



Blue Mountains City Council

Project submissions for NSW Local Economic Recovery Fund

23 July 2020



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Introduction

Unprecedented bushfires devastated Australia and impacted the City of Blue Mountains in November and December 2019.

The Blue Mountains experienced an extraordinary fire threat at the time and a significant impact on the natural environment, property, infrastructure, services, local economy and visitation to the area.

It is estimated that 80% (over 900,000 ha) of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area was burnt, which resulted in a massive impact on wild life, plants, biodiversity and ecosystems.

Villages in the Upper Mountains were most directly impacted including Bell, Mount Tomah, Mount Wilson, Mount Irvine, Mount Victoria, Blackheath and Megalong Valley. However, all towns and villages of the Blue Mountains have been significantly impacted economically.

The bushfires resulted in:

- More than \$1million in infrastructure damage including roads, retaining and drainage structures and traffic facilities including guard rails, guide posts and signage. Debris from the fires also resulted in significant clean up costs of debris in the upper Blue Mountains.
- More than 20 homes being destroyed (and another 10 damaged)
- 13 facilities destroyed (and another 3 damaged),
- 36 outbuildings destroyed (and another 30 damaged).

More than 120 rural landholders were also affected.

It has been estimated that almost 2,600 jobs were lost in the Blue Mountains following the bushfires, resulting in a gross turnover loss of nearly \$560 million from the local economy.

Data from REMPLAN's The 2019-2020 Bushfires: Economic Impact on the Blue Mountains Region report, commissioned by Blue Mountains City Council, confirms the significant impact the fires had on the local economy and livelihoods.

This has been compounded by flooding and landslides in February, that impacted critical tourism infrastructure, and the COVID-19 pandemic that is ongoing.

Bell – Post fire weed, erosion control and stormwater treatment works



Description of Project

This project seeks to address the significant impacts of the recent bushfires, particularly in the small community of Bell in the Upper Blue Mountains. The impact of bushfires was particularly devastating for the community of Bell, with extensive damage to private property and loss of homes in the area. It was, arguably, one of the most heavily fire impacted areas in the Blue Mountains LGA. Large areas of bare earth, on steep slopes, with multiple urban stormwater inputs, make private properties highly vulnerable to erosion, soil depletion, creek line destabilisation, and a reduction in the health of aquatic systems and overall catchment health from external stormwater flows.

The recovery response to address these impacts will focus on post bushfire soil conservation and erosion control, stormwater management and key priority weed control works through the installation of improved stormwater treatment systems in Wollangambe River sub-catchment and targeted weed control. These works will contribute to the protection of the Wollangambe River sub-catchment as part of the BMWHA and health of the aquatic system and provide for long-term resilience against the adverse impacts in this system of reoccurring fire events.

A key target weed as part of the project which responds with mass germination is Pampas Grass. Under the Biosecurity Act 2015, Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia jubata*) is a weed of Regional Significance in the Blue Mountains with a 'Control Measure' that the plant should be fully and continuously suppressed and destroyed. The Regional Priority Weed Objective for Pampas Grass includes targeted management for identified asset protection. Strategic response for the Blue Mountains region requires that the plant be managed in accordance with a regional best practice guide, to protect identified assets including the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Project Benefits

- This project will remediate damaged natural environment and strengthens resilience to future bushfires.
- The project will see key elements of the Blue Mountains natural areas restored, in turn leading to improved resident and visitor experience.
- The proposed projects will also provide economic activity in the Blue Mountains LGA with the project been delivered by Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury based environmental restoration trade and technical level contractors and earthmovers.
- In addition, the project will see regional suppliers and service providers in the Hawkesbury, Hunter and Western Sydney LGAs benefit from providing material supply and technical support to the project.

Funding Required: \$27,000

2020/21 – \$27,000

Delivery Timeframe

September 2020 to March 2021

Demonstrated Support

The project aligns directly with the draft Blue Mountains Weed Management Strategy and

Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes based – Natural Areas Operations Works Program as well as aligning with Council's Bushfire Recovery Action Plan and Water Sensitive Blue Mountains Strategic Plan.

Approvals Required

Standard annual works preapprovals are required, such as Part 5, dial before you dig and other heritage, cultural and AHIMs searches.

Similar structures that are proposed



Blackheath Golf Course Retention Dam - Drainage Improvement Works



Description of Project

The Blackheath golf course retention dam is part of strategic fire fighting infrastructure in the Upper Blue Mountains and was frequently used as a water source during the 2019-2020 bushfires.

The golf course dam has the capacity to store additional water that otherwise would flow directly to the adjoining creek. As the current system is undersized the golf course is frequently flooded, even during minor storm events.

The project will reduce flooding of the golf course, by directing the Brightlands Road drainage system into the golf course retention dam. This will significantly improve the dams' capacity to resource firefighting activities in the vicinity of Blackheath and in the Upper Mountains region.

Project Benefits

The major benefits of this project include:

- Upgrading important strategic fire fighting infrastructure providing water to fight bushfires and better resource fire fighting activities in the Upper Mountains.
- Improving drainage and flood management impacting the Blackheath golf course.
- The project will inject funding into the local economy and supporting local employment with flow on benefits to local economy and community.

Funding Required: \$350,000

\$350,000 for dam related drainage and flood mitigation works

Delivery Timeframe

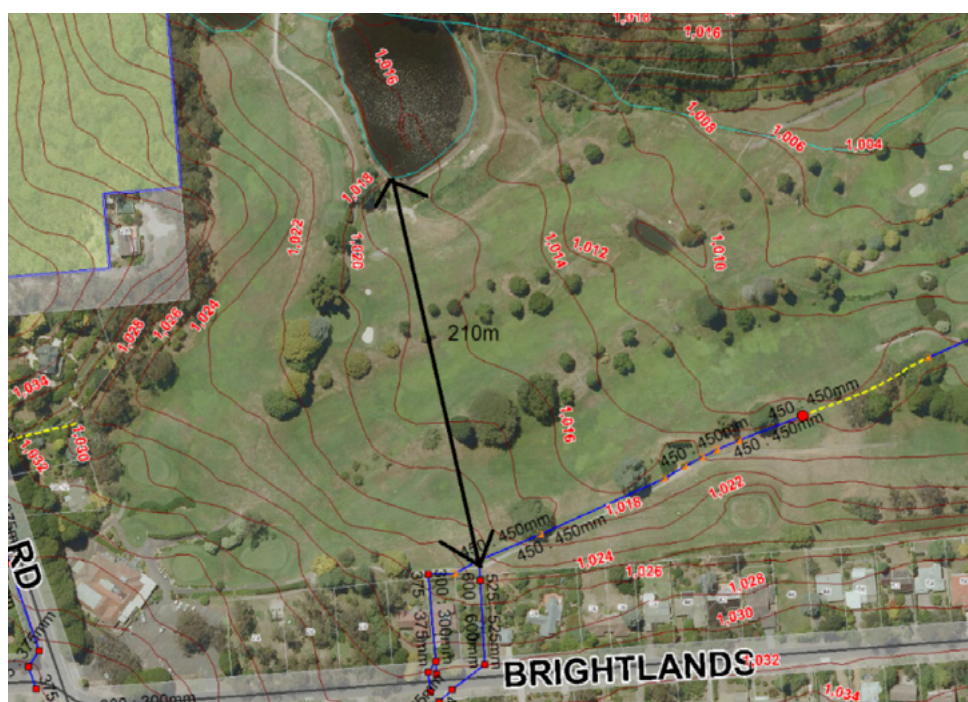
January 2021 till June 2021

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Council's Bushfire Recovery Action plan objectives for bushfire preparedness and recovery, by the Blackheath Golf Club and by the Rural Fire Service.

