



ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

To be held on

Wednesday, 23 June 2021
4pm

at

Armidale Council Chambers

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TRIM:

Community Leasing Policy

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [DATE TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework through which Council can determine the eligibility of community groups to occupy Council owned and managed land and buildings (such as community centres, scout and guide halls) in an equitable and transparent manner and in accordance with relevant legislative requirements.

It is noted that all commercial lease or licences owned and managed by Council outside of the scope of this Policy will be assessed and determined based on the probity principles of value for money, fairness, transparency, equity and accountability.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- Council owned and managed land and buildings;
- Council owned sporting and recreational facilities; and
- Crown land under management.

Where they refer to the above, the following types of instruments are within scope of this policy:

- Leases;
- Licences;
- Occupation agreements;
- Service level agreements; and
- Memorandums of understanding.

This policy does not apply to:

- Council community facilities that are managed by Council staff for short term hiring purposes;
- Sport and recreational facilities that are subject to Council's seasonal ground allocation process (not leased or licenced) and associated adopted fees and charges;
- Council owned commercial or retail properties (including Armidale Regional Airport, Car Parking Licences and Outdoor Dining Approvals); and
- Road reserve.

3. POLICY INTENT

Council's community land and facilities must be managed in accordance with the provisions of the *Crown Lands Management Act 2016*, the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and associated Regulations.

This policy aims to ensure that a wide range of community groups and individuals are given equal opportunity to occupy community land and buildings while alleviating some of the financial burden on Council.

The policy also aims to ensure that the best operator (and where possible, the best whole of life cost return) is obtained and that the required level of service is provided to the community.

The primary issues addressed under this policy:

- Ensuring that occupants have the capacity to meet lease or licence obligations;
- Set clear criteria for subsidised rents for community facilities by community groups;
- Provides a standardised approach to agreement terms;

- Encourages multiple uses of land and buildings, rationalising exclusive occupancies when current occupants are not appropriately using or utilising premises; and,
- Ensuring a competitive and transparent process is undertaken at all stages of the process.

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

The Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 reflects the community's input and aspirations for how the Armidale Region can best continue to grow and prosper. It also presents strategies on how Council can effectively balance its economic, environmental, and social aspirations to improve overall community well-being, foster creativity and innovation, build communities, and create opportunities.

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan align with the Community Strategic Plan to ensure consistency in strategic planning and delivery of services and infrastructure.

The main supporting strategies related to procurement in the Delivery Program are:

Our People & Community

Wellbeing: Community programs, services and facilities meet the needs of the community and provide a safe place to live

Diversity: Services are provided to ensure inclusiveness and support the vulnerable members of our community

Leadership for the Region

Fiscal Responsibility: Council exceeds community expectations when managing its budget and operations

Organisational Health: Council demonstrates sound organisational health and has a culture which promotes action, accountability and transparency

Environment & Infrastructure

Infrastructure: The community is provided with the essential and resilient infrastructure it requires for daily life, and has access to a prioritised schedule of infrastructure works

5. POLICY

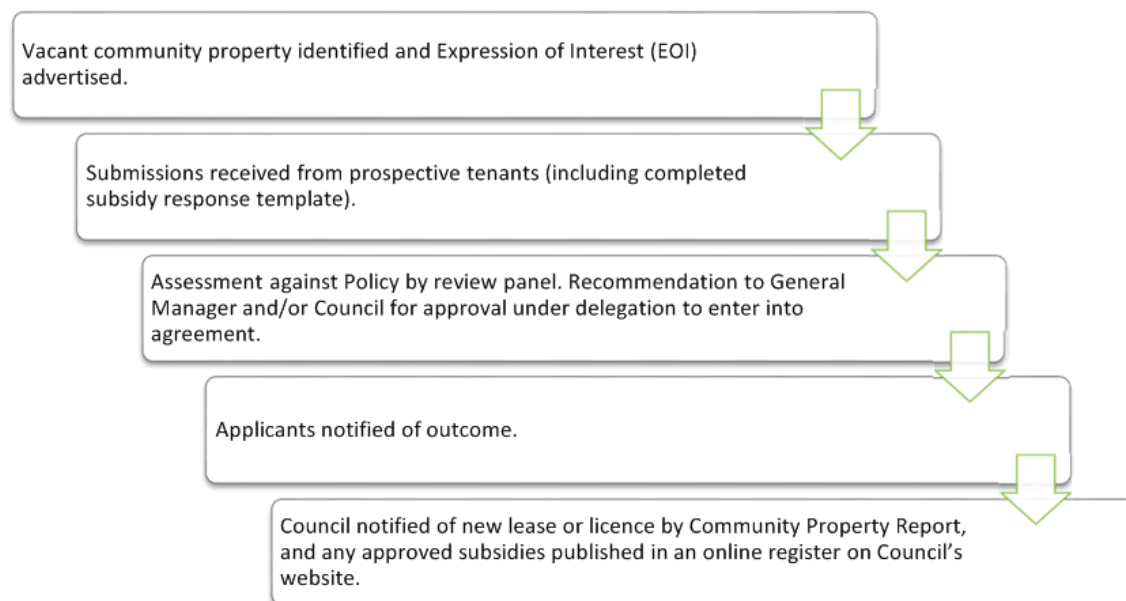
The Community Lease Policy enables Council to clearly communicate its intentions in relation to the following:

5.1 APPROVAL

Any approvals to grant occupation agreements of Council owned or managed land and buildings up to and exceeding 21 years are subject to a resolution of Council (and approval of the Crown if appropriate).

In accordance with section 377 of the Act, Council may delegate authority to the General Manager to negotiate and execute leases and licences in accordance with this policy.

Figure 1 – Lease/Licence Approval Process



5.2 CAPACITY

Ensures that all tenants, prior to entering any agreement, have the authority to enter into a lease or licence by confirming their status as an incorporated entity, and have the capacity to meet financial obligations under each occupation agreement, or lease/licence.

5.3 LEASES AND LICENCES (GENERAL)

5.3.1 Assessing Lease Term

The term of all community leases and licences will be assessed on an individual case basis having regard to the facts provided by the prospective tenant and information obtained by Council through public registers and on request to the prospective tenant. The criteria for assessment of each tenancy will include assessment of facts and evidence provided by the potential tenant and also obtained by Council through public register searches or by request of information to the prospective tenant. Information to consider in the assessment of a prospective tenant will include:

- the nature of the proposed use of the facility;
- the need for security of tenure (eg: to secure grant funding);
- Council's longer term plans, including any Plan of Management or Council Strategy for the facility and the benefit to the community that would occur as a result of the occupation of a facility by a particular group;
- value of monetary return to Council;
- feasibility of the prospective tenants' financial position in relation to the premises to ensure payment of rent and maintenance of the premises is feasible for the duration of the lease or licence; and
- consideration to past tenancy performance (where applicable).

5.3.2 Short Term Leases and Licences (up to 5 years)

Leases and licences of up to five (5) years, inclusive of any options for extension, may be preferable in circumstances where Council is reviewing the longer term use of a facility, where surrounding land uses are likely to change in the short-medium term or where the life expectancy of a facility is ending. Shorter term leases or licences may allow better asset management and community services planning.

Community and Crown Land

Council must give public notice of the proposed lease or licence in accordance with the requirements of section 47A of the Act and must consider any objections received. If requested by the Minister, Council must refer the matter to the Minister for approval.

5.3.3 Long Term Leases and Licences (greater than 5 years)

Long term leases or licences should be considered where a community group is offering significant capital investment in a facility, and where the community service or benefit provided by the group cannot be provided by Council.

Caution should be exercised in the granting of long term leases or licences to ensure that Council and the wider community are not excluded from gaining access to a range of community buildings/facilities.

Subject to the Act, a lease or licence term of greater than five years inclusive of any options for extension should only be offered where tenants can prove to Council's satisfaction, that they intend to spend at least \$100,000 in new capital works approved by Council as landlord, or where a five year term is insufficient to write off the capital cost or secure finance for the proposed works.

Community and Crown Land

Council must give public notice of the proposed lease or licence in accordance with the requirements of section 47 of the Act. If an objection is received, Council must prepare a submission to the Minister for their approval prior to granting the lease/licence. The details of how the submission to the Minister is to be made is specified within section 47 of the Act.

A lease of community or crown land cannot be made for more than 21 years (including any period for which the lease or licence could be renewed by the exercise of an option) by Council. The Minister can approve a term up to 30 years in accordance with sections 46(3) and 47(6) of the Act.

5.3.4 Multiple Use

Where possible, Council encourages multiple use of community facilities. Therefore, compatible users should be accommodated together, in order for Council to effectively manage asset costs and expenses.

Council needs to determine, before granting a lease or licence, whether other community groups can share the facility, or if the existing tenant can share another facility. Council should ensure that suitable community groups have equal opportunities to occupy community facilities under lease or licence. Low-use facilities are to be reviewed as historically, poorly maintained buildings have been returned to Council when leases or licences are terminated eg: scout halls.

Council is committed to supporting community organisations in delivering services to our local community through the provision of community facilities, as such, subleasing of community facilities may be allowed, subject to Council approval in writing, to be given at its sole discretion.

Future community facilities should be of designs suitable for use by more than one user group and should be offered to community groups through an advertised public tender or expression of interest (EOI) process.

5.4 LEASES OR LICENCES ON CROWN LAND

Where Council is the Crown Land Manager for facilities located on Crown land, lease or licences will be administered in accordance with the *Crown Lands Management Act 2016*, the *Crown Lands Management Regulations 2018*, the Act, and with reference to the *Native Title Act 1993*.

Leases or licences of Crown reserves granted in accordance with the Act must be consistent with the dedicated purpose of the reserve, and be permitted under the approved Plan of Management.

All proposed leases or licences must be advertised in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Section 3.22 of the *Crown Lands Management Act 2016* states that councils are to apply the same requirements to the management of leases and licences on Crown land as if it were public land managed under the Act.

When negotiating leases or licences for commercial activities on Crown land, Council will invite competitive tenders or proposals to attract the best operator and financial return for the property. On reserves designated for public recreation purposes, commercial uses should not result in exclusivity for individuals or groups or clubs.

Prior to any lease or licence being entered into, Council must be satisfied that the core use in relation to the lease or licence is consistent with the current Plan of Management associated with a park, sportsground or other designated area in accordance with the community provisions of the Act.

5.5 SUBSIDISED RENTALS

Subsidised rents are a form of financial support to community groups and should be considered in circumstances where a community group can demonstrate a special benefit or service provision to the greater community. Notwithstanding existing lease or licence agreements, all future subsidised rentals will be calculated and the revised annual rental (inclusive of the subsidy) will be written into lease or licence agreements and will be subject to periodic review by Council.

Applications for subsidised rentals by community organisations must answer each criterion, providing as much information as possible to allow Council to accurately assess the application. Responses should be submitted using the subsidy response template provided by Council.

To be eligible for consideration under this policy community groups must:

- be incorporated;
- have not-for-profit status; and
- the proposed utilisation of land and buildings under lease or licence must provide community benefits.

Specific criteria for determining rental subsidies are set out in Table 1 (Subsidy Criteria) below.

5.5.1 Rental Subsidy Assessment Process

Applications for rental subsidies will be assessed by an internal panel in accordance with this policy to determine the recommended subsidy amount.

5.5.2 Rental Subsidy Assessment Panel

In order to ensure consistent and transparency in the application of rental subsidies, Council will form a Rental Subsidy Assessment Panel comprising the Senior Property Specialist, a Manager and at least one other person involved with management of property.

All panel members will be required to declare any conflict of interest prior to the assessment process. Where a panel member declares a conflict of interest, the panel member will step down from that assessment panel and be replaced by another Council officer with no conflict of interest.

5.5.3 Rental Subsidy Assessment

The panel will meet and review the information supplied for the rental subsidy assessment. If required, subsequent meetings will be held to assess any further information supplied after the first assessment meeting if the initial information supplied is insufficient to make an assessment and recommendation based on the criteria in section 5.11 of this policy.

Assessment of the rental subsidy request will be made using the response provided by the prospective tenant and the criteria guidelines in section 5.11 of this policy.

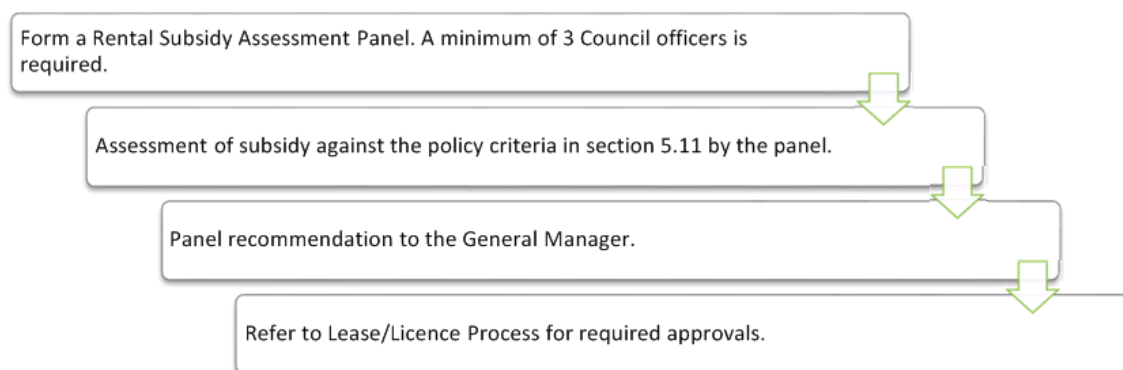
Further information, including audited financial statements, may be requested by the panel if insufficient information is supplied by the prospective tenant in the rental subsidy application form.

Upon finalisation of the subsidy assessment by the panel, a recommendation will be made to the General Manager and/or Council, seeking approval to enter into the lease or licence.

