme specifically for COSS lands – that is focused on acquisition of lands. Noted that reliance on biodiversity offsetting inherently means that biodiversity is lost through trade offs

5. Allocation of 0.003%\* of rate income to a restricted reserve COSS fund for allocation towards COSS acquisitions (in keeping with former Gosford Council)
6. application of heritage listings to our natural environment as part of our areas 'Natural Heritage' as another potential protection mechanism

\* Clarification after the meeting has identified that the rate applied was \$0.00003 per rateable dollar.

## **Item 5                    Bouddi National Park Plan of Management**

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Andrew Bayley (National Parks and Wildlife Service) presented the Bouddi National Park Plan of Management to the Advisory Group, which is available for comment via Public Exhibition until 30 September 2019.

It was noted that the presentation had a strong focus on mountain bike trails. Andrew noted that with the increased use of mountain bikes within Bouddi National Park, National Parks and Wildlife Services have consulted with riders specifically to ensure the park remains ecologically sustainable for all users. Tracks assessed as not being suitable for continued use by mountain bikes via the environmental impact assessment will be closed for rehabilitation.

Andrew noted the high number of illegal and unsafe tracks in the National Park. Question was asked about resourcing that NPWS puts into management – including rehabilitation and compliance. This was not known however, appeared that this was not an area that was resourced.

Members asked about the destruction of the National Park by red foxes and deer. National Parks and Wildlife Services rate red foxes highly and are deemed more problematic than deer.

Local Land Services said that the deer numbers have decreased and work with land holders to manage the population, as Bouddi National Park is near residential land the deer therefore cannot be shot. It was noted that deer have recently been reclassified from game to pest.

## **Item 6                    General Business and Close**

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No general business was discussed.

The meeting closed at 2.59pm

**Next Meeting:            Wednesday 27 November 2019**  
**4pm – 6pm**  
**Central Coast Council Wyong Office**  
**Level 2 Committee Room**