Approvals Required

Nil



Popes Glen Creek and Govett's Leap Brook sub catchments –

Post Bushfire Weed Management, Erosion Control and Stormwater Treatment Works



Description of Project

Protecting the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (BMWHA) through strengthening our natural environment's resilience to bushfires: The 2019 – 2020 Gospers Mountain and Grose Valley bushfires destroyed extensive areas of bushland across the Blue Mountains region. It was particularly devastating in the areas of Bell, Mount Wilson, Mount York, Mount Victoria and Blackheath. This project seeks to address the negative impacts of the bushfire particularly in the Popes Glen area of Blackheath. The recovery response will primarily focus on critical post-bushfire weed control activities and installation of improved stormwater treatment systems.

This project will also involve installation of erosion control and soil conservation structures including upgraded treatment systems at all urban stormwater inputs to the Popes Glen catchment. These improved stormwater management structures are essential to mitigate the impacts of urbanisation and the associated increased stormwater volume and velocity entering the catchment system. If left unmitigated these altered stormwater inputs have a huge detrimental impact on creekline stability and aquatic system health, exacerbated by the loss of vegetation and exposed soil from the bushfires.

*Key target weeds expected to flourish in the bushfire impacted area of Popes Glen, are Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) and Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), both listed as State Priority Weeds under NSW Biosecurity Act 2015.*

These weeds are also classified as 'Weeds of National Significance' indicating the detrimental impact of their invasiveness and the need for coordinated management at all levels of government. They germinate profusely post-bushfire and spread rapidly in the disturbed landscape. An historical distribution of these weeds throughout the Popes Glen and Braeside catchments has resulted in a large seedbank accumulating in the system.

The bushfire has triggered mass germination which requires critical and comprehensive weed control management to prevent the weeds resetting in the landscape. This work will support many years of successful weed management of these weeds in Council reserves and prevent spread into adjacent National Park, also vulnerable to invasion because of bushfire disturbance.

Project Benefits

- The project will see key elements of the Blue Mountains natural areas restored, leading to improved visitor experience. These works will provide for flow on benefits generated for the general, nature based recreation and eco-tourism sectors, as well as the protection of the BMWHA and other high conservation natural areas.
- The proposed projects will also provide for economic activity in the Blue Mountains LGA with the project been delivered by Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury based environmental restoration contractors and earthmovers. In addition the project will see regional suppliers in the Hawkesbury, Hunter and Western Sydney LGA benefit from supply and support to the project
- Given the labour intensive components of this project funded activities will see the stimulus funds readily entering local economies at a township scale across the Blue Mountains and adjoining LGAs.

Funding Required: \$84,000

Stage 1 - \$52,000, Stage 2 - \$32,000

Delivery Timeframe

Stage 1 – 2020-2021

Stage 2 – 2021-2022

Demonstrated Support

The project aligns directly with the draft *Blue Mountains Weed Management Strategy and Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes based – Natural Areas Operations Works Program* as well as aligning with the Council's *Bushfire Recovery Action Plan* and *Water Sensitive Blue Mountains Strategic Plan*.

Approvals Required

Standard annual works preapprovals are required, such as Part5, dial before you dig and other heritage, cultural and Ahims searches.



Similar structures during construction and at completion

Pulpit Rock, Blackheath – Design Concept for Precinct Upgrade



Description of Project

This entire Pulpit Rock tourism precinct was severely damaged during the 2019 bushfires. This project seeks funding to engage a local service provider to deliver a concept design for a modern visitor precinct with supporting facilities that would be in line with current natural area visitor facility upgrades, and match the expectation of visitors in 2020. The project would be delivered in consultation with the community.

Project Benefits

The proposed project will provide economic activity in the Blue Mountains LGA with the project being delivered by Blue Mountains or regionally-based based environmental design consultant.

It will provide support for the tourism industry, an improved visitor product and community engagement.

Funding Required: \$30,000

\$30,000 for preparation of concept design for upgrading the Pulpit Rock Precinct

Delivery Timeframe

Project can be completed by April 2021

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Blue Mountains Bushfire Recovery Plan objectives focused on recovery of damaged natural and built assets. Tourism is a significant contributor to the Blue Mountains economy and it is prominent in Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The commercial nature based recreation industry is highlighted in the Blue Mountains Destination Management Plan as a significant contributor to the product that the Blue Mountains trades upon to attract visitors.

Approvals Required

Nil



Current entrance to track (pre and post fire)

Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park Improvements – Supporting Community and Economic Recovery



Description of Project

Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park is a major District Park in the Upper Mountains servicing the recreational needs of local community and Visitors to the region. The park is a key community hub and tourist destination, adding to community well being and the vitality of the local visitor economy.

A Plan of Management and Masterplan have been prepared for the Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park in close consultation with community, identifying much needed improvements and infrastructure works. The project would implement key actions from the Plan of Management (PoM) and Masterplan, with a focus on restoration of the large pond in the park, including repair of a failing pond wall, footpath restoration and other civil engineering works, plantings, improved visitor access, riparian and water quality improvements.

Project Benefits

The project will support recovery of the Upper Blue Mountains providing a range of social, economic and environmental benefits. The upgrade will:

- Enhance and upgrade critical District Park infrastructure supporting recovery of tourist economy and local community wellbeing;
- Bring a diverse range of recreational and community users to the region - from local residents, tourists, school groups and special needs users;
- Provide employment and work for local contractors who will be engaged to undertake a number of works as listed and be actively encouraged to submit tenders; and
- Provide multiplier benefits to local businesses in the Upper Mountains including hardware stores, cafes, shops.

Funding Required: \$450,000

A design and construct budget of \$450,000 is required to deliver this project including implementation of:

- Park civil and engineering works - including repair of failing dam wall, footpath restoration, improved visitor connection with pond
- Improved water quality management and riparian improvements
- Plantings and beautification

The project can be staged if necessary and what ever funding is available would be utilised to progress required works.