The tenant will be notified of the outcome, and the lease or licence preparation will commence.

The approval will be reported to Council in a community property report and approved subsidies will be published in an online register on Council's website.

Figure 2 – Rental Subsidy Assessment Process



5.6 SPORTING AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

All commercial lease or licences (and other types of commercial agreements) of sporting and recreational facilities will be subject to an open and competitive public process such as tender or expression of interest at the expiration of each lease or licence period. This is as per legislative requirements of the Act.

5.7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES (GROUND LEASES OR LICENCES)

Where a community group owns a building or facility located upon Council owned or Crown land, the community group that occupies the building shall be entitled to automatic renewal of the lease or licence for a period not exceeding 5 years, on terms and conditions to the satisfaction of the General Manager and/or Council (subject to delegations under Section 377 of the Act).

Should a community group not require renewal of a lease or licence, the community facility will be subject to an open and competitive public process for future leases or licences.

5.8 COMMUNITY FACILITIES (COUNCIL/CROWN OWNED BUILDINGS AND LAND)

All leases or licences of Council/Crown owned community facilities will be subject to an open and competitive process such as tender or EOI where, in Council's view, a facility has been under-utilised or becomes vacant.

5.9 NEGOTIATION PROTOCOLS

When negotiating leases and licences, Council officers will adhere to the following protocols to ensure probity, integrity and confidentiality in the process:

- ensure confidentiality is adhered to for the information supplied from the prospective tenant;
- declare any conflict of interest using Council's processes to declare any interest prior to commencement of negotiations, or alternatively removal of the staff member from the negotiation process to ensure probity; and
- adhere to this policy and other related policies and procedures.

5.10 GENERAL CONDITIONS OF AGREEMENT

5.10.1 Rent and Fees

Calculation of rental fees will be based on independent valuation advice taking into consideration all operational costs of the facility.

The minimum annual rent for a lease or licence to a community group (net of the application of any subsidy) shall not be less than the 'Council Minimum Rent' as determined in Council's annual fees and charges, and may be subject to annual review.

Unless exempt by legislation or Council resolution, applicants/tenants shall be responsible for the payment of the relevant Administration Fee listed under the Council's adopted fees and charges as well as the payment of Council's legal costs associated with the preparation of lease or licence documentation capped at \$2,000+GST.

Section 47 and 47A of Act requires lease or licences on community land to be advertised. Advertising costs are included in the administration fee.

Tenants may be expected to pay a key bond, 3 months rental bond and will be charged for any lost keys as per Council's adopted fees and charges.

5.10.2 Insurance

Tenants must indemnify Council from any liability arising from their use of the premises. All tenants shall hold public liability insurance to the value of \$20 million and note Council as an interested party. Tenants may also be required to hold appropriate contents, building and plate glass insurance.

5.10.3 Outgoings

Tenants are liable for outgoings and day to day operational costs including (but not limited to) cleaning, electricity, telephone, data, washroom, water usage, commercial waste, pest control, security, garden maintenance, and be responsible for routine maintenance resulting from ordinary use of the premises and generally in accordance with their lease or licence.

5.10.4 Maintenance

Where a "ground lease or licence" has been entered into, the tenant is responsible for all upkeep and maintenance costs associated with the building in addition to normal operational costs. Major structural repairs are generally excluded from this provision unless specified within the lease or licence. Council at its discretion may direct a tenant to perform any maintenance works it sees fit especially in the interests of safety. All buildings are expected to be kept in good order and must not be left in a state of disrepair. Failure to maintain upkeep of buildings could result in termination of the lease or licence.

5.10.5 Modifications or Alterations

Any alterations made to Council's asset by a tenant must be approved by Council in writing, and are the sole responsibility of the tenant to maintain (eg. installation of air conditioning, kitchens/appliances, lifts, internal walls, etc).

At the end of the tenancy, Council may direct the tenant to remove any alterations and 'make good' the property. Council may conduct these works, especially where electrical or water services are affected, and charge the costs back to the tenant.

Any fees, charges or obligations incurred in complying with approved development conditions (including the creation of land title or other property restrictions) will be the responsibility of the applicant, irrespective of whether those conditions are levied against Council's land.

5.10.6 Access and Inspections

Council will conduct ingoing and outgoing condition reports at the commencement and finalisation of each tenancy, as well as conduct annual property inspections as required. Tenants will be required to provide reasonable access for Council officers to undertake inspections.

5.11 MANAGING UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS

Where an unsolicited proposal for the lease or licence of community land or property is received, Council must ensure the guidelines for leasing or licencing property is adhered to under this policy by way of a public EOI and guidelines in this policy.

Unsolicited proposals may be placed in an interest register where, if a future vacancy is available through an EOI process, applicants may be contacted to apply for the tenancy by way of the EOI process.

5.12 CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING SUBSIDIES TO COMMUNITY GROUPS

The criteria set out in Table 1 will be used as the assessment criteria for all rental subsidy assessments.

Table 1 – Subsidy Criteria

Criteria	Each Answer Worth 4 Points	Each Answer Worth 3 Points	Each Answer Worth 2 Points	Each Answer Worth 1 Point	Each Answer Worth 0 Points
Social and community benefit	Service is unique and meets high level of need or service meets identified social or community needs, with most service users from low socio-economic background	Service meets identified social or community needs, with most service users from a range of socio-economic backgrounds	Service meets broad social or community need	Service is valued by community but is not focused on meeting an identified social or community need	Does not meet criterion
Extent of service provided by organisation	Broad community is a beneficiary of service provided	Service is significantly used by a number of specific sections of the local community	While the organisation provides a direct service to only a small number in the local community, it forms part of a larger service provision	Service only used by a small number of the local community	Does not meet criterion
Extent of accessibility of facility to community	Facilities are accessible to many in Armidale community	Facilities are generally accessible to Armidale community	Facilities have limited access to local community	Facilities have access to organisation only	Does not meet criterion
Number/type of service provided	A unique kind of service	One of a number of service providers of a community service	One of a number of providers of less critical community needs	Provider meets social or recreational needs only	Does not meet criterion
Capacity to pay rent	Limited or no ability to raise revenue and/or pay rent	Some ability to raise revenue and charge fees which may be varied to reflect ability of clients to pay	Has ability to charge fees and raise revenue	Has capacity to pay market rent	Does not meet criterion
Access to funding sources	No access to other funding sources	Limited access to other sources of funding (no more than 5%)	Access to other sources of funding - state, federal and local which provides between 5-30% of total funding	Access to other sources of funding - state, federal and local which provides more than 30% of total funding	Does not meet criterion

Criteria	Each Answer Worth 4 Points	Each Answer Worth 3 Points	Each Answer Worth 2 Points	Each Answer Worth 1 Point	Each Answer Worth 0 Points
Do they provide direct competition to commercial ventures	No, main activity is not commercial	While main business is not commercial, some aspects of the business are in direct competition	In direct competition with commercial providers but provide additional or differentiated service to users	In direct competition with commercial providers	Does not meet criterion
Does their service impact on Council's need to provide a similar service	Without this service provision, Council would be required to provide additional service	Lack of service would have some impact on Council provision	Service is not core responsibility of Council but could be provided	Service is responsibility of Council	Does not meet criterion
Organisation status and structure	The organisation is locally based, stand alone and not for profit. It has a voluntary management committee made up of local area representatives	The organisation is locally based, has a regional focus, is stand alone and not for profit. It has a voluntary management committee partly made up of local area representatives	The organisation is locally based service, outlet or project that is part of a larger not for profit organisation. It has a voluntary advisory committee comprised partly of local area representatives	The organisation is locally based service, outlet or project that is part of a larger not for profit organisation. There is limited or no local area representation on the advisory committee or similar	Does not meet criterion
Capacity to undertake a range of administrative and management responsibilities	Dependent on assistance from volunteers for all administrative and management functions	Paid staff undertake some of the administrative and management functions and volunteers assist with other tasks	Staff undertake the majority of administrative and management functions with assistance provided by umbrella organisation	Umbrella organisation carries out the majority of administrative and management functions.	Does not meet criterion
Contribution to structural maintenance of building	Assumes full responsibility for long term maintenance (structural integrity) of building	Makes some contribution to long term maintenance (structural integrity) of building	Makes minimal contribution to long term maintenance (structural integrity) of building	Council responsible for long term maintenance (structural integrity) of building	Does not meet criterion
Reactive, routine and ongoing maintenance	Takes responsibility for internal & external reactive, routine and ongoing maintenance as per agreement	Takes responsibility for almost all of internal & external reactive, routine and ongoing maintenance as per agreement	Takes responsibility for some of internal & external reactive, routine and ongoing maintenance as per agreement	Does not take responsibility for internal & external reactive, routine and ongoing maintenance as per agreement	Does not meet criterion

5.13 RENTAL SUBSIDY CALCULATION

Category	A	B	C	D
Score	48 – 37	36 – 25	24 – 13	12 – 0
Level of Subsidy	100%	75%	50%	No Subsidy

6. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

There are a number of legislative requirements that will apply and need to be followed under this policy:

- NSW Local Government Act 1993
- NSW Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
- NSW Government Information Public Access Act 2009
- NSW Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998
- NSW State Records Act 1998
- Armidale Regional Council Code of Conduct
- Crown Lands Management Act 2016
- Crown Lands Management Regulations 2018
- Native Title Act 1993

7. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

8. REPORTING

Record Keeping Procedures

Council officers shall ensure that information of a commercially sensitive or confidential nature is obtained and recorded in an appropriate manner in accordance with the relevant Council privacy and commercial in confidence procedures.

Lease Register

Council will maintain a lease register incorporating the required information from this policy.

9. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The Senior Property Specialist is the responsible officer for this policy and will be the principle point of contact for interpretation or queries on this policy.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Responsibility
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To endorse by resolution this policy. • To promote this policy when dealing with community organisations.

Position	Responsibility
General Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to Section 377 of the Act, approve and execute leases and licences not exceeding a period of 21 years, or alternatively, refer matters to Council for approval.
Chief Officer responsible for Property Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review recommendations for new agreements. Provide point of contact for Councillor enquiries.
Senior Property Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the policy when required. Provide a point of contact about the meaning and application of the policy. Ensure compliance with the policy. Develop and adhere to related procedures. Report to Council via a Community Property Report. Prepare reports on leases/licences to Council.

11. RELATED PROCEDURES

Other related policies include:

- Fees & Charges Policy
- Authorised procedures, templates and guidelines that are current or in development relevant to this policy

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	Corporate and Strategy	
Responsible Officer	Senior Property Specialist	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> December 2020	<i>Council</i> 23 June 2021
Date/s of previous adoptions	N/A	
Date of next review	December 2022	
TRIM Reference	AINT/2021/19300	

APPENDIX A – DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Community groups	Community, sporting and other organisations which are <u>incorporated</u> as not for profit organisations which prohibit private gain
Community land	Means Community land under the Act and <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i>
Community facility	Council asset or facility on community land administered under the Act and land under <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i>
Council Manager	Means any local council that is a Crown land manager of dedicated or reserved Crown land
Crown land	Land that was Crown land as defined in the <i>Crown Lands Act 1989</i> immediately before the Acts repeal. Land that becomes Crown land because of the operation of a provision of the <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i> . Land vested, on and from the repeal of the <i>Crown Lands Act 1989</i> , in the Crown.
Crown Land Manager	In relation to Crown Land, means a person appointed as a Crown land manager under Division 3.2 of the <i>Crown Lands Management Act 2016</i>
Ground Lease	Means a lease over land where a tenant has constructed, at its own cost, a building on Council owned or managed land and has fully maintained that building (including structural and capital maintenance) throughout the term of the lease
Lease	Includes leases for exclusive use
Licence	Includes licence for non-exclusive use
Sporting and Recreational facility	Council asset or facility used primarily for sporting and recreational purposes (which may or may not be capable of supporting a commercial return)

TRIM: AINT/2021/17874



Asset Management Policy

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: 23/06/2021

1. PURPOSE

Armidale Regional Council manages a significant portfolio of assets and is committed to establishing a framework for implementation of asset management processes throughout the organisation.

The purpose of the Asset Management Policy is to set out principles and define how Council will develop and implement the Asset Management Strategy, the Asset Management Plans and outcomes associated with those documents. In line with the Community Strategic Plan, this policy will establish clear direction and guidance for asset management in order to attend to Council's strategic goals and the community needs.

Armidale Regional Council is committed to implementing a systematic asset management methodology to ensure that all Council assets are planned, created, operated, maintained, replaced and disposed of in accordance with Council's priorities for cost effective service delivery.

An Asset Management Steering Committee will be established to start implementing this policy.

2. APPLICATION

The Asset Management Policy applies to all fixed assets owned, controlled and managed by Armidale Regional Council. Council has a current overarching community strategy document called "Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027" that guides and influences the resourcing strategy. The Asset Management Planning is a vital component of the Resourcing Strategy, linking the delivery of services to the community goals.

This policy must be integrated with all Council business processes and procedures, ensuring efficient and effective delivery, accountabilities and responsibilities. They should be applied by Councillors, Council staff, consultants, contractors and whoever else conducting activities associated with the creation, acquisition, maintenance, operation, rehabilitation and disposal of assets.

