

## **Response to proposals of Long Beach Community Association of 28 November 2017**

Motion 17/374 sought consideration of the proposals put forward by the Association such that Council:

1. Reject the recommendation to support Long Beach Landcare in planting additional native species (including tall growing shrubs and trees) at the western end of the reserve (Trial Area 1). No taller species are to be planted in front of houses.
2. Reverse the zoning of Sandy Place Reserve from the existing E2 Environmental Conservation to RE1 Public Recreation.
3. Engage with the Long Beach community, Long Beach Community Association and Long Beach Landcare in a project to dramatically reduce the Coastal Wattle in a new trial area in the Long Beach Sandy Place Reserve dune system.

The further two proposals were that:

4. Coastal Wattle be replaced with the grasses and coastal heath vegetation predominant before the 1990s Council's ill conceived 'restoration', not with canopy species as per the 017/060 proposal.
5. This trial area be assessed for its ability to retain the dunes and mitigate the effects of the winter storms and southerly winds, and that no further planting take place until a significant trial area has been cleared and an assessment has been completed.

### **RESPONSES:**

The proposals raised by the Long Beach Community Association on 28 November 2017 are inconsistent with the adopted Council plans, including the Long Beach Coastal Wattle Management Strategy, the Implementation Plan, Property Vegetation Plan and the Office of Environment and Heritage's environmental assessment of the Long Beach Coastal Wattle Management Project. The proposal to conduct a new trial is contrary to these plans and advice of the Office of Environment and Heritage.

1. Reject the recommendation to support Long Beach Landcare in planting additional native species (including tall growing shrubs and trees) at the western end of the reserve (Trial Area 1). No taller species are to be planted in front of houses.

*Staff comment:* The proposed plantings are consistent with the management recommendations in the Strategy, which were prepared in consultation with the community and adopted by Council in 2010. The Community Association and Landcare agree there should be no planting of tall species in front of houses.

*Recommendation:* Support Long Beach Landcare in planting additional native species (including tall growing shrubs and trees) at the western end of the reserve (Trial Area 1). No taller species are to be planted in front of houses.

2. Reverse the zoning of Sandy Place Reserve from E2 Environmental Conservation, currently, to RE1 Public Recreation.

*Staff comment:* The zoning E2 Environmental Conservation is consistent across the coastal foreshores in the Eurobodalla under the *Eurobodalla Local Environment Plan 2012*. The approval process for vegetation management and removal are the same under either zoning.

*Recommendation:* E2 Environmental Conservation zoning remains.

3. Engage with the Long Beach community, Community Association and Landcare in a project to dramatically reduce the Coastal Wattle in a new trial area in the Long Beach Sandy Place Reserve dune system.

*Staff comment:* A new trial is not consistent with the Strategy or the advice from the Office of Environment and Heritage, who recommend that Coastal Wattle removal should not be a priority as a management strategy for the Long Beach dune system.

Long Beach Landcare and the revised Association support the recommendation below.

*Recommendation:* Assist Long Beach Landcare and the Long Beach Community Association to continue maintenance of the Coastal Wattle by:

- (a) ongoing Coastal Wattle removal on the northern side of the walking track
- (b) Coastal Wattle removal two metres either side of the beach access tracks
- (c) maintaining the current line of containment of the Coastal Wattle
- (d) removal in the wetland zone.

The further two proposals were that:

4. Coastal Wattle be replaced with the grasses and coastal heath vegetation predominant before the 1990s Council's ill conceived 'restoration', not with canopy species, as per the 017/060 proposal.

*Staff comment:* The species diversity and mix for the area has been based on independent expert advice and is consistent with coastal diversity across Eurobodalla Shire. The species lists are identified in the Strategy prepared by an independent consultant in 2010, and advice from the Office of Environment and Heritage.

Revegetation works were conducted following development of the site in the 1990s, and with the best known science at the time, with a view to establishing plant species to assist with dune stabilisation. The Coastal Wattle developed as a monoculture in areas in Long Beach and as such, a considered and staged approach to wattle removal and revegetation in the area was the basis of the grant funded project.

Coastal Wattle is a native species and continues to be the recommended species to use as it has proven to be a good coloniser and stabiliser on dunes along the NSW coast. It is also important that it is used along with other endemic species to ensure monocultures do not occur.

The canopy (taller) species would naturally occur in the hind dunes where they can be seen in the central part of the reserve. Taller species do not naturally occur in the foredune and will not be planted in this area where grasses and lower species naturally occur.

*Recommendation:* Revegetate areas where Coastal Wattle has died and replace with lower growing species. Allow natural regeneration of all plant species, including taller species, to occur and plant taller species in Trial Area 1 only.

5. This trial area be assessed for its ability to retain the dunes and mitigate the effects of the winter storms and southerly winds, and that no further planting take place until a significant trial area has been cleared and an assessment has been completed.

*Staff comment:* Two trial areas have been instigated according to the Strategy, Property Vegetation Plan and Implementation Plan with the grant funds from the NSW Environment Trust. The trials have demonstrated limited success.

The proposal is not consistent with the recommendations detailed in the report submitted by the Office of Environment and Heritage or the NSW Government's Coastal Management Policy objective.

*Recommendation:* No new trial area be undertaken. Replant in areas where Coastal Wattle dies and replace with native low growing species to increase species diversity.