Delivery Timeframe

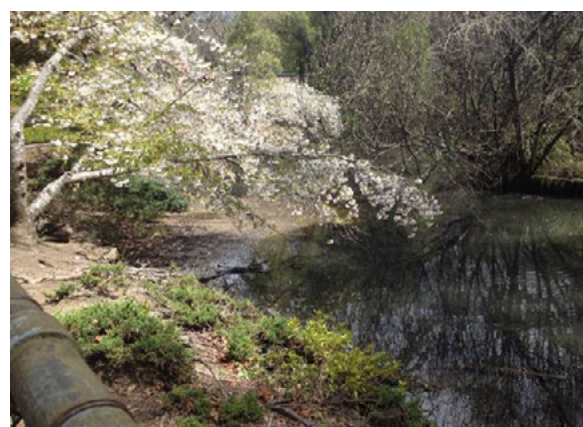
The project can be confidently delivered within a 12 – 24 month timeframe.

Demonstrated Support

The project aligns with the Council's strategy for improving recreation and visitor facilities and will implement components of the approved Plan of Management and Masterplan for the park, prepared through extensive community engagement process.

Approvals Required

Part 5 approvals will be required to undertake this work.



Improving Bushfire Preparedness and Safety – Access Control Improvements



Description of Project

This project aims to provide vehicle and pedestrian access controls (i.e. gates and signage) that more effectively prohibits unauthorised entry into bushland reserves, campgrounds and high visitation precincts during declared high-risk fire days and during post fire recovery. Currently, there is inadequate capacity to keep areas closed effectively. People ignore temporary barriers – which are easy to move, and vandalise closures to gain access.

During the 2019-2020 fire season Council had to close a large number of its bushland reserves including campgrounds, walking track networks, lookouts and high visitation precincts for several weeks in various configurations in response to declared Total Fire Ban days, and Extreme and Catastrophic bushfire rating days.

Council needed to produce adequate and effective temporary signage and install over 100 closure points into these areas in a very short time frame, throughout the upper mountains and entire southern escarpment. This was essential to communicate to the local community and visitors to the city in an effective manner; not to enter Council's bushland reserves whilst also being enforceable by BMCC Rangers and NSW Police.

This project supports effective communication in high bushfire risk areas through permanent signage installed at high risk, high use entry nodes to Council's bushland reserves and through the installation of gates, where required, enabling more effective closures of unsafe sites.

Project Benefits

- The project supports bushfire preparedness and safety against future bushfire events
- Local suppliers will be sought for manufacture and installation across the entire LGA with flow on benefits to the economy and community

Funding Required: \$70,000

Total funding requested \$70,000 including approximately:

- \$31,000 for installation of required signage
- \$39,000 – Installation of required gates at key sites

Delivery Timeframe

August 2020 – May 2021

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Blue Mountains Bushfire Recovery Action Plan objectives and by the Council's adopted BUSHLAND RESERVE EMERGENCY CLOSURES procedures.

Approvals Required

Standard pre-approvals including Part 5, dial before you dig, heritage & cultural due diligence and AHIM searches.



Blue Mountains Business Outreach Officer – Supporting Local Economic Recovery



Description of Project

The project seeks funding to recruit a Blue Mountains Business Outreach Office position within the Council's Economic development Unit for a 12 month period. This position will facilitate improved liaison, support and engagement with bushfire affected businesses, and provide support to navigate governmental processes and put in place effective mechanisms to aid suitable and effective business growth. This position would work in parallel with an enhanced roll-out of the Blue Mountains "Love Local" program and with a range of town and village re-activation initiatives supporting economic recovery.

Project Benefits

- Supporting recovery of local businesses within town and villages impacted by the bushfire through targeted engagement and support activities – business, social and mental health related
- Employment generation with flow on benefits to economy and community
- The Officer will also support continuation and enhancement of Council's highly successful Love Local program encouraging people to buy locally and support work of the Economic Development Unit that is targeting economic and tourism recovery. It is estimated that there has been a loss of over 2500 jobs and almost \$560M loss in output for the region as a result of recent bushfires (REMPAN Blue Mountains Bushfire Affectionation Report, 2020)

Funding Required: \$100,000

\$100K to employ Business Outreach Officer

Delivery Timeframe

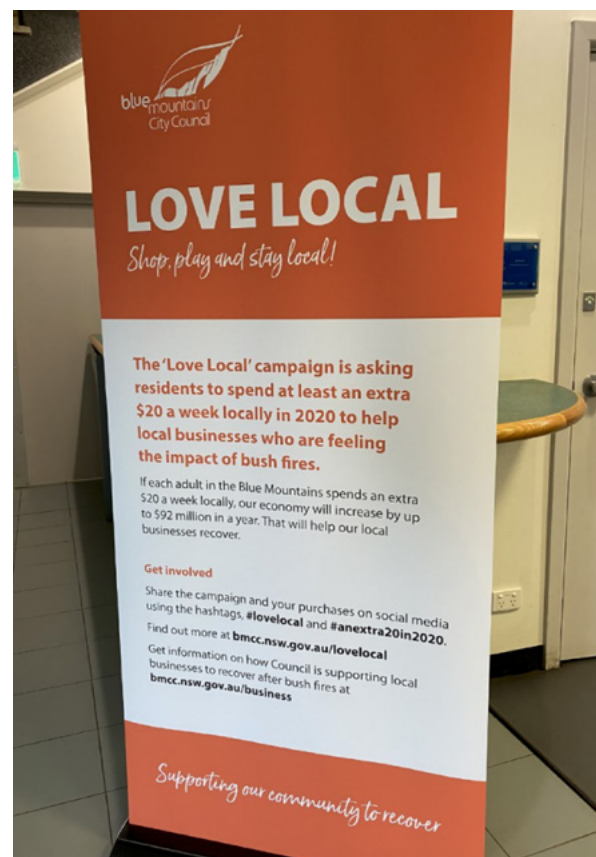
The project can be confidently delivered within a 12 month timeframe, once funding is received and recruitment is completed.

Demonstrated Support

The project aligns with and supports achievement of the economic recovery objectives of the Blue Mountains Bushfire Recovery Action Plan.