3. POLICY INTENT

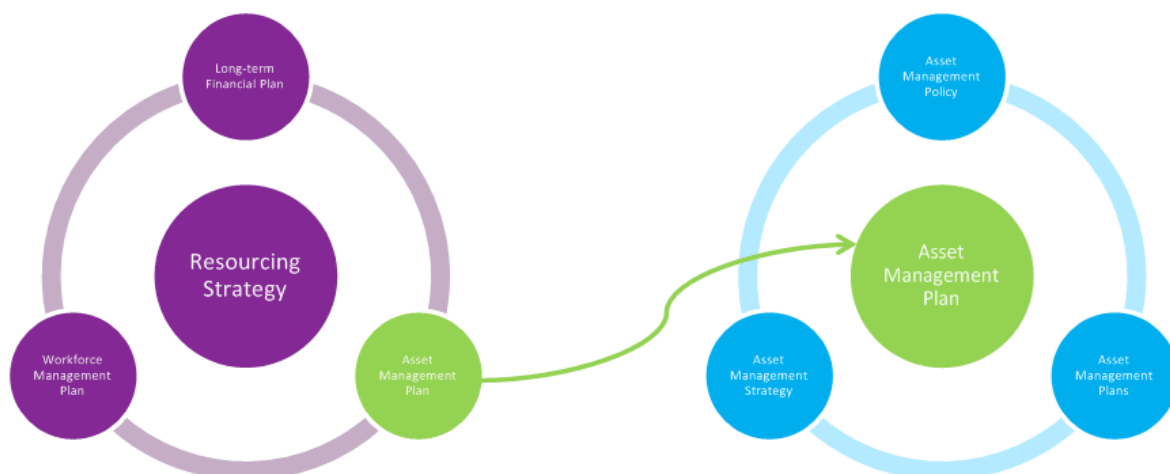
NSW local councils are required to undertake their planning and reporting activities in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009. To meet the Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation, councils must have a Resourcing Strategy, which is the long term strategy for council and includes the following:

- Long-term Financial Plan;
- Workforce Management Plan; and

- Asset Management Plan

Council is currently in the process of reviewing its Asset Management Plan, and the key documents that will drive the framework are:

- Asset Management Policy;
- Asset Management Strategy; and
- Asset Management Plans



The main objectives of this policy are to set out principles that will enable the following:

- Provide long term sustainable assets as required by the community, ensuring that asset management decisions are made to maximise the desired social, cultural, environmental and economic outcomes for the community, providing service to current and future generations
- Provide infrastructure and services that are aligned with the community needs, supporting quality of life for the residents and visitors in the short and long term
- Ensure all assets maximise value for money through the implementation of a life-cycle approach, allowing Council to do better planning and evaluate alternate solutions from acquisition, operation, maintenance and renewal, through to disposal
- Provide the necessary resources and operational capabilities to manage assets adequately
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements by having clear policies, processes and data, and providing adequate staff to manage assets
- Develop a forward works program for all asset categories, addressing the need for funds, required renewals and funding to be sourced
- Maintain financial sustainability through effective short and long-term financial management
- Develop an Asset Management Improvement Plan for the next four years
- Develop and regularly review the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans, detailing the approach taken in managing assets and facilitating the continuous improvement of asset management practices

- Prepare an integrated Asset Management Strategy and Plans, delivering on community strategy plan strategies and ensuring coverage of a minimum ten years
- Implement transparency and trust in managing assets by engaging and consulting with the community to establish satisfactory and agreed level of services
- Increase and improve communication with the community, consulting with them on all new initiatives or projects, providing them with a clear schedule of infrastructure works per financial year and increasing their involvement in initiatives which contribute to sustainable lifecycle
- Ensure that the Asset Management Strategy includes specific actions required to improve the Council's asset management capability and projected resource requirements and timeframes
- Address current asset register data issues, providing reliable information for better decision making
- Allocate asset management responsibilities to Councillors and relevant staff

The long-term and sustainable planning, delivery and management of Council's assets are critical to meeting the community's long-term objectives and Council's financial sustainability.

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

The Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 reflects the local community's input and aspirations for how the Armidale Region can best continue to grow and prosper. It also presents strategies on how Council can effectively balance its economic, environmental, and social aspirations to improve overall community well-being, foster creativity and innovation, build communities, and create opportunities.

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan align with the Community Strategic Plan to ensure consistency in strategic planning and delivery of services and infrastructure.

The four strategic directions specified in the Community Strategic Plan, which will contribute to achieving the community vision are:

- Environment and Infrastructure
- Growth, Prosperity and Economic Development
- Leadership for the Region
- Our People and Community

Of those four strategic directions, the main supporting strategies related to asset management in the document are:

- Regularly review Asset Management Plans to ensure prioritisation of resources is allocated in the most effective and efficient manner
- Improve community engagement mechanisms to establish acceptable levels of service for all of Council's asset classes
- Regularly review open space-related asset management plans to ensure parks, sports grounds, water recreation facilities and other open space meets community needs and is provided to an acceptable level of service
- Council's Asset Management Plans ensure that roads and bridges are provided and maintained to an acceptable standard and are suitable for use
- Integrate Council's strategic planning documents in a way that delivers community outcomes while effectively managing budgets, asset management and workforce planning
- Work collaboratively to develop Asset Management Plans for community facilities and public spaces such as buildings, sports grounds, swimming pools, playgrounds and open space which reflect community needs

- Give consideration to the issue of accessibility to Council's services and infrastructure as part of Asset Management Planning

5. POLICY

This policy applies to all infrastructure related service provisions such as water, sewer, roads, bridges, footpaths, stormwater drainage, buildings, fleet, parks and open spaces, airport, libraries and museums, sport and recreation centres owned or leased by Council and environmental protection and crown lands managed by Council.

The Asset Management Policy and accompanying Asset Management Strategy will establish the principles and direction for managing Council's fixed assets. The purpose of the Asset Management Strategy is to ensure that the management of Council's asset are being planned, delivered and operated in a way that aligns to the objectives in the Community Strategic Plan and ensures best possible value for the community from its assets.

To guide the sustainable management of Council's fixed assets and the delivery of the policy objectives, this policy has been based on the principles outlined below. No principle should be applied to the detriment of another; principles must be collectively considered and applied to the extent that are reasonable and practicable in the circumstances.

The Asset Management Framework will be developed and implemented based on an Asset Management Improvement Plan that is currently being developed, pending staff and funding allocation.

5.1 Life-cycle approach

- Council will develop a life cycle approach in managing assets, which will allow Council to perform better financial planning
- Decisions to accept, acquire or construct new assets will consider the full life cycle costs (operation, maintenance and renewal funding) with this information to be included in Council reports and to be subsequently allocated in Council's Long Term Financial plan and Asset Management Plans
- All asset renewal, upgrade or new projects are to include full lifecycle costs including maintenance as part of the project planning phase
- By using full life cycle methods, Council will identify and prioritise the lowest cost life cycle options in decision-making

5.2 Back to basics/ Focus on maintenance and renewal of existing assets

- Council will ensure that the asset management of existing assets will not be compromised by the creation of new assets
- Maintenance and renewal expenditure will be planned and prioritised in order to keep assets in an acceptable condition and minimise increase in renewal backlog
- By applying an optimised level of maintenance and renewal, Council will reduce future life cycle costs

- Council will only acquire new assets where there is demonstrable need in the community for the service and the lifecycle costs of the asset can be funded by Council
- An inspection regime will be used as part of the asset management to ensure service levels are maintained and to identify asset renewal priorities.

5.3 Financial capacity and value for money for the community

- Council will apply this policy to inform, plan and guide decisions about assets in order to deliver the optimum balance of services and risks within its financial capacity
- Effective planning around budget and operations will be undertaken to provide value for money solutions for community
- Council will identify funding to support and maintain Council infrastructure
- Asset Management Plans and the Long Term Financial Plan will be aligned to identify any funding gaps that will need to be addressed by balancing risk, lifecycle cost and service levels

5.4 Planning, process, practices and continuous improvement

- Decisions on asset renewal, disposal, upgrade or new asset provision will be carried out in accordance with asset management information that includes demonstrated need, life cycle costing, alternative modes of delivery, sustainability, equitable distribution of resources and social equity, financial performance, utilisation, function and the condition of the assets
- Council will better understand its assets, their criticality and consequences associated with poor planning and management of assets
- Council will plan, create, operate, maintain, renew and dispose of assets in accordance with community and Council's priorities for service delivery
- Asset management process, documents and practices will be review at appropriate intervals
- Key issues with asset management practices and process will be identified and Council will continuously work towards improvement
- An Asset Management Strategy will be developed, reviewed and adopted every four years by Council
- An Asset Management Framework aligned with the requirements of ISO 55001 will be prepared, implemented, monitored and continually improved
- Asset Management Plans should be considered as the baseline for future capital planning, and it will be guided by relevant Council plans and strategies, will include demand forecasts and community consultation

5.5 Resources

- Council will allocate sufficient resources for the development of asset strategies, asset management plans and service level documents and the identified asset maintenance and renewal activities from those strategies and plans
- Council is working towards ensuring that all employees are appropriately trained in asset management principles, practices and processes in order to effectively deliver asset management objectives and create and sustain an asset management awareness throughout the organisation

5.6 Legislative requirements

- The application of asset management will conform to legislative requirements and seek to achieve best practice in the industry
- Relevant legislative requirements and political, social and economic environments are to be taken into account in asset management decision making

5.7 Communication and engagement with the community

- Consultation and engagement with the community will be undertaken on key issues affecting the delivery of services and infrastructure assets
- When determining service and intervention levels through community and key stakeholder consultations, financial efficiency, utilisation, function and the condition of the assets will be the key performance measures considered

6. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

As part of the management of assets, there are a number of legislative requirements that will apply and need to be followed as part of this policy:

- Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
- Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Civil Liability Act 2002
- Public Works Act 1912
- Environmental Protection Act 1994
- Work, Health and Safety Act and Regulations
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1997
- State Records Act 1998 (NSW)
- Public Records Act 2002
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)
- AS 1428 (Set) – 2003 Design for Access and Mobility
- AS/NZS 4360 – 2004 Risk Management
- Road Transport (General) Act 2005
- Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Act 1999
- Roads Act 1993
- NSW Road Rules 2008
- Valuation of Land Act 1916
- Australian Accounting Standards
- Environmentally Hazardous Chemicals Act 1985
- Water Management Act 2000
- Heritage Act 1977

- Plant Protection Act 1989
- Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997
- National Parks and Wildlife Act (1974)
- Native Vegetation Act 2003
- Crown Lands Act 1989
- Building Code of Australia
- Building Fire and Safety Regulation 1991
- Electrical Safety Act 2002
- Building Regulation 2003
- Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002
- Rural Fires Act, 1997
- Dangerous Goods Safety Management Act 2001
- Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990
- Surveillance Devices Act
- International Infrastructure Management Manual (IPWEA)
- Australian Infrastructure Financial Management Guidelines (IPWEA)
- ISO 55001:2014 Requirements for Asset Management

7. REVIEW

An update of the policy will be done within each term of Council following the Local Government Elections, or as required to ensure that it incorporates relevant legislation requirements, newly released documentation from State Government, needs of the community and Council, and other best practice guidelines.

8. REPORTING

As part of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009, NSW local councils are required to undertake their planning and reporting activities to meet the Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation. Councils must have a Resourcing Strategy, which is the long term strategy for council and includes the Long-term Financial Plan; Workforce Management Plan; and the Asset Management Plan.

The Asset Management Framework will incorporate key documents that will form part of the framework and are as follows:

- Asset Management Policy;
- Asset Management Strategy; and
- Asset Management Plans

9. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

All related departments/Council staff that have direct or indirect responsibility for the whole or part lifecycle management of Council's assets are responsible for asset management. However, the responsible officer for communicating, maintaining its currency and making decisions on this policy is the Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities for the implementation, application, adherence and review of this policy across Council will be administered by the following stakeholders as per below.

10.1 Councillors

- Provide stewardship for the assets, setting the Asset Management Policy and considering the impact on Council's asset base of planning, financial and service level decisions
- Adopt the Asset Management Policy and Asset Management Strategy
- Ensure appropriate resources are available to manage Council's assets
- Communicate the policy to the community and ensure the provision of services provided by the assets are meeting the community priorities for present and future generations
- Ensure decisions made regarding assets are in accordance with this policy

10.2 General Manager

- Development and review of the Asset Management Framework (Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Plans)
- Management of policies and procedures, reporting on the status and effectiveness of asset management within Council
- Provide leadership in implementing asset management, leading staff in their understanding of this policy and to monitor its relationships with other areas of Council activity
- Provide financial planning models to help Councillors with decision making
- Meet Council's obligations within this policy, dealing with breaches in accordance with normal disciplinary procedures
- Report to Council on the status of asset management within the organisation
- Ensure that sound business principles are reflected in the Asset Management Strategy and Plans

10.3 Asset Management Steering Committee (to be put in place and members to be nominated)

- Ensure all asset management activities are consistent with the objectives of Council's Community Strategic Plan and Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework
- Ensure that people, processes and systems are in place to help delivering services and meet the Asset Management Framework objectives
- Development and implementation of asset and risk management plans for all asset categories
- Monitor adherence to this policy
- Monitor and review the implementation and improvement of the Asset Management Framework to ensure Council's asset management objectives are met
- Implement, monitor and report on the delivery of actions articulated in the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans that are associated with this policy
- Facilitate and coordinate asset management across the organisation

10.4 Executive Leadership Team

- Review the Asset Management Strategy
- Advise Council on asset matters
- Implementation of the Asset Management Framework (Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Plans)
- Implement asset management systems and procedures
- Ensure their divisions adhere to the requirements of this policy
- Provide guidance on how to achieve the strategic objectives of this policy within their division and the organisation
- Support the implementation of the Asset Management Strategy and associated Asset Management Plans

10.5 Senior Managers & Asset owners

- Responsible for implementing the Asset Management Framework, systems and procedures
- Ensure that business principles that are reflected in the Asset Management Strategy and Plans are being implemented
- Ensure community is involved and engaged with Council matters affecting service delivery
- Ensure service levels are communicated and agreed on all main asset categories
- Endorse Asset Management Plans
- Ensure the integration and compliance of this policy in conjunction with other policies and Council's processes
- Management of assets within their area of responsibility
- Implement this policy and related procedures
- Ensure adherence to the requirements of this policy

