

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REPORT

ATTENDANCE: Cr. Boyd (Chair and Councillor Representative), Helen Paulsen (Acting Manager Parks and Facilities), Joan Fitzsimmons (Community Representative), Bruce Milles (Community Representative), Stuart Fyfe (Natural Environment Officer).

APOLOGIES: Cr. Jones (Councillor Representative), Stuart Holley (Executive Manager Infrastructure Services), Lisa Kermode (Senior Environmental Officer),

The meeting commenced at 9.05am in the Engineering Conference Room.

1. **REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES – MATTERS ARISING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2007 were confirmed.

1.2 Process for Evaluating Projects

The Committee reviewed the two options proposed by the Senior Environment Officer for applications for funding of projects over \$5,000 and it was agreed by those present to obtain a detailed submission that included guidelines for applications, format for application and acquittal process information that would be reviewed at the next committee meeting. The timing for applications would be preferred in February and August, with the commencement of projects then possible in June and January and for a duration of 12 months. The projects should be concentrated on land that is in the public domain and not on private lands. This needs to be included in the application guidelines document. The criteria for the projects was agreed based upon the objectives of the Natural Environment Levy.

Action: That the guidelines, application and acquittal process information be presented to the next meeting for consideration by council.

1.3 Slade Point Reserve funding of entrance steps and seating proposal

The Natural Environment Officer informed the committee of the application from the local Slade Point community to provide stepped access at the end of Crane and Ibis Streets to provide access into the Slade Point Reserve. The Committee discussed the need to provide access into the reserve for passive recreational purposes and maintenance at these locations. With the location of disabled access off Teal street, which is in close proximity to the two streets mentioned above, the request for stepped access was considered favourably. The quotations received are now two years old, and new quotations are needed to be sourced, along with seating in strategic locations for elderly visitors.

Recommendation : That \$30,000 be allocated from the Natural Environment Levy funds towards the installation of steps and seats at the Crane and Ibis Street entrances to the Slade Point Reserve in response to applications from the local community.

ITEM 6 Request for Funding of Gross Pollutant Trap – Renae Street, Andergrove.
Resolution Item 6 requires highlighting to be forwarded to the Infrastructure Services Committee meeting of 2 May 2007.

2. BUDGET UPDATE AND 5 YEAR BUDGET

The updated financial report to 31st March was presented and discussions followed. Projects that are proposed to be funded through the levy should be submitted in report form for the committee to review. Major projects would be subject to application process as detailed previously.

Action: The 2007/2008 proposed budget be presented to the June meeting for consideration. Consultation with officers within Council prior to presentation to committee is required to ensure all projects are considered.

Action : A 5 year Strategic Plan be forwarded to the next committee meeting for review.

3. COASTAL PROTECTION BROCHURE

The Acting Manager Parks & Facilities advised that the draft brochure had been reviewed by the Corporate Communications Department staff. There were a few spelling and grammatical errors to rectify prior to final document being available. The final brochure will be forwarded to the committee in electronic format, however the layout and presentation reflects the changes requested at the previous NEAC meeting and are considered to be suitable for publication purposes after acceptance by Council. The brochure is to be distributed to Customer Service Centre, Libraries, Botanic Gardens, Tourist Information Centres, adjacent coastal property owners and tenants and Real Estate Agents for inclusion with rental information of premises adjacent to coastal habitats.

Action: Circulate electronic format of Coastal Management Brochure to committee members and Councillors for consideration at next Infrastructure Services Committee Meeting.

4. LAND FOR WILDLIFE

Following on from the previous meeting discussions on Land For Wildlife, it was suggested that the Morag McNichol Reserve at Andergrove may be considered for upgrading in status to a Nature Refuge to ensure the long term environmental value is not compromised in the future.

Action: The committee receives a report on the process needed to undertake the upgrading of status of Morag McNichol Reserve to a Nature Refuge. Consultation with environmental representatives and council officers is required in preparation of the report.

5. UPDATE ON STORMWATER PROJECTS

Robin Berkett and Daniel Radovic joined the meeting at 10.15am.

Robin presented an update on the Stormwater Quality Projects currently being undertaken. These projects include: Automatic Water Quality Sampling; Waterway Health Monitoring Program; Gooseponds Catchment Management Plan including review of existing studies and public consultation; Hydrology and Hydraulic Study of Vines and Gooseponds Creeks and Nadarmi Drive Stormwater Project which is now scheduled to commence in July/ August 2007.

The Water Quality Health Monitoring Project covers 17 sites in Mackay and 8 event sites. An event site includes industrial areas and large carparking areas. To date 6 ambient sampling sessions and 1 event (February) have been sampled. Details of the results were discussed.

One of the major issues affecting stormwater quality is cigarette butts polluting stormwater. Daniel worked on a very successful campaign in the Darwin region last year to promote responsible disposal of cigarette butts in the central city area. The campaign was sponsored by the Tobacco Industry and included liaison persons distributed through the city area advising of disposal methods and issuing butt bins to smokers. Other initiatives included location of butt bins at strategic gathering points and a poster campaign to support the infrastructure.

Action: The Water Education Officer, Stormwater Quality Officer and Natural Environment officers prepare a proposal for a Mackay City Butt Free Campaign to be considered by the NEAC committee with possible reference to Council following.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- 6.1 Reliance Creek The committee discussed the expansion of Reliance Creek reserve area to encompass surrounding wetland areas. Lindsay Haines has prepared a proposal that he would like supported to other agencies. The committee discussed the method for this extension process and as this would involve other agencies outside of Council, additional information is required.