Approvals Required

Normal recruitment process



Blue Mountains Carbon Reduction Projects



Description of Project

The below package of lighting upgrades, Solar PV and climate risk assessment projects are proposed to help Council adapt and mitigate climate change through the built environment. These projects will help to boost the local economy while updating Council's built assets. In addition, funding is being sought to implement a *Climate Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan* that will include consideration of risk from future bush fires and other natural disasters and ways of best acting to limit risks. The completion of the below projects will achieve a carbon reduction of 670 Tonnes CO₂e annually. This helps reduce the future impact of climate change, aligns with multiple Council and State strategies and plans. The proposed projects are:

- Street lighting upgrade to LED lighting - \$200,000
- Hope Street Blaxland (library and community facility) lighting upgrade - \$21,000
- Katoomba and Blackheath Caravan Park lighting upgrade - \$22,000
- Katoomba and Blackheath Caravan Parks solar PV - \$20,000
- Smaller facilities lighting upgrades (community, recreational or tourist facilities) - \$200,000
- Council Katoomba Solar PV - \$120,000
- Glenbrook Pool Lighting Upgrade - \$5000
- Glenbrook Pool Solar PV - \$45,000
- Climate change risk assessment and adaptation plan \$50,000

Project Benefits

This program of works has many benefits for the local economy, the environment and the broader community. These benefits include:

- The upgrades have a strong focus on community and tourist infrastructure. This will help to improve the environmental performance of these key facilities. Furthermore the upgrades to tourist facilities support Council's ambition to be a sustainable tourism destination, helping to attract more environmentally conscious tourists visiting the Blue Mountains.
- Supporting local contractors, by providing work, broken into small parcels that are manageable for local contractors. The projects support and show commitment to Council's Local program aiming to support the local economy through these challenging times.
- The works will reduce council's cumulative carbon emissions by 6,700 tonnes over the next decade. This reduction will help reduce future climate change impacts while supporting both council and state government objectives.
- Providing a formal climate risk assessment and where appropriate adaptation plan for the Local government area will allow for investment decision to fully consider future climate risks including from bushfires and how best to prepare. This is particularly beneficial for pipeline infrastructure investment as it reduces the need for costly retrospective climate adaptation work in the future.

Funding Required: \$683,000

The total funding package request is \$683,000 for the above projects.

The projects can all be delivered or can be broken down into individual packages of work to align with a lower funding commitment.

Delivery Timeframe

The projects can be delivered in 12 months.

Demonstrated Support

Blue Mountains City Council and our community are committed to reducing our impact on climate change. This is demonstrated through our Community Strategic Plan, which was developed with extensive community input. One of the 5 guiding principles of the most recent CSP is sustainability, specifically aligning with this project is becoming an Environmentally responsible City.

Further actions that demonstrate the level of support for Climate adaptation and mitigation was the February 2019 Council resolution to declare a climate emergency. This made Council only the third in NSW to do so. Given the 2020 bushfire season and rain fall events that significantly impacted the LGA support for action has only increased.

Following the climate emergency declaration, Council, with support of the community, resolved in September 2019, to become a Certified Carbon Neutral Organisation by 2025. This built on Council's

Blue Mountains Carbon Reduction Projects



successful carbon abatement action plan which has already seen a 15% reduction in emissions.

Blue Mountains City Councils Local Strategic Planning Statement also has 3 priority areas that directly support these projects:

- LOCAL PLANNING PRIORITY 1: Living sustainably in the City within a World Heritage National Park
- LOCAL PLANNING PRIORITY 2: Managing bushfire risk and responding to climate change in our unique environment

Approvals Required

All relevant internal approvals are in place including Executive Leadership Team Approval. Relevant Part 5, Complying Development Certificate or Development Application approvals will be required for each parcel of work. These will be completed initially upon successful funding allocations.



Commercial Adventure Tourism and Ecotourism Support Package



Description of Project

To provide a dedicated stimulus package to support up to 30 commercial tourism operators licensed under Council's Eco-tourism licensing scheme. These operators have been significantly adversely impacted by the recent bushfires. The package will provide fee relief, in the form of rebates for license and user fees, and local marketing of the industry.

Project Benefits

- The package will provide support for approximately 30 mostly local businesses, and their employees. Marketing of adventure tourism activities to locals will increase awareness of the industry and stimulate business activity. Locally sourced marketing mediums will be utilised in promoting the industry.
- The Council's Eco-tourism licensing scheme has been a highly successful example of Council and industry working together.
- The commercial adventure tourism/ecotourism industry is also highlighted in the Blue Mountains Destination Management Plan as a significant contributor to the niche product that the Blue Mountains trades upon to attract visitors.
- The stimulus will provide support for the industry with flow on benefits to local economy and community and ensure ongoing engagement with Council and the community

Funding Required: \$25,000

\$25,000 is requested. This is the average fee usually received from commercial tourism operators over a 6 month period. Given the depressed business activity, fees generated and rebates are expected to be less and the balance will be spent on local marketing of adventure tourism and ecotourism activities.

Delivery Timeframe

1 October 2020 until 31 March 2021

Demonstrated Support

This project is supported by the Blue Mountains Bushfire Recovery Plan objectives and action focus for economic recovery. The plan was developed in consultation with community and bushfire impacted residents and businesses.

Approvals Required

A resolution of Council would be sought to provide a fee rebate to licensees.

City of Blue Mountains Entry Signage and Acknowledgement of Country

Description of Project

The 2019-2020 bushfires destroyed City entry signage and signage acknowledging “You are travelling through Darug and Gundungurra Country”. This project will install newly designed City entry and Acknowledgement of Country combined signage, at the Blue Mountains City Council local government area boundary on the Great Western Highway at Lapstone (eastern entry) and Mount Victoria (western entry).

The new City Entry signage, shown in image below, promotes the World Heritage status of the surrounding environment and has been developed in close consultation with the Blue Mountains Aboriginal Advisory Committee, traditional owners and indigenous representatives.

Project Benefits

- The combined City entry and Welcome to Country signage is a powerful statement of recognition of Country and First Peoples by the local government authority following on from a significant consultation with the local Aboriginal Advisory Council in the design development of this signage.
- The Great Western Highway is one of the two key roads traversing the World Heritage Area and most of the towns are strung along it.
- The project replaces signage impacted by the bushfires with signage that itself is a work of art developed in partnership with traditional owners and indigenous representatives

Funding Required: \$500,000

\$500,000 (\$250,000 for manufacture and installation of each sign at each end of City)

Delivery Timeframe

The project can be delivered within the next 12 months

Demonstrated Support

Delivery of this project is clearly articulated in the Council's adopted Local strategic Planning Statement (Action 8.8) - Council will develop city signage that promotes the identity and location of the City within a World Heritage Area

The Council's adopted Blue Mountains Destination Management Plan (DMP 2017) recommended: UNESCO World Heritage Signage – investigate options for entry gateway signage at various locations. (p.139)

The proposed signage has been developed in consultation with traditional owners, via the Aboriginal Advisory Committee, who were involved throughout the design development process.

Approvals Required

Department of Transport (Road signage)



Left: Fire damaged City entry signs

Below: New combined sign

Below: New combined sign



Supporting Economic recovery – Town and Village Centre Improvement and Activation Program



Description of Project

The project will deliver a range of social, economic and infrastructure enhancements and improvements in Blue Mountains towns and villages which have been affected economically by the bushfires.