10.6 Service areas coordinators; Asset Management, Strategic Infrastructure Planning and Design teams; and other Council staff where applicable

- Develop, implement and review Asset Management Policy and Strategy
- Develop and maintain Asset Management Plans
- Identify and develop appropriate policies and procedures to ensure effective asset management across the organisation
- Implement better practice asset management principles across Council
- Facilitate community consultation to establish agreed service levels
- Develop and maintain asset maintenance and renewal plans
- Provide advice where applicable to other departments of Council in relation to asset management
- Develop and maintain an asset registers for all asset categories
- Make recommendations to Council in regard to the most sustainable use of available funds across the asset portfolio
- Review all new asset acquisitions before commitments are made to ensure they are consistent with Council's long-term objectives, that the life cycle costs have been considered and that the asset can be funded within agreed risk tolerances
- Timely completion of activities contained within the Asset Management Framework
- To comply with this policy and consider its implications for related projects and programs.
- Implement the Asset Management Strategy and Plans

- Engage current technologies, methodologies and continuous improvement processes in Asset Management
- Consistently provide programs, data and actions within the adopted Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Plans

11. RELATED PROCEDURES

The following documentation is to be read and considered in conjunction with this policy:

- Resourcing Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Asset Management Plans
- Community Strategic Plan
- Delivery Program
- Operational Plan
- Procurement Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Plan of Management Policies
- Council's Code of Conduct
- Local Strategic Planning Statement (adopted in October 2020)
- Roads Management Policy (under review)
- Armidale Regional Council Operating policies
- Other adopted strategic plans/ documents related to assets

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	Asset Management and Strategic Planning	
Responsible Officer	Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> 28/04/2021	<i>Council</i> 23/06/2021
Date/s of previous adoptions	May 2013	
Date of next review	After the next Local Government Elections in 2024	
TRIM Reference	AINT/2021/17874	

APPENDIX A – DEFINITIONS

Asset: an item of physical infrastructure under the control of council that has actual or potential value to council and its stakeholders.

Asset Categories: grouping of assets having common characteristics that distinguish those assets as a group or class.

Asset Disposal: activity or activities necessary to dispose of unwanted, unserviceable and/or decommissioned assets. There are two distinct aspects to asset disposals: the physical disposal process and the associated accounting treatment.

Asset Life Cycle: period of ownership of an asset from the planning and design phase through to decommissioning or disposal.

Asset Maintenance: activity performed on an asset with a view to ensuring that it is able to deliver an expected level of service until it is scheduled to be renewed, replaced or disposed of.

Asset Management: coordinated activity of an organization to realize value from assets. A systematic process to guide the planning, acquisition, operation, maintenance, renewal, upgrade and disposal of assets, combining management, financial, economic, engineering and other practices to provide the required level of service in the most efficient manner.

Asset Management Plans (AMPs): documented information that specifies the activities, resources and timescales required for an individual asset, or a grouping of assets, to achieve the organization's asset management objectives. It identifies asset service standards, containing long- term projections of asset maintenance, rehabilitation and replacement costs.

Asset Management Policy: A statement of council's approach and preferred directions in managing its assets to meet desired outcomes consistent with its strategic goals.

Asset Management Steering Committee (AMSC): representative senior staff responsible for ensuring that people, processes and systems are in place and oversee the development and implementation of asset and risk management plans for all asset classes. The AMSC is still to be established and nominations will occur once working group is constituted.

Asset Management Strategy (AMS): Identifies the way council currently looks after its assets, both day to day (maintenance and operational) and in the long term (strategic Asset Management). It also looks at where council wants to be in the long term and how council intends to get there. The Asset Management Strategy is a key component of the 10 year Council Resourcing Strategy. The Asset Management Strategy will include specific actions required to improve council's asset management capability and projected resource requirements and timeframes.

Asset Renewal: replacement or refurbishment of an existing asset (or component) with a new asset (or component) capable of delivering the same level of service as the existing asset.

Asset Upgrade: an upgrade is capital work carried out on an existing asset to provide a higher level of service. This is different to a renewal, which restores an asset to its original condition (and service level).

Backlog: total amount or value of renewal works that need to be undertaken to bring council's asset stock up to an acceptable standard.

Depreciation: reduction in the value of an asset due to usage, passage of time, environmental factors, wear and tear, obsolescence, depletion or inadequacy.

Expenditure: the spending of money on goods and services. Expenditure is typically broken up into recurrent and capital expenditure, and further sub-categorised as operating, maintenance, renewal, upgrade, expansion or new.

Fixed Asset: an asset planned to have useful life that spans multiple reporting periods. In most cases, only tangible assets are referred to as fixed. Fixed assets are subject to depreciation to account for the loss in value as the assets are used, whereas intangibles are amortized. Plant and equipment are also included within the fixed assets.

Intervention Level: in asset management the term intervention level refers to the condition score below which the owner or operator of an asset has decided it should not be allowed to deteriorate, i.e. the point in an asset's life at which it should be programmed for renewal. A number of factors can be considered when setting intervention levels, including: cost; safety, historical practices, available resources, public opinion & community consultation, legislative requirements, neighbouring council practices, user amenity and accessibility, asset integrity, effect on life cycle cost, engineering judgement, etc.

ISO 55001: ISO 55001 or more precisely "ISO 55001:2014" is an International Standard relating to Asset Management Systems (Framework).

Level of Service: The defined quality and quantity of services to meet community expectations delivered by council.

Lifecycle Cost (also known as Whole of Life Cost): total cost of ownership over the life of an asset including; planning, design, construction/acquisition, operation, maintenance, renewal, finance and disposal costs.

Resourcing Strategy: As per Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines (IP &R) for local governments in NSW, the Resourcing Strategy is the point where the council assists the community by sorting out who is responsible for what, in terms of the issues identified in the Community Strategic Plan. The Resourcing Strategy focuses in detail on matters that are the responsibility of the council and looks generally at matters that are the responsibility of others.

Armidale Regional Council

Planning Proposal

to create the

Armidale Regional Local Environmental Plan

Harmonisation of the

Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan 2012

and the

Guyra Local Environmental Plan 2012

This version of the ARLEP Planning Proposal is a draft for Ministerial review and determination under section 3.34 Gateway Determination of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Contents

- Introduction
- Part 1 – Objectives or intended outcomes
- Part 2 – Explanation of provisions
- Part 3 – Justification
- Part 4 – Mapping
- Part 5 – Community Consultation
- Part 6 – Project Timeline
- Appendix

Introduction

This Planning Proposal relates to the creation of the Armidale Regional Local Environmental Plan (ARLEP) which is to be achieved through harmonisation of the Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan (ADLEP) 2012 and the Guyra Local Environmental Plan (GLEP) 2012.

This Planning Proposal has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP+A Act) and in response to the NSW Government publication: “A guide to preparing planning proposals” dated December 2018. It is also consistent with the NSW Government publication “Guidance for merged councils on planning functions” dated May 2016, which states that in proposing to harmonise existing comprehensive local environmental plans, councils can expand an existing local environmental plan to become the principal instrument for the area.

The Armidale Regional Council (ARC) Local Government Area (LGA) was proclaimed on 12 May 2016 from the merger of Armidale Dumaresq Council (ADC) and Guyra Shire Council (GSC). On that date ARC became responsible for the ADLEP 2012 and the GLEP 2012. On 1 July 2019, a subsequent proclamation altered the boundaries between the ARC and Inverell Shire Council (ISC) LGAs, so that the localities collectively referred to as “Tingha” (formerly within the GSC LGA), became part of the ISC LGA.

This Planning Proposal seeks to expand the ADLEP 2012 to apply to the whole of the ARC LGA. Consequently, the GLEP 2012 will be repealed but only in so far as it applies to the ARC LGA i.e. it will still apply to the relevant part of the ISC LGA.

The decision to expand the ADLEP 2012, rather than the GLEP 2012, is simply due to the fact that the ADLEP contains more content than the GLEP and therefore fewer amendments will be required in order to create the ARLEP. In any case, the harmonisation process is being undertaken by directly comparing ADLEP 2012 content with content from the GLEP 2012 and from the Standard Instrument – Principal Local Environmental Plan (SI or Standard Instrument) 2006¹. Where any differences exist between the content from each of the three LEP documents a review process has been undertaken to determine whether an amendment should be made to the ADLEP 2012 content to create the ARLEP and if so, the nature of that amendment.

Part 1 – Objectives or intended outcomes

A statement of the objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed instrument

This Planning Proposal is consistent with the NSW Government publication: “Guidance for merged councils on planning functions” dated May 2016. The publication states that in proposing to harmonise existing comprehensive local environmental plans, councils can expand an existing local environmental plan to become the principal instrument for the area. The primary objective of this Planning Proposal is therefore:

- To amend the Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan 2012 in light of content within the Guyra Local Environmental Plan 2012 and within the Standard Instrument - Principal Local Environmental Plan 2006, to create the Armidale Regional Local Environmental Plan².

A secondary objective of this Planning Proposal is also:

- To recognise the proclamation of the Armidale Regional Council Local Government Area and where possible to minimise changes to land use rights in resolving any differences between the Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan 2012 and the Guyra Local Environmental Plan 2012.

¹ The Standard Instrument sets out the standard provisions for a local environmental plan.

² The date of the ARLEP will depend on the date that it is made.

Part 2 – Explanation of provisions

An explanation of the provisions that are to be included in the proposed instrument

Appendix A summarises the findings arising from a comparison of content extracted from a version of the Standard Instrument 2006, the ADLEP 2012, and the GLEP 2012 (refer Table 1).

Table 1: LEP Comparison Documents

Document	Currency of Version
Standard Instrument—Principal Local Environmental Plan (2006)	Current version for 1 February 2021 to date (accessed 3 March 2021 at 15:36)
Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan 2012	Current version for 12 February 2021 to date (accessed 26 February 2021 at 15:50)
Guyra Local Environmental Plan 2012	Current version for 1 February 2021 to date (accessed 26 February 2021 at 15:52)

Appendices B and C comprise a series of documents that detail the findings arising from the LEP comparison. As the ADLEP 2012 and the GLEP 2012 are both based on the Standard Instrument 2006 there is a high degree of similarity in content. In some cases, even where the content differs, the net effect has been found to be the same following review. A number of changes are required to the ADLEP 2012 content to reflect the proclamation of Armidale Regional Council and the creation of the ARLEP. A number of changes are also proposed to the ADLEP 2012 to address differences with the GLEP 2012 content and with the Standard Instrument 2006 content. In some cases the proposed amendment seeks to maintain existing land use rights in the former Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra LGAs. In other cases the proposed amendment seeks to adopt a single solution that will apply across the whole of the ARC LGA.

Appendix D provides information regarding the proposed new ARLEP Map Set.

Part 3 – Justification

The justification for those objectives, outcomes and the process for their implementation

Section A – Need for the planning proposal

Q1. Is the planning proposal a result of an endorsed local strategic planning statement, strategic study or report?

This Planning Proposal is not the result of an endorsed local strategic planning statement (LSPS) as the requirement to harmonise merged council local environmental plans pre-dates the inclusion of provisions relating to such statements in the EP+A Act. It is however consistent with the NSW Government publication: “Guidance for merged councils on planning functions” dated May 2016 as described previously.

Q2. Is the planning proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?

This Planning Proposal is considered to be the best means of achieving the stated objectives and/or intended outcomes as described previously. The decision was made to expand the ADLEP 2012 in order to minimise the number of amendments required to create the ARLEP.

Section B – Relationship to strategic planning framework

Q3. Will the planning proposal give effect to the objectives and actions of the applicable regional, or district plan or strategy (including any exhibited draft plans or strategies)?

This Planning Proposal will not directly give effect to the objectives of the New England North West Regional Plan (NENWRP). It will however facilitate future local environmental plan review and update processes as required by the EP+A Act, including those related to NENWRP implementation, particularly as reflected in Council's LSPS.

Q4. Will the planning proposal give effect to a council's endorsed local strategic planning statement, or another endorsed local strategy or strategic plan?

As described previously, this Planning Proposal will not directly give effect to Council's endorsed LSPS. It will however facilitate future local environmental plan review and update processes, including those related to LSPS implementation.

Q5. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies?

Given the nature of this Planning Proposal (i.e. to merge two current LEPs based on the Standard Instrument), no inconsistencies should exist with any applicable State Environmental Planning Policies. Any inconsistencies identified in the Gateway determination as issued by the Minister will be addressed in an appropriate manner.

Q6. Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (s.9.1 directions)?

Given the nature of this Planning Proposal, no inconsistencies should exist with any applicable Ministerial Directions. Any inconsistencies identified in the Gateway determination as issued by the Minister will be addressed in an appropriate manner.

Section C – Environmental, social and economic impact

Q7. Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected as a result of the proposal?

Given the nature of this Planning Proposal, it is unlikely that any critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats will be adversely affected. Therefore, no studies are proposed to undertaken in this regard.

Q8. Are there any other likely environmental effects as a result of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?

Given the nature of this Planning Proposal, no other environmental effects are likely. Therefore, no further investigations are proposed to be undertaken in this regard.

Q9. Has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?

Given the nature of this Planning Proposal, no potential social and/or economic effects are envisaged. Therefore, no further issues are proposed to be addressed in this regard.

Section D – State and Commonwealth interests

Q.10. Is there adequate public infrastructure for the planning proposal?

Given the nature of this Planning Proposal, it is unlikely that any additional demands will be placed on public infrastructure. The potential for any proposed changes in land use rights to lead to additional demands is more appropriately addressed in conjunction with the assessment of any future development application. Therefore, no studies are proposed to be undertaken in this regard.

