

June 25, 2009

## Construction starts on new home for Cassie and Ockie

Rockhampton's most-loved brothers, Cassie and Ockie the Chimpanzees, will be excited to see construction on Rockhampton Zoo's large new chimpanzee enclosure start on Friday, June 29, 2009.

Chair of Council's Sports and Recreation Committee, Cr Cherie Rutherford said Council had conducted extensive community consultation to determine the future direction of the Rockhampton Zoo and the new chimpanzee enclosure was one thing that was strongly desired by our community.

She said it was anticipated, weather permitting, that construction works would continue until mid to late October, then Cassie and Ockie would move into their much larger living space.

"The current living area for our two resident male chimps, which doesn't meet the new standards required, is approximately 200sq.m and this new enclosure, at an approximate cost of \$1.2M, will increase their living area in size to approximately 1000 sq.m," Cr Rutherford said.

"Their new environment will more closely resemble the natural environment where they would live in the wild and we're thrilled to improve their living space for them.

"Council officers have been working closely with Bio Security Queensland, engineers, chimpanzee experts and construction experts to develop a state of the art facility, in line with the community's expectations.

"There will be some tree trimming operations being undertaken over the next few days to ensure that the site is safe for construction workers, the animals and the general public.

"Site establishment works will also be undertaken in anticipation for full construction," she said.

During construction, the area will be appropriately signed and safe for the public and the animals at the Zoo.

Rockhampton Zoo is a member of the Australasian Regional Association of Zoos and Aquariums which is committed to conservation and education.

**ENDS**