The project will be implemented by the Council's Place Management Team, in close partnership with local Chambers of Commerce and Town and Village Associations and the Mayoral Reference Group for Business.

Indicative types of works include:

- Installation of Water bubblers – Sydney Water style
- Additional Seats / Rubbish Bin / Street Furniture
- Art installation to enliven a space
- Contribution to local events
- Local campaigns to buy and shop local – shop local paper bags, stickers on shop windows etc
- Xmas celebrations – lights, shop window comps, live entertainment on the evening etc
- New Banners (for those that have them)

Project Benefits

- The project will deliver a range of social, economic and infrastructure benefits, with major focus on minor, but important, place enhancement initiatives that activate and improve existing town and village centres.
- Project will engage a range of local contractors where appropriate, supporting local employment and with flow on effects for the local economy. It is estimated that there has been a loss of over 2500 jobs and almost \$560M loss in output for the Blue Mountains region as a result of recent bushfires (REMPPLAN Bushfire Affectionation Report).
- This project will support improved performance of our towns and villages, building local confidence through well targeted improvements and investments.

Funding Required: \$290,000

\$290,000 in total:

- \$20K for each major district centre - Katoomba and Springwood
- \$5K - \$10K each for remaining 25 towns/villages.

Delivery Timeframe

Program can commence within one month and be completed over the next 12 – 16 months.

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Council's Blue Mountains Bushfire Recovery Plan and by the Mayoral reference Group for Business with representatives from all key Chambers of Commerce and Town committees.

Approvals Required

Part 5 assessments for minor capital works programs will be required.



City-wide Tree Asset Database



Description of Project

The management of trees has been a significant and extremely challenging component of the bushfire response and recovery processes in the Blue Mountains, particularly in the most severely affected areas of the Blue Mountains including Bell, Mt Tomah, Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine. This project supports the Council being better prepared and equipped to more proactively manage dangerous trees in times of bushfire and to manage trees as an important asset.

The Blue Mountains local government area incorporates extensive areas of urban forest that includes natural bush land, street and park trees, located on both public and private land. This 'green infrastructure' is a significant environmental asset with measurable ecosystem benefits such as carbon sequestration and passive cooling, a defining characteristic of the Blue Mountains and a focus for the Region and the Western District.

The first and primary stage of the project is the establishment of a Public Tree Asset Database to record the location of trees and data such as species, health and condition. The Council currently has no such database or ability to understand and monitor tree health, tree canopy – thereby impeding planning and risk management essential for best practice tree management. Subsequent stages would include broad scale mapping of tree canopy across the City both on public and private land.

Project Benefits

- Currently tree management is reactive. This project would enable the proactive management of these assets across the City, based upon up-to-date data captured by tree experts and local arborists working in the field.
- Local contractors/ arborists / tree experts would be engaged to support implementation of the project, contributing to local employment and local economy. A long-term pool of local tree experts would be established - to be trained and prepared to respond in times of bush fire recovery or other natural events resulting in emergency tree management.
- Knowledge of tree condition and other tree data will contribute to Council's ability to respond to natural disasters, increase Council and community resilience in recovering from these significant events and most importantly improve public safety across the City.
- Operationally, the project will achieve long term efficiency through the creation of a database and initial mapping that once established, will drive proactive improvements in tree management and lead to cost savings through a more efficient use of available resources.
- The condition of public trees will be monitored, and those assessed as compromised proactively treated thus reducing the incidence of failures during bushfires, storms and high winds.

- Proactive works have been shown to contribute to extending the useful lifespan of trees within the urban forest, and cost efficiencies by grouping works of similar risk abatement priority.
- Ability to continue to manage a mixed age class of trees within the urban forest of the City with result being to maintain or improve biodiversity and forest health resilience.
- Other general benefits include reduced response times for tree management assessment and remedial works for residents of the Blue Mountains, reduction of tree failures and subsequent risk of asset damage or personal injury, reduced insurance claim cost for BMCC.

Funding Required: \$265,000

Stage 1: \$180,000

- Establishment of the project, engagement of local arborists and tree experts to conduct field work to support required data collection, scoping and recording of targeted, high priority areas including bush fire affected areas and highly bush fire prone areas of LGA
- Deliverable:
 - Database framework and initial data entry
 - Asset management framework for trees and urban forest in highly bushfire prone environment
 - Long-term pool of local tree experts established

City-wide Tree Asset Database



Stage 2: \$85,000

- Recording of annual auditing results, maintenance required and completed, replanting opportunities and appropriate species selection.
- Reporting and analysis of species propensity for decline and/or failure, particularly those subject to effects of climate change and natural disaster events including bushfires, which may also inform policy and guideline formulation.
- City-wide mapping of tree canopy to capture baseline data and prioritise areas of focus in relation to heat island effect for example, as well as other key metrics.

Stage 3:

- Ongoing monitoring resourced within Council budgets once the project is established

Delivery Timeframe

Stage 1 of the project can be implemented in 2020-2021 and Stage 2 in 2021-2022.

Demonstrated Support

This project is supported within the Council's adopted Local Strategic Planning Statement

Blue Mountains 2040: Living Sustainably which includes:

- *Local Planning Priority 2 – Managing bush fire risk and responding to climate change in our unique environment*
- *Action 1.12: Council will develop an Urban Tree Forest Project to map the tree canopy within the urban footprint and establish baseline data to monitor change over time.*

This project also supports planning priority W15 in the NSW Governments **Western City District Plan**, which calls for an integrated and more proactive approach to green infrastructure including urban tree canopy and green grid connections.

Approvals Required

No approvals are required for the project.

Gloria Park Sports and Play Precinct Upgrade



Description of Project

Gloria Park is a significant district recreational facility in the mid-mountains. Local economies have been significantly impacted by recent bushfires and an upgrade to this sports facility would provide flow on benefits to the local economy as well as to community wellbeing in the mid-mountains.

Project Benefits

- Gloria Park is a key sporting and community hub servicing the mid-Blue Mountains.
- The upgrade will bring a diverse range of recreational users from sporting clubs, school groups, and special needs users together through participation, inclusion and supports their health and well-being.
- Local contractors are fully capable of undertaking a number of works as listed in stages 1 to 3 and will be actively encourage to submit tenders.
- Furthermore if funding is successfully secured during the construction phases it is predicted that contractors will support local businesses (cafes/ bakeries/shops) in the Hazelbrook/Lawson area in purchase of items and therefore support the local economic recovery.