Q.11. What are the views of state and Commonwealth public authorities consulted in accordance with the Gateway determination?

Preliminary consultation has been undertaken with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) in preparing this Planning Proposal. DPIE confirmed previous guidance from the NSW Government that Council may propose to expand the Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan 2012 as a means of harmonising the two current local environmental plans.

Further Agency consultation is proposed to be undertaken as outlined in Table 2 following. Table content will be updated as required to reflect the Gateway determination as issued by the Minister.

Table 2. Agency consultation (Draft pre-Gateway determination)

Ref.	Agency	Issues
1.	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment	Compliance with the Standard Instrument – Principal Local Environmental Plan (2006) and related matters.
2.	Other (to be advised)	(to be determined)

Part 4 – Mapping

Maps, where relevant, to identify the intent of the planning proposal and the area to which it applies

A proposed new map set has been prepared (refer Appendix D) consistent with the NSW Government publication: “Standard Technical Requirements for Spatial Datasets and Maps” Version 2.0 dated August 2017. The new map set combines current maps from the ADLEP 2012 and that part of the GLEP 2012 within the ARC LGA, as described in Appendix B12. That Appendix also includes details of amendments included within the new map set.

Part 5 – Community consultation

Details of the community consultation that is to be undertaken on the planning proposal

Community consultation is proposed to be undertaken as outlined in Table 3 following, having regard to the requirements set out in the NSW Government publication: “A guide to preparing local environmental plans” dated December 2018. The statutory requirement for the public exhibition period from Schedule 1 of the EP+A Act has been adopted given the nature of this Planning Proposal. Table content will be updated as required to reflect the Gateway determination as issued by the Minister.

Table 3. Community Consultation (Draft pre-Gateway determination)

Ref.	Item	Period / Manner
1.	Public exhibition period	28 days
2.	Public exhibition manner	Notification on Council’s website Posts on Council’s social media platforms

Part 6 – Project Timeline

A project timeline to detail the anticipated timeframe for the plan making process

The anticipated timeframe for the relevant plan making process is outlined in Table 4 following. Table content will be updated as required to reflect the Gateway determination as issued by the Minister.

Table 4: Project Timeline (Draft pre-Gateway determination)

Ref.	Item	Month
1.	Anticipated commencement date (date of Gateway determination)	Jul. - Aug. '21.
2.	Anticipated timeframe for the completion of required technical information	Aug. - Sep. '21.
3.	Timeframe for government agency consultation (pre and post exhibition as required by Gateway determination)	Aug. - Nov. '21.
4.	Commencement and completion dates for public exhibition period	Sep. - Oct. '21. (not before 13 Sep.)
5.	Dates for public hearing (if required)	Assume not required.
6.	Timeframe for consideration of submissions	Oct. - Nov. '21.
7.	Timeframe for the consideration of a proposal post exhibition	Nov. '21.
8.	Date of submission to the Department to finalise the LEP	Nov. - Dec. '21.
9.	Anticipated date the local plan-making authority will make the plan (if authorised)	Assume not authorised.
10.	Anticipated date the local plan-making authority will forward to the PCO for publication.	Not applicable.

Given the above, it is expected that the ARLEP will commence in the first half of 2022.

Appendix

- A - LEP Content Comparison Summary
- B - LEP Content Comparison
- C - LEP Content Comparison - Part 2 - Zones
- D - Proposed ARLEP Map Set

Appendix A – LEP Content Comparison Summary

This document summarises the findings arising from a comparison of content extracted from a version of the Standard Instrument – Principal Local Environmental Plan (SI or Standard Instrument) 2006, the Armidale Dumaresq Local Environmental Plan (ADLEP) 2012, and the Guyra Local Environmental Plan (GLEP) 2012. Relevant LEP Content Comparison Tables are included within Appendix B and C. Information regarding the new ARLEP Map Set is included in Appendix D.

Content	Clause Reference		Appendix Ref.
1. No change proposed to ADLEP 2012			
Status Information	(except as noted below)		B01
Contents	(except as noted below)		B02
Part 1	(except as required, as referenced below)		B03
Part 2	-	Land Use Table	B04
		Except as required / proposed, as referenced below and as follows:	
		Zone: RU3 Forestry	C02
		Zone: RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	C03
		Zone: R1 General Residential	C05
		Zone: R2 Low Density Residential	C06
		Zone: B5 Business Development	C11
		Zone: B7 Business Park	C12
		Zone: IN2 Light Industrial	C14
		Zone: SP2 Infrastructure	C15
		Zone: E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves	C18
		Zone: E3 Environmental Management	C19
		Zone: E4 Environmental Living	C20
Part 3	-	-	B05
Part 4	(except as required / proposed, as referenced below)		B06
Part 5	(except as required / proposed, as referenced below)		B07
Part 6	(except as proposed, as referenced below)		B08
Schedules	(except as proposed, as referenced below)		B09
Dictionary	(except as required / proposed, as referenced below)		B10
Historical Notes	(except as required, as referenced below)		B11
2. No change proposed to ADLEP 2012 but update required to reflect the ARLEP version of the legislation when the relevant ADLEP 2012 amendment is finalised			
Status Information	-	-	B01
Contents	-	-	B02
3. Change Required to ADLEP 2012 to create the ARLEP			
Part 1	1.1	Name of Plan	B03
	1.2	Aims of Plan	
	1.8	Repeal of planning instruments applying to land	
	-	Maps	B12 and D
Part 2	-	Land Use Table	(B04)
		Zone: B3 Commercial Core	C09
Part 4	4.1A	Minimum subdivision lot size for strata plan schemes in certain rural, residential and environment protection zones	B06
Part 5	5.10	Heritage Conservation	B07
Dictionary	-	(select definitions only)	B10
Historical	-	Table of amending instruments	B11

Notes	-	Table of amendments	
4. Change Proposed to ADLEP 2012 to create the ARLEP			
Part 2	2.1	Land use zones	B04
	2.8	Temporary use of land	
	-	Land Use Table	
		Zone: RU1 Primary Production	C01
		Zone: RU5 Village	C04
		Zone: R5 Large Lot Residential	C07
		Zone: B2 Local Centre	C08
		Zone: B4 Mixed Use	C10
		Zone: IN1 General Industrial	C13
		Zone: RE1 Public Recreation	C16
		Zone: RE2 Private Recreation	C17
		Zone: E2 Environmental Conservation	C21
Part 4	4.1	Minimum subdivision size	B06
	4.1AA	Minimum subdivision lot size for community title schemes	
	4.1A	Minimum subdivision lot size for strata plan schemes in certain rural, residential and environment protection zones	
	4.1C	Exceptions to minimum lot sizes for certain rural subdivisions	
	4.1D	Minimum lot sizes for certain split zones	
	4.1E	Exceptions to minimum subdivision lot size for boundary adjustments	
	4.2A	Erection of dwelling houses or dual occupancies in certain rural, residential and environment protection zones	
Part 5	5.4	Controls relating to miscellaneous permissible uses; specifically, sub-clause (5) Farm stay accommodation	B07
	5.10	Heritage conservation	
Part 6	6.6	Essential services	B08
	6.8	Remediation of land at former gasworks site and adjoining land, Armidale	
	6.9	Development on land bounded by Queen Elizabeth Drive, Golgotha Street, Niagara Street and Tancredi Street, Armidale	
	6.10	Development on land at 118 and 120 Niagara Street, Armidale	
Schedules	Schedule 1	Additional permitted uses (part only)	B09 and B13
	Schedule 2	Exempt development (part only)	
	Schedule 4	Classification and reclassification of public land (part only)	
	Schedule 5	Environmental heritage	
Dictionary	-	(select definitions only)	B10

Appendix B - LEP Content Comparison

Ref.	Title.
B00	LEP Content Comparison - Notes
B01	LEP Content Comparison - Status Information
B02	LEP Content Comparison - Contents
B03	LEP Content Comparison - Part 1
B04	LEP Content Comparison - Part 2 (excluding Zone comparison tables)
B05	LEP Content Comparison - Part 3
B06	LEP Content Comparison - Part 4
B07	LEP Content Comparison - Part 5
B08	LEP Content Comparison - Part 6
B09	LEP Content Comparison - Schedules (excluding Schedule 5)
B10	LEP Content Comparison - Dictionary
B11	LEP Content Comparison - Historical Notes
B12	LEP Content Comparison - Maps
B13	LEP Content Comparison - Schedule 5

Appendix C - LEP Content Comparison - Part 2 – Zones

Ref.	Title.
C00	LEP Content Comparison - Notes
C01	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: RU1 Primary Production
C02	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: RU3 Forestry
C03	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: RU4 Primary Production Small Lots
C04	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: RU5 Village
C05	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: R1 General Residential
C06	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: R2 Low Density Residential
C07	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: R5 Large Lot Residential
C08	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: B2 Local Centre
C09	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: B3 Commercial Core
C10	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: B4 Mixed Use
C11	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: B5 Business Development
C12	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: B7 Business Park
C13	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: IN1 General Industrial
C14	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: IN2 Light Industrial
C15	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: SP2 Infrastructure
C16	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: RE1 Public Recreation
C17	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: RE2 Private Recreation
C18	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: E1 National Parks and Nature Reserves
C19	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: E3 Environmental Management
C20	LEP Content Comparison – Zone: E4 Environmental Living
C21	LEP Content Comparison – Zone E2 Environmental Conservation
C22	Land Use Matrix

Appendix D – Proposed ARLEP Map Set

Ref.	Title.
D00	Proposed ARLEP Map Cover Sheet
D01	Land Application Map
D02	Land Zoning Map
D03	Lot Size Map
D04	Height of Buildings Map
D05	Land Reservation Acquisition Map
D06	Heritage Map
D07	Additional Permitted Uses Map
D08	Combined Local Maps: Airport Buffer Map Sewage Treatment Buffer Map
D09	Clause Application Map

THE BIG CHILL FESTIVAL 2021

Post Event Report

Unleash the opportunities

www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Big Chill Beer & BBQ Festival was held for the first time on 15-16 May 2021, at Civic Park in Armidale.

The event was funded by State Government Funding, and was designed to promote local business activation to help stimulate the social and economic recovery of the community and businesses after the 2019/2020 bushfires.

Local producers and retailers of food, alcohol and BBQ related merchandise were able to showcase their business and supplies over the weekend. There were also a number of trade stalls that came from out of town to support the event. All wineries, distilleries and breweries within the New England High Country area were invited to attend the event, a number of these declined therefore we approached vendors from outside the New England region.

Key highlights for the event included live music, featuring a performance by Rai Thistlethwayte of Thirsty Merc, two nationally recognised BBQ competitions and a great weekend out for the local community and travelers alike. Armidale was unable to host an event like this for 63 weeks in Armidale due to the pandemic, therefore the local community and visitors were keen to embrace something new, which is exactly what The Big Chill promised.

The event was hailed a huge success by attending vendors and patrons however a number of key recommendations need to be considered for the event in 2022.

- The time of year: was it too cold? Would it be better off a month earlier or in another season?
- Should it be a family event or at least have a family day on the Sunday.
- What entertainment will be provided to children
- Ticketing: pricing, administration, reporting and printing vs online.
- Other events within the festival: home brew competition, industry talks and demonstrations.
- Budget: what grants can we apply for now to run 2022 and how can Council support this event into the future?
- Event lay out to maximize foot traffic for vendors and competitors.
- Increasing media exposure to include television advertising.
- Stronger marketing message and communication



29

TRADE
VENDORS

21

COMPETITORS

2900

ATTENDEES

COMMENTS FROM ATTENDEES

"I have lived here all my life and this was hands down the best event Armidale has ever seen!" - Geoff Dare

"Great work ARC in putting on this event. More events like this more often!" - Anonymous

"Really well organised event with an incredible atmosphere and something really great could come from this if turned into an annual event" - Anonymous

"A huge congratulations to ARC for a first year event. It felt very professionally organised. Thank you for trusting you patrons to exercise common sense and feature things like fit pits and breweries showcasing a full range of beers." - Anonymous

"We traveled up from Coffs and have told all our friends how much we enjoyed ourselves. We will definitely be back next year with a bigger crew. This is how you run an event!" - Anonymous

"Please do it again. It was wonderful even if it was a bit cold. And pleased to say after years of backward looking ARC can be seen as doing something proactive!" - Anonymous

"Your attention to detail and ability to make these amazing events happen need to be applauded and recognised." - Kent Laverak

INTRODUCTION

On 15-16 May 2021 the Events & Tourism Department of Armidale Regional Council organised and facilitated the inaugural Big Chill Festival at Civic Park in Armidale, which was transformed into a fully fenced, licensed venue, filled with vendors, tables and chairs, marquees, fire pits and a stage.

The Events & Tourism Department staff consisted of Darren Schaefer, Katrina George and Anna Stevenson, along with input from the ARC Communications department, and ARC Outdoor Events Team.

This event was initially due to be held in March 2020 utilising an \$80,000 Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund from the State Government, to kick start the local economy and breathe new life into a bushfire affected community. COVID-19 unfortunately saw the event postponed until May 2021, providing the added benefit of providing an economic boost to a COVID-19 affected community.

The decision to hold the event in May 2021 was made based on three considerations:

- The additional timeframe was going to allow for time for the COVID-19 restrictions to be relaxed that were in place in March 2021
- The grant required expenditure and acquittal at the end of May 2021
- The BBQ competition affiliates only had one weekend in May free to assist us in hosting a Steak Cook-off and Slow Cook competition.

Based on the fact that the event was held at the start of winter, the name The Big Chill was born to not only represent the weather at the time, but also the feel of the event. Who doesn't want to chill out at a Beer & BBQ Festival and listen to live music next to a fire pit!