Action: Lindsay Haines, Stuart Fyfe, Lisa Kermod and Matt Bloor forward a proposal to the next NEAC Committee meeting on the Reliance Creek potential reserve that includes the process for furthering this proposal through other agencies. In preparing this report, reference to David McKendry and Mackay Water will be needed to include future expansion for Bucasia Waste Water Treatment Facility and other Council requirements for land in this area.

- 6.2 Envirofund Round 9 of the Federal Government's Envirofund is now open for submissions.

- 6.3 Publicity of NEAC Functions Joan Fitzsimmons requested that additional information be placed in the public forum for the role and function of the NEA Committee. Inclusion of information in the Citywide publication is planned and an area of the Council Website is also considered appropriate for distribution of information.

- 6.4 Plants additional to need for Natural Environment Projects** Stuart Fyfe advised that the volunteer program have been propagating plants for use in natural environment projects, however they have additional plants surplus to needs. Instead of throwing out the plants, it was suggested that the plants could be distributed within the community.
The committee discussed previous Council initiatives that were not considered suitable for this purpose now.

Action: NEO prepare a proposal for plant distribution to be considered at the next meeting of this committee.

7. SIGNIFICANT TREE REGISTER

The committee requested that this item remain on the minutes and that an update on the register be presented at each meeting

8. TIDAL PLAN

The committee requested that the Tidal Plan be available at the next meeting for information of committee members.

9. COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The committee request that an update and review of the work to date be presented at the June meeting.

10. LAND ACQUISITION ALONG GOOSEPONDS

A plan of the area sought for inclusion in future parkland alongside the creek line is requested and details of process to secure this land to be presented at the next meeting.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on 14th June 2007 in the Council Chambers commencing at 9.00am.

Minutes recorded by Helen Paulsen, Acting Manager Parks & Facilities

NEAC Meeting Action Items

Minutes/ item number	Action	Responsible officer(s)	Outcome/Status
Oct 06 / Item 5	Investigate the potential purchase of the parcel of land identified by the EMIS.	Stuart Holley/ Helen Paulsen	Report to June meeting required
Oct 06 / Item 8	SEO to proceed with the development of a coastal protection brochure and investigate the possibility of developing signs for areas where vegetation has been removed, with the intention of presenting this information to Council for consideration.	Lisa Kermode	Ongoing – final draft to be available prior to April meeting
Oct 06 / Item 10	NEO and SEO to investigate the possibility of a native vegetation protection policy, with a view to organising a presentation on Brisbane City Council's experience to Council.	Stuart Fyfe Lisa Kermode	Ongoing
Dec 06 / Item 2.3	SEO to continue to be part of the website development project.	Lisa Kermode	Ongoing
Dec 06 / Item 6.3	SEO to investigate the proposal for revegetation works, steps and seats at Slade Point Reserve and provide a recommendation for the next committee meeting.	Lisa Kermode	Committee supported application and recommended \$30,000 be approved for these works from NEL project funds.
Dec 06 / Item 6.4	EMIS to write to Stacey Jupiter and arrange for a presentation to Council, to which NEAC members will be invited.	Stuart Holley	Initial contact made, final date to be confirmed
Feb 07 / Item 1.2	SEO to review and recommend levy funding application and evaluation processes that will be considered by the Committee for resolution.	Lisa Kermode	Application form, guidelines and acquittal process to be presented to June meeting
Feb 07 / Item 4	SEO to investigate the possibility of entering into an agreement with a consultant to undertake a set number of Land for Wildlife inspections per year and confirm costs	Lisa Kermode	Ongoing, report to committee to follow.

NEAC Meeting Action Items Cont

Apr 07 / Item 2	SEO to prepare budget for 2007/08 financial year and 5 year Strategic Budget proposal for next meeting	Lisa Kermode	Budget required for June meeting
Apr 07 / Item 3	Coastal management brochure to be developed for distribution to adjacent neighbours, information centres etc.	Lisa Kermode and Simon McKinley	Draft circulated to committee for comment
Apr 07 / Item 4	Upgrade Morag McNichol Reserve to Nature Refuge Status	Stuart Fyfe	Present report to NEAC June Meeting
Apr 07 / Item 5	Darwin Butt Free City Campaign presented and similar campaign supported for further development in Mackay	Water Ed Off, SWQO & NEO	Prepare proposal for Mackay campaign development at June meeting
Apr 07 / Item 6.1	Reliance Creek Reserve extension proposal from community through Joan Fitzsimmons	SEO, NEO, Matt Bloor, Lindsay Haines	Report to June meeting on proposal and process for progressing request.
Apr 07 / Item 6.4	Plants surplus to needs of Natural Environment projects	NEO	Report to June Meeting on proposal for distribution of plants to community
Apr 07 / Item 7	Significant tree register update	Arbor Supervisor	Updates to be presented at each meeting.
Apr 07 / Item 8	Tidal Plan	Lisa Kermode	Take Tidal Plan to June Meeting for information of committee.
Apr 07 / Item 9	Coastal Management Plan – update and review of works to date to be presented to committee	Lisa Kermode	Present to June Meeting