Funding Required: \$650,000

Stage 1 - Gloria Park Surface and Irrigation Upgrade - \$250,000

Stage 2 - Gloria Park Lighting Upgrade to modern LED Lighting - \$250,000

Stage 3 – Gloria Park Play Equipment Upgrade focusing on nature based play and inclusivity - \$150,000

Total project cost if all stages funded: \$650,000

Although listed as individual stages these works aren't in any priority order and while it would be beneficial if all were funded, the funding of individual items would also be beneficial to the community.

Delivery Timeframe

Projects can be confidently delivered in a 12 – 24 month timeframe.

Demonstrated Support

The works are supported by the Council's adopted Open Space and Recreation Strategic Plan and by the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan - Care Objective 3.2b – Support increased community participation in physically active, fit and social lifestyles, including the provision of supporting infrastructure.

Approvals Required

As this project is an upgrade to existing infrastructure it is anticipated that a Part 5 approval would be sufficient.



Bush Fire Affected Towns – Local Link Road Strategy - Hazelbrook



Description of Project

Construction of Terrance Falls Road, Hazelbrook.

This critical link along Terrance Falls Road and Baths Road provides the only limited alternate Great Western Highway access, between Hazelbrook and Lawson, in case of emergence closures of the highway. Examples of previous occasions which have blocked the highway are bush fires, motor vehicle crashes, road maintenance and traffic congestion.

Currently the Bath Road section provides a suitable level of service. However, Terrance Falls is a very narrow road with minimum supporting civil infrastructure i.e. it has no shoulders, kerb and guttering and very poor road surface to adequately manage increased traffic volumes and vehicle types.

The proposed upgrade will significantly improve the condition of the roadway into a fit for purpose link for this critical alternate connection in the mid mountains.

Project Benefits

- Provides safe alternate access for local residents, businesses and tourist to the Blue Mountains.
- Provides alternate access for the movement of good services from Western NSW to Sydney in the event of the Great Western Highway being blocked.

Funding Required: \$400,000

\$400,000 – for road construction (with the design for the road completed by Council).

Delivery Timeframe

Within 12 months of funding approval.

Demonstrated Support

In August 1999 the Council adopted a Local Link Road Strategy, which was specifically aimed at providing improved local linkages, which would:

- Improve safety for local residents and highway users
- Improve convenience by making areas more accessible
- Improve bushfire access
- Reduce the traffic conflict with the highway.

This strategy also addresses the following strategic objective in the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan: Sustainable transport links are developed between villages as an alternative to the Great Western Highway.

Approvals Required

Part 5 Assessment



Lapstone Netball Precinct Upgrade



Description of Project

Comprehensive upgrade to the Lapstone Netball Precinct including seating upgrade, lighting upgrade and netball court resealing. This recreational facility is regularly used by thousands of residents and visitors (in normal times) and supports community well being.

Project Benefits

- Contractors will be engaged to undertake the works with flow on benefits to the local economy and community
- As indicated above the Blue Mountains Netball Association has a highly developed working relationship with BMCC and this upgrade will have a benefit for numerous netball clubs and their members, from across the City.
- The upgrade will bring a diverse range of recreational users from sporting clubs, school groups, and special needs users together through participation, inclusion and supports their health and well-being.

Funding Required: \$525,000

There are 3 stages to this upgrade that are listed below:

Stage 1: Seating – Upgrade to the tiered spectator seating to accommodate the increase in use at this facility – \$200,000

Stage 2 Lapstone Netball Lighting – Upgrade to modern LED lighting – \$150,000

Stage 3: Lapstone Netball Court Resealing – Upgrade to modern flexi paving solution that will accommodate a range of sporting uses for training and competition – \$175,000

Total project cost if all stages funded: \$525,000

Delivery Timeframe

The project can be delivered in stages over the next 20 months, commencing with Stage 1 in 2020-2021.

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Council and by the Blue Mountains Netball Association. This facility caters for clubs from across the Blue Mountains and acts as a competition hub.

The project is supported by the Council's adopted open Space and Recreation Strategy and – Community Strategic Plan which has the following Objective 3.2b – *Support increased community participation in physically active, fit and social lifestyles, including the provision of supporting infrastructure.*

Approvals Required

As this project entails upgrades to existing infrastructure, it is anticipated that a Part 5 approval would be sufficient.



Mt Riverview Rural Fire Service – Toilet Renovation



Description of Project

To provide additional toilets for the Mt Riverview Rural Fire Service (RFS) to support volunteers during a bushfire. The RFS building is located at 178 Rusden Road, Mount Riverview, NSW. The current single toilet at the Mt Riverview RFS is insufficient to meet demands of the RFS during fire seasons, incident management, training events and RFS functions. The current toilet provides little privacy and there is no segregation between male and female members. It is necessary to reconfigure and renovate the space to provide a DDA compliant toilet together with male and female toilet facilities for the Mt Riverview RFS.

Project Benefits

- The project will make the existing RFS building more functional in meeting needs of volunteers so they can protect local community (people and assets) during the bushfire seasons.
- If successful the work would be tendered locally to provide work for local trades and builders, with flow on benefits for the local economy and community.

Funding Required: \$75,000

\$75,000 for reconfiguration and renovation of existing toilet

Delivery Timeframe

Within 12 -16 months from the date funding is made available

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Council and by the Mt Riverview Rural Fire Service

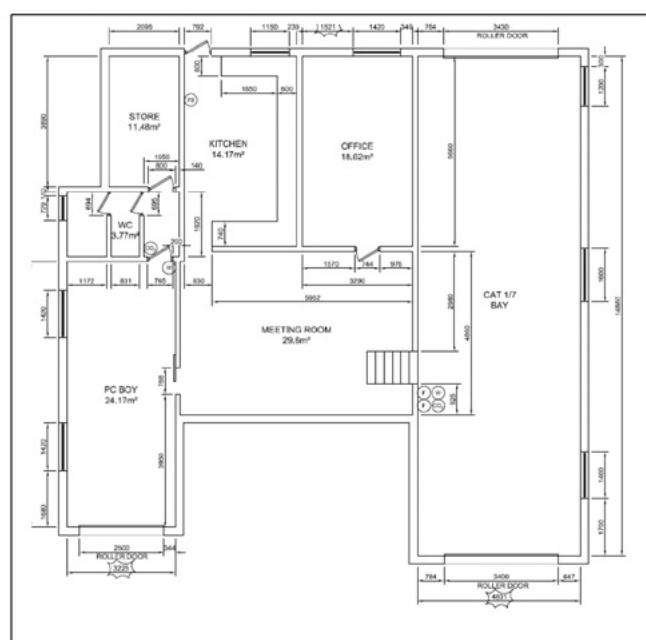
Approvals Required

Council's Owner consent

RFS's endorsement

BCA Compliance

Development Application (possible exemption)



Mt Victoria – Post Fire Weed, Erosion Control and Stormwater Treatment Works



Description of Project

Protecting the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (BMWHA) through strengthening our natural environment's resilience to bushfires: The 2019 – 2020 Gospers Mountain and Grose Valley bushfires heavily impacted on extensive areas of bushland across the Blue Mountains region. Its impact was most hard felt in the villages of Mount Wilson, Mount York, Mount Victoria and Blackheath.