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of The Big Chill were:

1. To run a licensed Beer & BBQ Festival at Civic Park within an \$80,000 budget from grant funding
2. To run the event as safely and risk free as possible
3. To bring travelers to Armidale to help stimulate the local economy outside the festival hours
4. To support and showcase local businesses and produce
5. To give the Community a new event that can grow and become its own entity on the Armidale social calendar each year.
6. Successfully host a sanctioned SCA Steak Cook-Off and ABA Slow Cook competition.



OBJECTIVE 1 –

Run a licensed Beer & BBQ Festival at Civic Park within an \$80,000 budget

The initial budget put together for the event at the start of 2020 was quite conservative and didn't accommodate the community benefit an event like this could have.

The initial budget also didn't factor in many requirements to run an event of this size, to make it a popular and successful event or for any contingency plans for failed or inadequate elements.

- Outdoor crews, fleet and materials were double what was initially budgeted for. This was always going to be an unknown element due to the scope of additional works that needed to be done last minute, and to accommodate how much the event grew from the initial concept.

- Keevers Security Company pulled all security guards 2 days out from the event, unexpectedly and without a real reason. Last minute sourcing and securing guards after that came at a cost over double what was originally budgeted for.
- Rai Thistlethwayte was an entertainment investment that proved a positive move to sell more tickets, however came at a cost \$12,000 over what was initially budgeted for a headline act.
- Skip bins, first aid, a sewer truck and additional toilets were all extras from the original budget but were necessary to hold the event successfully as it grew in size, as its potential was realised within ARC.
- The BBQ competition was an unknown factor that will require sponsorship to help absorb the prize money cost, a lesson that we have learnt for 2022. That competition however was deemed highly successful for the competitors and has received a lot of positive reviews, so we can expect the competition to grow significantly in size for 2022.
- We had no way of forecasting attendance at the event due to COVID-19, a predicted cold snap a week out from the event, and the fact that the Armidale community is known for not booking tickets to any event until the last minute.

Obtaining the Alcohol Licence also proved tricky in the first instance of planning, as a Liquor Licence for an event of more than 2000 people, can only be held by an individual rather than an organization. Therefore the decision was made nominate someone at Council to become the Licensee.

Darren Schaefer undertook his RSA and Licensee certification to become the Licensee for this event, which solved the issue, however any breaches in license agreement would have seen Darren responsible and he would have personally incurred any fines. This was the main reason behind the decision to run this as an over 18's event.



Conclusion

Objective 1 was not 100% achieved with the event cost. Planning issues and budget shortfalls meant taking a risk and eating into expected revenue in the organisational stages of a brand new event. This risk thankfully paid off so the event didn't impact the Council's general fund.

Overspending was mostly seen in –

- Music: with booking Rai Thistlethwayte
- Event set up: with lights, bins, first aid, sewer trucks, aesthetic additions like bean bags and table clothes etc.
- Marketing: with a marginal overspend
- Staff & Plant Requirements: this was the biggest overspend in planning, and this needs to be managed for future events.

Recommendations

- Apply for grant funding to cover events like The Big Chill.
- Factor in a monetary 'risk' for unforeseeable costs.
- Obtain sponsorship for the competition portion of the event to free up the budget.
- Obtain sponsorship from local businesses
- Factor in marquees as part of the stall holder costs for Breweries and Wineries to ensure there is adequate shelter from the elements.
- Have Council financial support for events like this in the future.
- Work with the outdoor crews to ascertain a working budget for the event, and possibly obtain quotes from them for foreseeable works and staff requirements. Then apply a risk cost for unforeseeable issues or plans for event expansion where outdoor crews are required to do additional work.

OBJECTIVE 2 –

To run the event as safely and risk free as possible

The event was fully enclosed with a security fence as well as security day and night to guarantee we were adhering to our license requirements. Licensing police Chris Jordan and Colin Bird were in support of the event, and assisted us in getting the license passed, with the requirements we needed to sell craft beers over 4% alcohol. They also registered the event as a Special Event, which allowed them to source and allocate extra police, including mounted police that were a great drawcard in themselves..

First aid was in place as well as COVID and RSA Marshalls over the weekend. We used a QR sign in to comply with COVID-19 requirements and had a COVID-19 plan in place.

Risk assessments, including a tree audit, highlighted areas of concern, for example the dam and drainage system, and a comprehensive and detailed Event Management & Risk Assessment Plan was created.

Overall the event was very successful and we didn't have any of the following:

- License breaches
- Injuries or medical emergencies (first aid support was never used)
- Security issues during the event or after hours
- Insurance claims of any description

Conclusion

Our risk assessments were on point and delivered to everyone concerned including our insurance company via a complex and detailed Event Management Plan.

Recommendations

That future events like this also include in-depth risk assessments. Ground maintenance and trees need to



be considered and assessed 6 -12 months prior to the event.

OBJECTIVE 3 –



To bring travelers to Armidale to help stimulate the local economy outside the festival hours

We currently have a survey out with all the attendees who pre-purchased tickets online, of which there was 1,131. The survey is also open to the wider Armidale Community and will close on the 30 June 2021. This will accurately show how many people came from outside Armidale, however we were delighted to receive our Eventbrite report that showed Sydney as our top city for ticket purchases prior to the event. These visitors would have booked accommodation and stayed for at least one night in Armidale. On the day we sold an

additional 700 approx. tickets to Armidale locals. General discussions with the public by our gate staff revealed a number of people that had travelled for the event from the coast and surrounding towns like Tamworth and Inverell. There were also a number of people that were visiting Armidale that saw the marquees, heard the music and bought a ticket to the event.

The Steak Cook- Off and Australasian BBQ competition attracted competitors from Victoria, QLD and all over NSW.

Conclusion

The Big Chill Beer and BBQ Festival was a fabulous success with approximately 3000 people attending over the weekend. The inaugural event drew in people from all over NSW who came to celebrate the uniqueness of Armidale. The post event survey is showing an overwhelming support for The Big Chill 2022.

Recommendation

That Armidale Regional Council commit to facilitating and managing the Big Chill in 2022 and expand our marketing budget to include a television campaign and increase our marketing reach to the Hunter Valley, Southern Queensland and the North West region.

OBJECTIVE 4 –

Support and showcase local businesses and produce

While we did have outside vendors attending at the Big Chill, the focus was on our local producers of alcohol, food and retail. All local Breweries, Wineries and Distilleries from the New England Region were invited to exhibit at the Big Chill. While the space could have been better planned to give more exposure to the retail trade stalls, the alcohol and food vendors were more than happy with the foot traffic and business they did over the weekend.

Several food vendors and a couple of the alcohol vendors actually ran out of their daily food and alcohol allocation. One distillery had to travel 2 hours back home on Saturday night to refill their truck for Sunday.

We had in attendance:

- 6 craft breweries, 1 winery and 1 distillery
- 8 food vendors
- 13 retail trade stalls

We failed to get more wineries and distilleries due to the Beer & BBQ theme and the fact that it was our first event and we hence couldn't guaranteed assurance that they would have a successful weekend. We will be expecting a greater number of trade stalls for the Big Chill 2022 following on from the hype and success of this inaugural event.

We also need to note the businesses outside the event that benefited from the Big Chill. Many motels booked out with travelers coming to the event, and pubs reaped the benefits of patrons leaving the event on



Saturday night! Restaurants and cafes got busy serving breakfast on Sunday morning, and many other business saw additional trade as a result, like our taxi services!

Conclusion

The event was very successful for our food and beverage vendors. 1 in 2 retail trade stalls wanted to see more foot traffic as revealed in a recent survey, but they still enjoyed the event immensely and will be back.

Given the success of the event for our 1 winery and 1 distillery, there is no doubt that we will get more vendors in these areas for 2022. Same can be said for the breweries.

With a better laid out map for the retail trade stalls, we will have more for 2022 also.

Recommendations

- Scatter the retail stores throughout the food and alcohol or have them all at the front gate so you must walk past them to get to the food, alcohol and entertainment.
- Push for more alcohol vendors to come with proof that 2021 was a success for those that did attend.
- Bring in more food vendors
- Target more local retail vendors
- Call the event The Big Chill Festival for future years, so it's not carrying the beer and BBQ theme. This will allow it to grow and showcase more of what Armidale is all about.

OBJECTIVE 5 –

Give the Community a new event that can grow and become its own entity on the Armidale social calendar each year

If nothing else, the Big Chill Festival was something new for Armidale! The Community was happy to see the event, not only after such a long period without any events due to COVID, but because it was new and exciting! It embraced everything that is Armidale – the cool weather, the relaxed country lifestyle, good food and alcohol and some awesome tunes from local bands.

All the feedback we have received via debriefs, email, phone, social media, surveys etc. have shown us that this event hit the nail on the head for the Community. They want to see it grow and become an annual fixture on the Armidale events calendar.



Conclusion

The fact that ARC successfully ran an event risk and incident free, and within its own means financially, proves that it can and should be done again next year and every year after that.

Recommendations

- That Council financially supports this event into the future
- That this event continues to grow and improve each year

OBJECTIVE 6 –

Successfully host a sanctioned SCA Steak Cook-Off and ABA Slow Cook competition.

The Big Chill Festival was not only a chance to showcase local produce and business, but host a nationally recognised sanctioned Steak Cook Off Association (SCA) BBQ steak competition on Saturday and a sanctioned Australasian Barbecue Alliance (ABA) slow cook competition on Sunday.

These competitions pulled chefs from all over NSW, Victoria and QLD! We had 17 teams compete in the ABA competition and 22 chefs compete in the SCA competition. We had 32 judges in attendance, including some ARC staff who put their hand up to find a winner for each competition.

While this event cost us money, we know that it was a complete success for competitors who are still talking about the event and will be back next year. This competition could double in size and this, coupled with



more sponsorship, the event could generate an income.

Conclusion

The competition cost us money, but showed us the potential of really getting in the BBQ culture. If held in future years, we will be better positioned to know how to make money of this aspect of the Big Chill.

Recommendations

- That we host the competitions again in future years

- That we find sponsorship for the prize money an contra prizes so the competition costs us less to run
- That we advertise and only run the competition if we have 30+ SCA competitors and 30+ ABA teams

TRIM:

Financial Reserves Policy

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [DATE TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

1. PURPOSE

This Policy provides direction to management in relation to a framework surrounding decisions to place funds into a restricted cash reserve for particular purposes and their strategic use.

2. APPLICATION

Council can create a reserve or utilise reserve funds in line with the purposes outlined in this Policy. If it is determined operationally or financially prudent to do so, a decision to amend this Policy can be undertaken by Council resolution.

3. POLICY INTENT

Reserves are accounts established and held as cash and cash equivalents retained by Council for the purpose of:

- meeting asset renewal and upgrades in conjunction with Asset Management Plans;
- meeting other project requirements (such as IT infrastructure and non-tangible assets); or
- meeting statutory obligations and other external requirements.

The main objectives of this Policy are to:

- improve financial management;
- improve strategic capacity; and
- reduce business risk

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

Council's Community Strategic Plan – Leadership for the Region – Community Outcome 2 – Council exceeds community expectations when managing its budget and operations.

5. POLICY

The objective of this Policy is to develop a strategy for the creation and utilisation of restricted cash reserves as part of Council's overall financial management.

Council's total cash and investments portfolio falls into three (3) categories:

- Externally Restricted Cash Reserves;
- Internally Restricted Cash Reserves; and
- Unrestricted Cash

Externally Restricted Cash Reserves

Externally restricted cash reserves are held for the purpose for which they were received. The use of externally restricted cash reserves is not optional, and Council must continue to manage these reserves to ensure that these funds are expended in accordance with their intended purpose and, where applicable, relevant legislation.

Council's current external reserves include:

External Reserve	Purpose
Developer contributions	This reserve contains unspent developer contributions received under S7.4, S7.11, S7.12 and S64 contribution plans together with accumulated interest on unspent contributions.
Domestic waste management	Established under s504 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> . This reserve contains net proceeds from domestic waste management services and will be used to assist with funding landfill remediation, infrastructure and other assets required to support domestic waste management.
Northern Inland Regional Waste grant from EPA	This reserves contains the net unspent grant proceeds pertaining to Northern Inland Regional Waste.
Specific purpose unexpended grants and contributions	This reserve contains unspent grant and contribution proceeds where use of the funding is tied to a specific purpose.
Specific purpose unexpended loans	This reserve contains unspent loan funding tied to a specific purpose.
Sewerage Services	This reserve contains the audited end of year cash and investment balance for the sewerage fund. Funds are held in accordance with the requirements of the Act and associated legislation to provide for future replacement and upgrade of infrastructure to support the sewerage network.
Trust fund	This reserve contains unspent proceeds pertaining to Council's trust fund.
Water Supplies	This reserve contains the audited end of year cash and investment balance for the water fund. Funds are held in accordance with the requirements of the Act and associated legislation to provide for future replacement and upgrade of infrastructure to support the water supply network.

