Infrastructure Services Committee Late Agenda

12 March 2019
INFRAS STRUCTURE SERVICES REPORTS

ISC.03.1 HUNTER RIVER ROCK FLUME ABERDEEN
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the construction of a rock flume along the Hunter River near St. Andrews Reserve in Aberdeen.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council enter into an agreement with the property owner of 2 St. Heliers Street Aberdeen, to manage the weeds in the proposed rock flume on private property (Lot 28 DP 255878).

BACKGROUND

The Hunter River bank in the vicinity of 2 St. Heliers Street Aberdeen (Lot 28 DP 255878) has eroded due to over land flow and stormwater entering into this area. Council owns the neighboring property (Lot 3 DP 1076080) St. Andrews Reserve, where Council’s Perth Street Sewer Pump Station (SPS) is located. Approximate location of the eroded area and Perth Street SPS are shown in the map below.
The owner of 2 St. Heliers Street Aberdeen contacted Council to address the issue, and since then Council have worked with Local Land Services (LLS) and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) to find a solution to rectify the river bank erosion issue.

**REPORT/PROPOSAL**

Local Land Services engaged Soil Conservation Service to find a suitable remediation proposal to prevent further river bank erosion due to overland flow/stormwater and draw back during flood events.

Soil Conservation Service proposed to construct a rock flume in the above mentioned location. The scope of work includes:
- Mobilisation and demobilisation of site
- Clearing of work area
- Earthworks
- Vegetation stabilisation

Council resolved at the November 2018 Council meeting to contribute $106,741 towards these works with the LLS to administer the project.

Staff have met with the property owner a number of times to work with the owner on how the project will be constructed and maintained. During these discussions a number of concerns have been raised by the owner and options have been considered to best manage these concerns.

The following key concerns have been raised.
- As the rock flume will be constructed on an existing drainage line and in both public road and private property who is responsible to maintain the rock flume?
  - It is reasonable for Council to take the responsibility of weed management in the rock flume area in both the road and private property.
- The LLS are required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the property owner. This MOU requires the property owner to undertake the following maintenance and monitoring activities, Council staff believe that this is a reasonable expectation of the LLS.
  - Monitoring and removing regeneration of treated weed species.
  - Ensure weed extent is maintained at 80% reduction or better.
  - Replacing planted trees and shrubs if survival is affected by non-compliance with best practice methods including follow up watering, stock caused damage or lack of weed and pest animal control.
  - Maintaining stock-proof fences.
  - Establish at least two photo points for determining changes in vegetation cover in the project area. Photo points to be established as per the Hunter LLS photo point protocol.
- Why is there a drainage line through the property?
  - The drainage line is a natural gully. This negates the requirement for having an easement over the land.
Why is the land owner asked to maintain Council constructed infrastructure?

- The land owner has not been asked to maintain Council infrastructure, the land owner has been asked to enter into an MOU with LLS to maintain and monitor the drainage line within their property.

During discussions with the property owner he has proposed that Council purchase his entire property 2 St. Heliers Street Aberdeen. Staff have explained that they would not support such a request as it is not required to manage the existing natural drainage line through the property.

As stated there is currently a proposal from LLS and Council to construct the rock flume to repair the damage caused by erosion on the Hunter River. The funding from LLS is available until June 2019, however LLS will require all agreements signed off prior to any works commencing. If agreement is not reached by the end of March 2019 LSS will reconsider their funding options.

OPTIONS

1. Enter into an agreement with the property owner of 2 St. Heliers Street Aberdeen to manage the weeds in the proposed rock flume on private property (Lot 28 DP 255878).
2. Not to enter into an agreement with the property owner of 2 St. Heliers Street Aberdeen to manage the weeds in the rock flume on private property and only maintain the area within the land Council is responsible for.
3. Purchase 2 St. Heliers Street as proposed by property owner.
4. Walk away from the current proposal and not fund part of the repair works.

CONSULTATION

- Manager Water and Sewer
- Manager Asset Services
- Property Owner
- Local Land Services

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Community Strategic Plan 2027

This report links to the Community Strategic Plan 2027 as follows:

BUILT & NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
Goal 3 Protect Natural Environment
  CS10 Advocate for, facilitate and support programs that protect and sustain our diverse environment for our future generations.

ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE
Goal 6 Increase, enhance and maintain civil infrastructure, Community assets and open spaces to meet the needs of current and future generations.
  CS 24 Provide for replacement, improvement and additional community and open space infrastructure through investment, best practice and risk management.
  CS 26 Provide safe and reliable water and sewerage services to meet the demands of current and future generations.
We are working to achieve the following Community Priorities:

b. Delivery Program

- Sewage Services
  To maintain a sewage system for transportation and treatment of sewage to license requirements and encourage appropriate further expansion of services

c. Other Plans

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil

b. Financial Implications

Council has allocated $106,741.

c. Legislative Implications

Nil

d. Risk Implications

Should an agreement not be reached the project will not proceed.

e. Other Implications

The damage to the Hunter River bank will continue should this matter not be rectified.

CONCLUSION

This project is a joint venture between the property owner, LLS and Council to improve management of stormwater outflow into the Hunter River and also project Council’s Sewage infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no enclosures for this report