This project seeks to address the negative impacts of the bushfire, particularly in the area of Mount Victoria. Large areas of bare earth, on steep slopes, with multiple urban stormwater inputs, make it highly vulnerable to erosion, soil depletion, creek line destabilisation, and a reduction in the health of aquatic systems and overall catchment health. The recovery response to address these impacts will focus on post bushfire soil conservation and erosion control and key priority weed control works through the installation of improved stormwater treatment systems in Fairy Dell catchment and targeted weed control. These works will contribute to the protection of the Fairy Dell Creek sub-catchment and health of the aquatic system and provide for long-term resilience against the adverse impacts in this system of reoccurring fire events.

A key target weed as part of the project which responds with mass germination is Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*). Under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015, Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) is a State Priority Weed with the Regional Priority Weed objective of asset protection. Strategic response for the Blue Mountains region requires that the plant be managed in accordance with a regional best practice guide to protect identified assets including the Great Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Project Benefits

- The project will see key elements of the Blue Mountains natural areas restored, in turn leading to improved visitor experience. These works will provide for flow-on benefits generated for the general tourism, nature-based recreation, eco-tourism, and hospitality sectors, as well as the protection of the BMWHA and other high conservation natural areas.
- The proposed projects will also provide economic activity in the Blue Mountains LGA with the project being delivered by Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury based environmental restoration trade and technical level contractors and earthmovers. In addition, the project will see regional suppliers and service providers in the Hawkesbury, Hunter and Western Sydney LGAs benefit from providing material supply and technical support to the project
- Given the labour-intensive components of this project, funded project activities will see the stimulus funds readily entering local economies on a weekly and fortnightly basis at a township scale across the Blue Mountains and adjoining LGAs as well as maintaining continuity of trade level employment across the City.

Funding Required: \$37,000

2020-2021 - \$37,000

Delivery Timeframe

September 2020 to March 2021

Demonstrated Support

The project aligns directly with the draft Blue Mountains Weed Management Strategy and Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes based – Natural Areas Operations Works Program as well as aligning with the Council's Bushfire Recovery Action Plan and Water Sensitive Blue Mountains Strategic Plan.

Approvals Required

Standard works pre-approvals are required, such as Part 5, dial before you dig and other heritage, cultural and AHIMs searches.



Similar structures during construction and at completion

Mt Victoria Volunteer Garden Creation – Rotunda Park



Description of Project

Working with the local community through the Mt Victoria Community Association to facilitate a partnership project between Council and the community, to install additional garden beds in Rotunda Park and focus on heritage and heirloom plantings.

Local Benefit(s)

- The project will have the longer term benefits of fostering community stewardship in the town of Mt Victoria
- It will bring the community together and support community well being in a bush fire affected area
- It will allow for some highly experienced community members in the field of horticulture to impart their knowledge to others.
- The works will be delivered with Council Open Space operational team and community volunteers working collaboratively together and a longer term Park Care volunteer agreement will be set up with the Mt Victoria Community Association.

Funding Required (can be listed in stages)

\$12,000 is requested to assist with the establishment of the garden beds and purchase of soils and plants in order to facilitate this community partnership.

Delivery Timeframe

The funded component of the project can be delivered in a 6-month period. Once completed this will be a longer term volunteer partnership between Council and the Mt Victoria Community Association.

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Blue Mountains Bushfire Recovery Plan objectives for supporting community well being and recovery. It is also supported by the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan Care Objective 3.1.g – *Foster and promote volunteering programs that support the City's community, cultural, recreational and environmental priorities.*

Approvals Required

A Part 5 approval will be required



Mount Wilson – Post-fire Hazardous Tree, Weed and Environmental Management Works



Description of Project

Protecting the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (BMWHA) through strengthening our natural environment's resilience to bushfires: The 2019 – 2020 Gospers Mountain and Grose Valley bushfires heavily impacted on extensive areas of bushland across the Blue Mountains region. Its impact was significant in the reserve systems of the edge of the villages of Mount Wilson, Mount Irvine, and Mount Tomah.

This project seeks to address the significant impacts of the bushfire particularly in the bushland reserves on the edges of Mount Wilson and the associated tall open forests on the Moist Basalt Cap. This has resulted in large areas of fire effected trees, bare earth, on steep slopes, with multiple drainage inputs, make it highly vulnerable to erosion, soil depletion, creek line destabilisation, and a reduction in the health of aquatic systems and overall catchment health.

The Blue Mountains Basalt Cap Forest in the Sydney Bioregion is an ecological community classified as Endangered under both the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and Commonwealth Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. The recovery response to address these impacts will focus on post bushfire soil conservation and erosion control and key priority weed control works after completion of the delivery of targeted hazardous tree management work. These works will contribute to the protection of the Wollangambe River sub-catchment and health of the aquatic system and provide for improved long-term resilience against the adverse impacts in this system of reoccurring fire events.

Project Benefits

- The project will see key elements of the Blue Mountains natural areas restored, in turn leading to improved visitor experience, to one of the most popular visitor locations.
- These works will provide for flow-on benefits generated for the general tourism, nature-based recreation, eco-tourism, and hospitality sectors, as well as the protection of the BMWHA and other high conservation natural areas.
- The proposed projects will also provide economic activity in the Blue Mountains LGA with the project been delivered by Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury based environmental restoration trade and technical level contractors and tree management contractors.
- Given the labour-intensive components of this project, funded project activities will see the stimulus funds readily entering local economies on a weekly and fortnightly basis at a township scale across the Blue Mountains and adjoining LGAs.

Funding Required: \$40,000

2020-2021 - \$40,000

Delivery Timeframe

September 2020 to March 2021- delivery team will be the Natural Area Management Team

Demonstrated Support

The project aligns directly with the draft *Blue Mountains Weed Management Strategy and Biodiversity Conservation Landscapes based – Natural Areas Operations Works Program* as well as aligning with the Council's *Bushfire Recovery Action Plan and Water Sensitive Blue Mountains Strategic Plan*.

Approvals Required

Standard annual works preapprovals are required, such as Part 5, dial before you dig and other heritage, cultural and AHIM searches.



Mt York Restoration Project - Improving Infrastructure that Supports Visitation



Description of Project

The 2019 Grose Valley bushfire heavily impacted extensive areas of bushland across the Blue Mountains region, particularly Mount York in the Upper Mountains. The Mount York precinct is an area with significant heritage assets and nature based recreation and eco-tourism opportunities. Hundreds of Council assets were burnt. This project will enable repair, redesign and improvement works to be implemented in fire damaged areas of this reserve including repair of walking tracks, renewal of the campground, soil conservation and erosion control works.