Internally Restricted Cash Reserves

Internally restricted cash reserves are different from externally restricted cash reserves in that their existence is controlled by the Council. These reserves are for specific works, services or initiatives that have been included in the Annual Budget or Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

Council's current internal reserves serve many different purposes. Council's current internal reserves include:

Internal Reserve	Purpose
Airport Business Park land sale proceeds	<p>This reserve contains net cash proceeds from sale of land at the Airport Business Park. Funding from this reserve is permitted to be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 finalisation including, but not limited, establishment of biodiversity offset area and associated works • Stage 2 preconstruction activities • Ongoing direct costs of managing, maintaining, holding and disposal of unsold lots • Adjacent property costs, which will eventually be recovered from sale <p>Established by Council resolution AINT/2021/01037:</p> <p>Council delegates the General Manager to apportion up to three percent (3%) of net sale proceeds each year, based on previous calendar year results, for marketing and site-enhancements to Airside Business Park lots.</p>
Airport	This reserve contains funding for capital works at the Armidale Regional Airport. Any surplus generated by the airport, after allowing for operating and capital expenses, will be added to this reserve on an annual basis.
Asset replacement	This reserve contains funding for asset replacement with priorities for funding to be determined by way of Council's budget process.
Automated Vehicle Trial	This reserve contains remaining funding from the automated vehicle project.
Biodiversity Offsets	This reserve contains funding to meet liabilities relating to biodiversity offsets.
Carry forward works	This reserve consists of funds set aside from projects not completed in a previous financial period where the funding for the project has been provided for from untied revenue. These funds will be used to complete those capital works projects in a future financial period.
Design and planning future capital works	This reserve contains funding for the purpose of design and planning future capital works.
Employee leave entitlements	This reserve contains funding to cover employee leave entitlements to ensure sufficient funds are held for payment of accrued leave.
Environmental remediation	This reserve is being managed to meet legacy, current and future environmental liabilities. Careful funding and management of this reserve will ensure inter-generational equity in the use of resources and services.
Financial improvement plan	Savings from implementation of the financial improvement plan actions that have a direct impact on the budget are to be placed in this reserve initially with priorities for expenditure to be determined by the General Manager.
Kolora repair and maintenance	<p>Established by Council resolution AINT/2018/03030</p> <p>Surplus funds from rental income are placed in this reserve.</p>

Internal Reserve	Purpose
Kolara sinking fund	Established by Council resolution AINT/2018/03030 This reserve contains funds pertaining to the transfer of allocated spaces and plant and equipment to the lessee.
Natural disaster provision	This reserve contains funding to provide for natural disaster related costs.
Plant and vehicle replacement	This reserve consists of funds set aside for the future replacement of Council's plant and fleet.
Preschool	This reserve contains funding to assist with funding capital costs associated with the preschool.
Preschool fundraising	This reserve contains funding from preschool fundraising activities.
Property sale proceeds	Net proceeds from sale of property are to be placed in this reserve unless identified under another reserve. Funding from this reserve is permitted to be used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing direct costs of managing, holding and disposal of land identified under Council's land divestment strategy • Development of land for sale • Direct costs of land reclassification processes for the purpose of disposal
Special Rate Variation	Special rate variation funding not spent on the asset renewal program in any year will be placed in this reserve so that it can be allocated in a future year.
Technology strategy	Savings achieved through implementation of improved use of existing technology or new technology are to be placed in this reserve to create a source of funding to implement ICT strategy.
Waste management	This reserve contains net proceeds from waste management activities apart from domestic waste management, which is held under a different reserve. These funds will be used to cover the costs of landfill remediation and infrastructure required to manage waste over the long term.

Unrestricted Cash

Unrestricted cash are funds that Council has earned but have not been allocated to specific expenditure in the past or future and are held as Council's savings. These act as a buffer against unanticipated future costs and/or can be used to provide flexibility to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.

In accordance with the Ministerial Performance Improvement Order issued 9 December 2020, Council shall ensure a minimum of \$4-5m is available as unrestricted cash to fund working capital requirements before setting aside funds as Internal Restrictions (with the exception of the employee leave entitlements reserve).

In order to verify whether Council is carrying a sufficient level of unrestricted cash, it shall consider the following indicators:

- Unrestricted cash is forecast at minimum \$4-5m balance as recommended
- Unrestricted current ratio is forecast to remain above benchmark of 1.5x

Council has not yet achieved the required level of unrestricted cash. The underlying improvement of Council's cash position will be a key outcome identified in its Financial Improvement Plan.

Establishment

The creation of all reserves must be approved by Council. Reserves will only be created for specific purposes.

New externally restricted cash reserves will only be created if required by legislation.

The establishment of any new reserve should consider at least one of the following criteria:

- Provide for the annual capital requirements for the replacement of assets (incorporated in an adopted Asset Management Plan).
- Be required for contractual or legislative reasons or where the source of funding is required to be tied to expenditure over a longer period.
- Provide for a known liability that is reflected in Council's Budget or LTFP.
- Fund a future debt repayment liability.
- Have a specific but unquantifiable future strategic requirement or where there are significant changes to priorities of the Council.

Characteristics of each reserve must be identified before approval for creation can be given and must include at least the following:

- The name of the reserve;
- The purpose of the reserve;
- The source of funds of the new reserve;
- The intended use and timing of funds in the reserve;
- The program or activity to which the reserve will be allocated;
- The budgetary effect of the new reserve on the LTFP.

Utilisation

The Annual Budget and Quarterly Budget Review processes will provide the opportunity for Council to adopt or review reserve balances and allocations as required. Consideration shall also be given to the impacts on the LTFP and adjustments made accordingly.

Confirmation of the availability of reserve funds should be made through the Manager Financial Services to ensure accuracy prior to be included in any adjustment to the budget or report to Council.

Review

The purpose of all reserves shall be reviewed annually by the Manager Financial Services to confirm continued consistency with this Policy. The Manager Financial Services will maintain a register that forms the basis of the restricted assets amount held as cash and cash equivalents.

6. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

There are a number of legislative requirements that will apply and need to be followed under this Policy:

- Local Government Act 1993 – Section 409

- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
- Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting
- Australian Accounting Standards
- Office of Local Government Circulars

7. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed annually from the date of each adoption at a Council meeting, or more frequently as required. Any amendments are to be approved by a resolution of Council.

8. REPORTING

Minimum report requirements for Council's cash reserves are to be included in the following documents where applicable;

- Annual Operational Plan/Budget
- Delivery Program
- Quarterly Budget Review Statements
- Monthly Cash and Investments report
- Annual Financial Statements
- Statutory Returns as required

For external audit purposes workings for all reserves that Council has funds held as restricted for should be made available for review as at 30 June of each year.

9. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The Manager Financial Services is Council's Responsible Accounting Officer and the Responsible Officer for this Policy.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Manager Financial Services is responsible for making determinations in accordance with this policy and delegating responsibilities to persons whose role it will be to carry out most of the functions under this policy.

Some of the functions the Responsible Officer will perform in relation to the policy include:

- Maintaining records
- Reporting
- Keeping the policy current
- Investigating breaches and enforcing compliance
- Implementing communications, education and monitoring strategies

All council officers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy, related legislation and procedures.

11. RELATED PROCEDURES

Nil.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	Financial Services	
Responsible Officer	Manager Financial Services	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> [updated by policy owner]	<i>Council</i> [DD Mmmm YYYY]
Date/s of previous adoptions	N/A	
Date of next review	[Annually from last adoption]	
TRIM Reference		

Finch Consulting

ABN 364 304 931 06

GPO Box 389

Armidale NSW 2350

24 Nov 2020

The Administrator
Armidale Regional Council
Rusden St
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Dear Sir,

Review of Council Finances

In accordance with an engagement agreement dated 4 Nov 2020 we have been commissioned to undertake a review of Councils finances, specifically:

- a. Undertake a forensic review of Council finances, in particular the deterioration of internally restricted and unrestricted cash since the merger of the Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra Shire Councils. The analysis is to focus on General Fund over expenditures, unplanned expenditures and budget revenue shortfalls.
- b. Report on the status and utilisation of Reserves, both pre and post merger.

Our review has been conducted with the assistance of the Council's Finance Team. Due to the state of the records, there have been scope limitations in sourcing relevant records and compiling financial information. The capacity to interview Management Team members was restricted as key personnel employed in the early years are no longer with Council. The current Finance Team have provided valuable assistance in extracting data and recompiling information to assist the review.

From a governance perspective we have relied on Council resolutions and reports presented to Council. We have not considered reports, discussions or decisions that may have been part of Councillor workshops.

A summary of our findings is available on page 2 and recommendations arising from our review are included on page 13.

We would be happy to respond to any questions in relation to this review.

Yours faithfully



Robert Finch
Finch Consulting

Review of Council Finances

1. Executive Summary:

A summary of our findings is as follows:

- Net Current Assets (working capital and reserves) declined by \$11m in the first three years of the new Council.
- The decline in Net Current Assets and Reserves is attributable to:
 - Council adopting deficit budgets (excluding capital grants) exceeding \$8.2m in total for FY2017 to FY2019.
 - Operating Expenditure in FY2017 and FY2018 substantially exceeding budget by \$11.6m thus exacerbating the original budget deficits.
 - Merger Implementation project expenditure (included in operating expenditure above) and funded by the \$5m NSW government grant, exceeding budget by \$0.6m. Redundancy payments of \$1.2m were included in merger project expenditure and an additional \$0.9m in redundancy costs associated with organisational restructures was funded by Council, bringing total redundancy costs since merger to \$2.1m.
 - Specific major capital projects (including the Library) exceeding the original budget estimates by \$4.2m.
 - Council proceeding with capital purchases without a budget or identified funding source, such as land adjacent to the Airport for \$0.67m.
 - Cash generated by operating cash surpluses together with external funding sources being insufficient to fund the capital works programs in FY2017 and FY2018, which, as a result, impacted on cash reserves.
- Expenditure on the new Library exceeded the original projection of \$3.5m by \$0.9m. Project approval was outside the original budget for FY2017 and as the original proposal to fund the project via a loan did not proceed, total costs contributed to the erosion in Net Current Assets. NSW Government Capital Expenditure Review guidelines do not appear to have been followed.
- Reserves (Internal Restrictions) established in FY2017 and FY2018 were either unfunded or relied on limited working capital cash for funding. This includes the Plant and Vehicle Reserve of \$2.24m, documented as a source of funding for acquisitions totalling \$3.2m in FY2017 and FY2018.
- Projects were initiated on the assumption that Reserves existed but in fact they had been extinguished.
- In the initial years, there was a significant lapse in management control, oversight and reporting to the Council in relation to expenditure on operating and capital projects and budget forecasting.
- Project management and oversight, from a financial perspective, was inadequate in the early years of the new Council.

Review of Council Finances

2. Background

The Armidale Regional Council (ARC) was formed on 13 May 2016 as a result of the amalgamation of the former Armidale Dumaresq Council (ADC) and Guyra Shire Council (GSC). The Council governance structure operated under an Administrator until Sept 2017 and an elected Council until June 2020, when the current Administrator was appointed.

The audited General Purpose Financial Reports of the former entities for the period ended 12 May 2016 indicate that both Councils were in a stable financial position, but with limited reserves to fund future commitments and asset renewals and doubts over future financial sustainability.

The audited Financial Reports as at 12 May 2016 disclosed cash and investment balances (excluding external restrictions) of \$12.7m. The unrestricted current ratio for ADC was 1.5 and GSC 2.8. The industry accepted minimum benchmark is 1.5. Loan liability stood at \$32.4m as at 12 May 2016 (\$26.6m for General Fund.)

The audited Financial Reports are consolidated accounts for the General, Water and Sewer Funds. The Water and Sewer Funds are restricted funds to the extent that their financial resources cannot be utilised to fund General Fund operations or capital projects without Ministerial approval. The financial position of the Water and Sewer funds appears to be reasonably sound. Accordingly, the focus of this review has been on the General Fund.

As a merger incentive, the NSW Government provided ARC with \$15m in grants for Community Projects (\$1m), Merger Implementation (\$5m) and Major Projects (\$9m).

The majority of the \$1m from the Community Grants Program was distributed to not-for-profit community groups during 2016/17. Merger Implementation grants of \$5m were expended over four years ending June 2020 on over eighty projects including:

- Organisation and Restructure Reviews
- Redundancies
- Workforce Planning and development
- Strategic and Asset Management Planning
- ITC Development
- Project Management

We have not considered whether Council has received value for money for merger implementation expenditures.

Prior to amalgamation ADC and GSC Councils approved several major projects, including the Armidale Airport Terminal and Kolora Aged Care facility. These projects became the responsibility of the new Council.

Review of Council Finances

3. Current Financial Position

Since amalgamation, the General Fund's financial standing has eroded. The last audited Financial Reports of ADC and GSC for the period ended 12 May 2016 disclose combined Net Current Assets for General Fund amounting to \$29.8m compared with a balance of \$18.2m for ARC as at 30 June 2019.

Net Current Assets is an important measure of the Council's available working capital necessary to fund day to day operations and its ability to fund reserves and capital projects.

This report explores the reasons for this substantial decline in Net Current Assets.

4. Financial Performance

The audited financial reports of the Armidale Regional Council disclose the following General Fund operating results since merger.

Income Statement General Fund	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating Surplus (Deficit) Excluding Capital Grants	6,359	(16,424)	(1,797)	(2,203)
Asset Revaluation Decrements/Write Offs	669	5,650	1,242	3,446
Less: Merger Grant Implementation/Capital Projects	(15,000)	-		
Add Back: Merger Grants Expenditure	2,758	2,401	880	65
Adjusted Operating Surplus (Deficit)	(5,214)	(8,373)	325	1,308

The operating surplus reported in 2016/17 includes the merger grants totalling \$15m, so for comparative purposes, the operating result has been adjusted to reflect the operating position had Council not received these grants, nor incurred the associated expenditure.

The actual results also compare unfavourably compared with the original adopted budget.

OPERATING BUDGETS	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Operating Surplus (Deficit) before Capital Grants	-607	-4301	-3459	22

Of significance, is the substantial operating deficit in both 2016/17 and 2017/18. In both cases the deficit exceeded the original budget deficit by \$4.6m and \$4m respectively. Councils inability to achieve budget expectations in these two years has significantly impacted on available funding for capital works and reserves.

Further analysis of these results follows:

Financial Year 2016/17

Management is required to provide council with quarterly budget review reports detailing actual versus budget income and expenditure. The Regulations also require that a budget review statement must include or be accompanied by a report as to whether or not the Responsible Accounting Officer believes the report indicates that Council's financial position is satisfactory, having regard to the original estimate of income and expenditure.

