

## **DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT**

13 June 2006

**DSDS13      REVOTES 2005/06  
FILE: 153 RBP**

### **SUMMARY:**

Reporting that consideration needs to be given to revoke funds allocated to projects for 2005/06 administered by Council's Sustainable Development Services Department.



### **Strategic Planning Projects**

At its meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> April 2006, Council resolved: -

*"That Council revoke the following funds from the 2005/06 Budget: -*

- *Heritage Study Implementation - \$14,200*
- *Residential Land Release Strategy - \$10,000."*

This allowed for a reduction in the draft 2006/07 Estimates of \$25,000.

In addition to these projects, having regard for the longer term time frames of projects in the current Strategic Planning Program which was endorsed by Council at its meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> March 2006, consideration needs to be given to revoting funds for the following projects: -

Saltwater LEP – This is a developer funded project. Unexpended funds held by Council are required to be revoked until completion. At the completion of the project any unexpended funds should be returned to the developer.

Ex Oil Terminal LEP - This is also a developer funded project nearing completion. Unexpended funds held by Council are required to be revoked until completion. At the completion of the project any unexpended funds should be returned to the developer.

Local Heritage Program – This is dollar-for-dollar funded with a grant from the NSW Heritage Office. As at the time of writing there was \$8,244 remaining in the fund. Under the program, owners of listed heritage items are entitled to matching grants of up to \$1,500 for maintenance and repairs with payments made following completion

of works. There are seven (7) applications currently before Council and payment is unlikely to be made before 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

Following exhibition of the Heritage Study, it is likely that this incentive will encourage some owners to have their premises listed and the revoted amount and 2006/07 allocation is likely to be required.

Spencerville/New Entrance Master Plan – The funds expended to date include part of a grant of \$40,000 from the Department of Planning and funds previously revoted from deferment of planning for a proposed distributor road linking New Entrance to Spencerville. A flora and fauna assessment has been completed and draft concept plans prepared. Due to the presence of a number of threatened species, the option of “bio-banking” is to be discussed with the Department of Environment and Conservation that will determine the likely extent of future residential development in the area. Further investigations relating to geology, hydrology, bushfire and aboriginal archaeology will be required to complete a draft plan suitable for public exhibition with contributory funding from affected owners, including the Lands Department to be provided. There is currently \$50,154 unexpended that is required to be revoted.

Vegetation Mapping – Due to the magnitude and cost of the project that will lead to detailed mapping of all vegetation communities in the Shire, the project has been divided into three (3) areas (Coastal, Central and Upriver). The project involves detailed mapping of each area from aerial photography followed by on-ground investigations to verify the community type, level of disturbance and key processes affecting long term viability, including any endangered ecological communities. The project will underpin future urban and rural residential land releases and assist in assessment of DAs. Council has committed to Stage 1 of the project to the amount of \$34,000 to be drawn from the 2005/06 allocation of \$20,000 and \$20,000 from 2006/07. To date \$17,350 has been spent and it is likely that the balance will need to be revoted.

## **Environmental Rehabilitation Projects**

### Macleay River Management Plan

Council has committed to this longer term project which is jointly funded by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The 2005 / 06 budget of \$102,632 was revoted from 2004 / 05, of which \$89,621 remains unspent due to delays in obtaining matching funding from DNR which have now been received. These funds are committed with appointment of a consultant expected in May 2006 and will be required to be revoted.

### Korogoro Creek Estuary Management Plan

This project was also delayed due to delays in DNR confirming matching funding which has now been received. The project has

commenced with the appointment of a community committee to oversee the preparation of a brief and appointment of a consultant to prepared the Estuary Management Plan. The proposed allocation of \$20,000 in the draft 06/07 Estimates was deleted on the basis that Council agreed to revoke unexpended funds from 2005/06 with a further \$20,000 required to be revoked from the unexpended Macleay River Projects allocation. It is expected that the plan will be the basis for seeking grant funding to carry out works recommended by the plan.

### Gills Creek Restoration Project

This project has commenced with the collection of baseline water quality information funded from the environmental monitoring allocation. At it's meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> April 2006, Council resolved: -

*"A That Council note the progress of the Rehabilitation Plan;  
and*

*B That Council reallocate \$20,000 from the Macleay River Floodplain Project to the Gills Creek Project in 2005 / 2006 Budget."*

This resulted in a saving in the draft 2006/07 Budget of \$20,000.

The funds which are derived from the Environmental Levy have been reallocated and are required to be revoked.

### Saltwater Creek Flood Study

The funds have been committed with the study in the final stages of completion. Any remaining funds will need to be revoked to complete the Flood Study and for Flood Model development.

### Macleay River Flood Plain Project

As was the case in 2005/05, funds remain unspent due to the success of Council in attracting grant funding for floodplain rehabilitation projects. It is recommended that the balance of unexpended funds, which are derived from the Environmental Levy, be revoked to make up funding required for the preparation of the Korogora Creek Estuary Management Plan and to ongoing projects that have previously been successful in attracting grant funds.

### ASS Management Project

This allocation is also derived from the Environmental Levy. These funds will need to be revoked to continue to undertake small site specific ASS remediation/management projects within the Macleay and Upper Maria River ASS landscapes. For the 2006/07 period a number of small ASS projects are planned to be undertaken which, it is hoped will be successful in attracting matching grant funding.

## **Economic Development Projects**

## Communications Newsletter

The funds have been committed as the newsletter has been prepared and is expected to be printed in June 2006.

## Farmers Market

This is a two (2) year project with Council's commitment due to cease in October 2006. It is not proposed to continue promoting the markets beyond this time. The remaining funds are required for promotions until October 2006.

## Town Entrance Statements

This project forms part of Council's Bypass Strategy. The project was delayed pending a response from the RTA. Expressions of Interest are being sought from artists and a revote is requested.

## Retail Survey

This project has been delayed pending a response from the Chamber of Commerce to a request for feedback with funds expected to be expended in July 2006.

## Arts and Gallery Trail

Funds have been committed with maps for a brochure having been prepared with printing expected in July 2006.

## Airport Investigation

A draft strategy has been prepared that will be presented to MDAP then to Council to endorse for public exhibition. If adopted, the remaining funds could be reallocated to implementing the recommendations of the strategy.

## Projects Officer

The short term appointment of an officer to coordinate projects is required to implement a backlog of MDAP projects, including cluster development project. The appointment was delayed pending an unsuccessful request to the DSRD for matching funding.

## **REPORT IMPLICATIONS:**

- ***Environmental***

**Revoting of funds will enable environmental programs to continue that will result in environmental benefits.**

- ***Social***

**Several strategic projects will contribute to development of the Shire resulting in social benefits.**

- ***Economic (Financial)***

Revotes will reduce the burden on the General Fund in 2006/07 and allow completion of a number of Economic Development Projects.

- *Policy or Statutory*

*Nil*

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council resolve to revoke the funds remaining as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006 from the 2005/06 Budget to the 2006/07 Budget in accordance with the above report. [\(Appendix M\)](#)

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**R B Pitt**  
**DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**