Project Benefits

- The project will provide employment for a number of local contractors/ businesses and their staff; stimulating economic activity in the Blue Mountains LGA with the project being delivered by Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury based environmental restoration and trade contractors.
- The project will see key elements of the Blue Mountains nature based visitor facilities renewed and improved, leading to improved visitor experience for visitors and commercial operators.
- These works will provide for flow on benefits generated for tourism, nature based recreation, eco-tourism and hospitality, as well as the protection of the GBMWhA and other adjacent high conservation natural areas.

Funding Required: \$60,000

\$60,000

Delivery Timeframe

The project can be delivered between September 2020 and May 2021.

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Blue Mountains Bushfire Recovery Action Plan and is consistent with the Council's adopted Mt York Plan of Management and with the objectives of the Blue Mountains Destination Management Plan.

Approvals Required

No non-standard pre-approvals are required for infrastructure renewal works, however a Part 5 Form 1 will require approval for the minor works campground redesign.

Upper Blue Mountains Lookouts - Minor Renewal Works

Description of Project

To help support local small business and recovery of tourism in the Blue Mountains, this project seeks to undertake minor renewal works on key lookouts in high visitation precincts at Leura and Katoomba. Works would include hazardous tree removal, re-surfacing of walking areas and lookout platforms, replacement of signage, drainage maintenance and restoration of associated out-dated and ageing natural area visitor furniture.

Project Benefits

- These works will provide flow on benefits for general tourism, nature based recreation, eco-tourism and hospitality sectors, as well as the protection of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and other high conservation natural areas.
- The project will also provide economic activity in the Blue Mountains LGA, with the project been delivered by Blue Mountains and regionally-based trade and technical level contractors and material suppliers.
- Funded project activities will see stimulus funds entering local economies on a weekly and fortnightly basis at a township scale, across the Blue Mountains and adjoining LGAs, as well as maintaining continuity of trade level employment across the City.
- The project would improve the visibility and amenity of Council natural area visitor facility assets, orientation and way finding experience for visitors and align more closely with the expectation of modern day visitors.

Funding Required: \$55,000

\$55,000 for minor renewal works at key lookouts

Delivery Timeframe

July 2020 – June 2021

Demonstrated Support

Aligns with Council's Southern Escarpment Masterplan priorities. Tourism is a significant contributor to the Blue Mountains economy and it is prominent in Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

Approvals Required

Nil



Footpath Renewal, Station Street Wentworth Falls (West Side, Canton Palace to Plantation Street)



Description of Project

This project seeks to renew a significant section of footpath in Wentworth Falls - a key Upper Blue Mountains tourist town. The current paving is more than 25 years old and the section identified has significant trip and safety hazards.

Wentworth Falls, like other Blue Mountains destinations, has suffered a significant decline in visitation as a result of the bushfires and more recently COVID-19. It is estimated that there has been a loss of over 2500 jobs and almost \$560M loss in output for the Blue Mountains region as a result of recent bushfires (REMPLAN Bushfire Affectionation Report, 2020).

This project directly targets a significant infrastructure improvement in a key town centre, building local trader confidence and supporting local economic recovery.

Project Benefits

1. Project supports local economic recovery in a key tourism town centre through renewal of main street footpath and tree plantings
2. Elimination of significant safety trip hazards.
3. Replacement / renewal of existing failed street planting with significant increase in root volume availability.
4. Restoration of an unsightly stretch of footpath in a small but significant town centre that experiences significant tourism visitation.

Delivery Timeframe

The project can be delivered over the next 10 months

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Council and by the Wentworth Falls chamber of commerce and business providers.

Approvals Required

Project can commence as soon as funding is available

Funding Required: \$150,000

\$150,000 is required to renew existing footpath with asphalt footpath, brick header courses on grid, using compacted sub grade of structural soil and to accommodate replacement of existing street trees with new trees.



Summerhayes Sports Precinct Upgrade



Description of Project

Upgrade to the sporting facilities at Summerhayes Park. The works will include lighting upgrades, hard court resealing, installation of silt drains and a storage shed for netball items.

Project Benefits

- The upgrade will bring a diverse range of recreational users from sporting clubs, school groups and special needs users together through participation, inclusion and supports their health and wellbeing.
- Local contractors are fully capable of undertaking a number of works as listed in Stages 1 to 3 and will be actively encourage to submit tenders.
- If funding is secured, contractors (during the construction phases) will support local businesses (cafes/bakeries/shops) in the Winmalee/Springwood area in purchase of items and therefore support the local economic recovery.

Funding Required: \$465,000

Total project cost if all items funded: \$465,000:

- Item 1 – Lighting Upgrades – Upgrade to modern LED lighting – \$300,000
- Item 2 – Hard Court Resealing – Upgrade to modern flexi paving solution that will accommodate a range of sporting uses for training and competition – \$75,000
- Item 3 – Installation of silt drains on the edge of the sportsgrounds to improve drainage – \$80,000
- Item 4 – Storage shed for netball items \$10,000

While it would be beneficial if all items were funded, the funding of individual items would also be beneficial to the community.

Delivery Timeframe

Projects can be confidently delivered in a 12 – 24 month timeframe.

Demonstrated Support

The works are supported by the Council's adopted Open Space and Recreation Strategic Plan and by the Blue Mountains Community Strategic Plan - Care Objective 3.2b – *Support increased community participation in physically active, fit and social lifestyles, including the provision of supporting infrastructure.*

Approvals Required

As this submission is upgrades to existing infrastructure, it is anticipated that a Part 5 approval would be sufficient.



Provision of Additional Toilets at Woodford Rural Fire Service Building

At 2 Park Rd, Woodford NSW 2778



Description of Project

The project would provide much needed additional toilets for the Woodford Rural Fire Service (RFS) located at 2 Park Rd, Woodford - to support volunteer fire fighters during bushfires and other preparedness activities.

The Woodford RFS building currently has two (2) non-Disability Discrimination Act compliant toilets. The Woodford RFS has requested additional toilet facilities to support large number of volunteers and fire fighters, as the current facilities were not able to cope with usage demands during the December 2019 bushfires.

Project Benefits

- Supports fire fighting building support facility in high fire prone area.
- Functional RFS building to protect local community (people and assets) during the bushfire seasons.
- If successful, the work would be tendered locally to provide work for local trades and builders.

Funding Required: \$110,000

\$110,000 for construction of addition compliant toilet facility

Delivery Timeframe

Within 12 months from the date funding is made available

Demonstrated Support

The project is supported by the Woodford Rural Fire Service and by the Council

Approvals Required

Council's Owner consent

RFS's endorsement

BCA Compliance

Development Application (possible exemption)