Review of Council Finances

The first quarter budget review, which was tabled at the Council meeting of 16 Nov 2016, lacked appropriate financial information for the consideration of actual versus budget performance and did not include the declaration required by the Regulations.

The second quarter review for the period 31 Dec 2016 was not received by Council until 12 April 2017, some nine months into the financial year and only included some minor budget adjustments and an indication that a fully detailed report would be included in the 3rd quarter review.

Council considered the third quarter budget review report at its meeting on 24 May 2017. This report anticipated a General Fund operating surplus (excluding capital grants) of approximately \$16.5m by 30 June 2017. This projection included the \$15m in merger grants that had to be disclosed as operating revenue in the year of receipt in accordance with the Accounting Standards.

The actual operating result disclosed in the audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 was a net surplus of only \$7m, a reduction of \$9.5m compared with the 3rd quarter projections. It is noted that audited financial statements did not include the normal original budget comparison as Council was exempt from this disclosure in its first year of operations.

General Fund 2016/17	3rd Qtr Review	Projected	Actual	Variance
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
GF Surplus (excl Cap Grants/Revaluations)	15,934	16,520	7,028	9,492
Exclude Merger Grants	(15,000)	(15,000)	(15,000)	-
Add back Merger Grant Expenditure FY2017	2,758	2,758	2,758	-
Adjusted Net Surplus (Deficit)	3,692	4,278	(5,214)	9,492

In adopting the third quarter review, Council also agreed to defer \$10m in capital expenditure until the 2017/18 financial year due to project delays. This would have had the impact of offsetting any cash deficiency at financial year end caused by the unexpected operating result.

At the same meeting Council adopted (subject to community consultation) the 2017/18 Operational Budget which, to some degree, may have been incorrectly compiled based on the anticipated results disclosed in the third quarter review.

On 26 Oct 2016 the Council resolved to acquire and refurbish an existing commercial property for a new Library. The estimated cost was \$3.5m and was to be funded by way of a 10 year loan. This capital expenditure was outside the original adopted budget. The acquisition and refurbishment of the Library was completed for a total cost of \$4.4m a budget overrun of \$0.9m. We have been unable to determine why the proposed loan funding did not proceed. As no loans were utilised, funding of the Library was met from Council's revenue and reserves.

Under Office of Local Government (OLG) Capital Expenditure Guidelines for projects over \$1m or 10% of ordinary rate revenue, whichever is higher, Council is required to complete a Capital Expenditure Review (Business Case) and notify the OLG prior to commencement of the project, unless the project falls within an exempt category, such as roads and bridges.

Review of Council Finances

If project costs increase by 10% or more of the initial estimate Council must advise the OLG of the revised project cost. We have been unable to site any evidence that these Guidelines were followed.

In its first year of operations, the new Council appeared to be struggling in consolidating accounting systems and processes and managing projects. Opening balances from ADC and GSC were not incorporated into the general and project ledger until Feb 2017 and budgetary controls over projects appeared inadequate or non existent. Complex ledger configuration and lack of understanding of the cost integration aspects of the system contributed, but there was a total lack of consistency in how costs were allocated in the system. Therefore, it would have been very difficult to obtain any meaningful management reporting in a timely manner.

This situation is evidenced in reporting by the Chief Finance and Information Officer (CFO) to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) from that time and instances where projects exceeded budget or had no budget.

During 2016/17 there was a significant disconnect in commentary on budgetary issues being reported to ELT and that reported to Council. For example, a report by CFO to the ELT on 6 Dec 2016 exposes the weaknesses in General Fund finances. Comments such as *"Cash in General Fund remains stressed"* and a *"constant history of operating deficits is partially covered up in the reporting period ended 12th May 2016"* and *"the amount of Cash available for working funds once external restrictions are applied, is at the minimum limit and must be addressed"*.

The CFO commented further that *"over 23% of all project costs (for the 2016/17 period) did not have a budget"*.

The CFO also stated in a report dated 18 April 2017 to ELT that *"an assessment of the budget position for 2016/17 seems to be ok at a macro level but at a micro level it is poor. A number of activities have incurred costs without a budget allocation. The dilemma is that these costs plus the programmed budgeted works are sending the budget a long way in to deficit. The Capital budget is causing the most financial concern. Project are not tracking very well and all financial buffers have been used for the shortfall. Project management remains an issue. We are observing a number of variations with no updated information from the project manager."*

These adverse comments do not appear to be reflected in formal management reporting to Council.

The draft Financial Statements for 2016/17 were referred to Council on 25 Oct 2017 for approval to be referred to the Auditor for audit. The commentary accompanying the report to Council stated *"The financials presented are in line with the past performance of ADC and GSC combined and is consistent with assumptions made in the future forecasted results as part of the long term financial plan"*.

There was no reporting on the poor operating result recorded by the General Fund, after excluding Merger Grants, other than a comment that *"in the Financial Strategy, LTFP and recent Report with Morrison and Low there needs to be some effort to improve the unrestricted cash levels in 2018"*.

Review of Council Finances

Financial Year 2017/18

The Income Statement table above demonstrates that after one-off adjustments (disclosed in the table), Council recorded an operating deficit (excluding capital grants) of \$8.3m. This poor result compares unfavourably with the original budget deficit of \$4.3m. Part of the variance is due to the carry-over of approximately \$2.4m in Merger Project expenditure from the previous year, whereas the grant income was booked to the 2016/17 financial year.

Council also revalued assets which resulted in a \$5.6m expense charged to the Income Statement. This adjustment had no impact on cash so has been excluded from the comparison.

The first quarter budget review which was tabled at the Council meeting of 22 Nov 2017 provided for minor changes to budget and suggested that the projected financial position will be *"satisfactory"* at year end. The resolution adopting the report included a statement by Council that *"staff be instructed to achieve a break even budget result by June 2018"*.

The second quarter budget review, tabled on 28 Feb 2018, adopted a net increase in the budget deficit, together with first quarter variations of \$937,909 (Operating and Capital). The report indicated that *"management are currently reviewing operations and looking to present options around what can be adjusted to achieve a balanced result to the original budget as per resolution by 30 Jun 2018"*.

The third quarter review was presented to Council 24th May 2018. With only a little over a month to go before year end, it would be expected that any substantial blowout in the budget would be apparent.

The third quarter report stated that for General Fund *"Tight cash flow controls over the year ensure that the operating result lands as projected. As at the end of the third quarter there has been no additional information received to change expectations that the 4th quarter will not land as planned"*.

Financial Years 2018/19 and 2019/20

For the last two financial years Council has been able to achieve a modest adjusted operating surplus in General Fund.

For the FY2020 cash generated by the operating result was sufficient to fund the capital works program, thus avoiding a further deterioration in unrestricted Net Current Assets.

Operating Revenue – General Fund FY2017 - FY2020

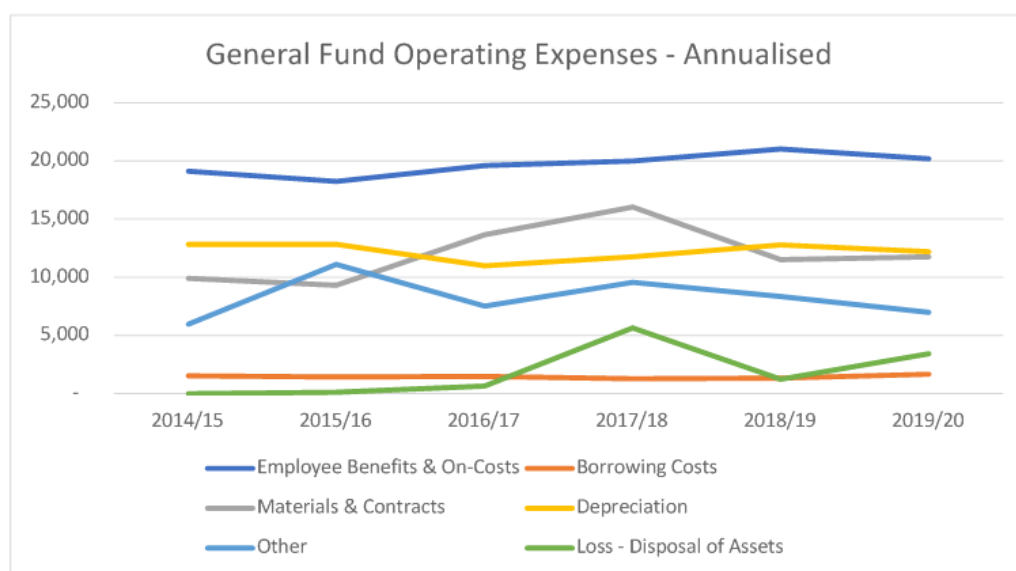
Revenue from Rates and Annual charges exceeded budget expectations by a total of \$6.9m for the four years under review. There was an offsetting shortfall in revenue from User Charges and Fees due to changes in operations and conditions associated with the drought. The explanations for revenue budget variances as disclosed in the audited financial statements appear reasonable.

Review of Council Finances

Total revenues (excluding grant revenues) were within budget expectations and we do not believe contributed to the operating results exceeding budget.

Operating Expenses – General Fund

The audited Financial Reports of the respective Councils for 2015/16 cover a 10.5 month period and the 2016/17 reports cover a 13.5 month period. In attempting to compare the operating expenses of the Council both pre and post merger, pro-rata adjustments have been made to the following graph for these respective years to approximate a twelve month reporting period. (It is accepted that the apportionment methodology may result in some inaccuracies between the two years, however the purpose is to highlight trends.)



This graph shows that Materials and Contracts category rose significantly in the 2016/17 and 2017/18 Years. The Materials and Contract category incorporates raw materials, consumables, contractor and consultancy costs. An increase was to be expected, given the subsequent expenditure of the Merger Grants in this category. However, after adjusting for merger grant expenditure, there are still apparent substantial over expenditures of up to when compared with the pre-merger average and against the original budgets.

Part of the variation in 2017/18 is due to increased costs associated with the Airport Roundabout which is classed as an Operating Expense rather than capital as it is a State Highway. Expenditure on the roundabout in 2017/18 amounted to \$1.2m. Total project expenditure was \$4.16m, a budget overrun of \$.96m.

Review of Council Finances

Merger Implementation Grant \$5m

The Merger Implementation Grant of \$5m was utilised to fund over eighty separate projects. After further analysis, it has been identified that not all project costs were charged to the relevant projects. The following table demonstrates that total merger project expenditure was \$1.78m over budget and thus funded by Council operating revenue and reserves.

A significant cost related to redundancies as the result of the merger and subsequent restructure. The total cost of redundancies since merger has totalled \$2.3m.

MERGER GRANT \$5M	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	TOTAL
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Merger Expenditure as per the Project Ledger	1,939	2,300	942	153	5,334
Identified Additional Expenditure on Merger Projects	458	226	87	25	622
Additional Restructure Redundancy Costs	-	-	81	630	711
	2,397	2,526	936	808	6,667
Over Expenditure (Budget \$4.88M General Fund)					1,787

As discussed above, the existence of appropriate project management protocols, budgetary controls and reporting accountability appeared lacking in the FY2017 and FY2018 years.

5. Capital Expenditure

Council has voted significant funds for capital expenditure in General Fund since the merger, however, expenditure in FY2017 to FY2018 fell short of the total allocation due to delay in commencing and completing projects.

Major projects have been the focus of attention in this review. The following table demonstrates significant over expenditures on many projects compared with the original budget.

PROJECT	FY 2017 to FY2020		
	Original Budget	Actual	Over Budget
Regional Airport Terminal Extension	10,500,000	10,414,999	
Airport Apron Expansion and upgrade	# 3,279,000	3,603,369	(324,369)
Airport Roundabout construction and design	* 3,200,000	4,165,028	(965,028)
Airport Business Park	# 9,750,000	5,558,130	-
New Library Construction	3,500,000	4,352,000	(852,000)
Kolora Aged Care Facility	6,300,000	7,085,012	(785,012)
New Landfill - Construction Waterfall Way	# 14,000,000	10,270,263	
Kempsey Road	# 5,551,083	2,074,526	
Bridge Renewal	2,903,903	3,177,921	(274,018)
Stormwater	1,905,000	2,924,832	(1,019,832)
Guyra Main Street upgrade	# 2,495,845	1,454,582	
Total Capex	63,384,831	55,080,661	(4,220,258)
# These Project are still in progress * This Project has been treated as an Operating Expense			

These significant project budget overruns have contributed to the decline in Council's Net Current Assets and Reserves.

Review of Council Finances

It has been difficult to extrapolate approved life to date budget allocations for these major projects due to mismatch between project ledgers, originally adopted budget, revised budget reporting and alternative sources such as community newsletters.

During 2016/17 Council expended \$6.5m on new roads or renewals which were capitalised as assets. Expenditure in 2017/18 totalled \$5m. For those projects that had an identified budget, over expenditures of \$.045m were recorded. Fifteen Projects totalling \$4.7m for the two years did not have a budget allocation recorded in the Project Ledger.

In April 2017. The Executive Leadership Team was advised of \$2.8m in over expenditure on specific projects for that year. These over expenditures do not appear to have been reported to Council. Expenditure overruns were to some extent hidden by delays in commencing or completing projects in the capital expenditure program.

6. Cash Flows for Project Funding – General Fund

The audited Financial Statements do not include a Statement of Cash Flows for the General Fund and Councils internal reporting systems are not geared to provide such a report.

It has therefore been necessary to extrapolate cash flow movements by adjusting the operating income and expenditure categories to exclude non-cash items. This approach will only provide an approximate cash movement and there may be timing differences between years.

The following table demonstrates that deficit results in FY 2017 and FY2018 impacted on Council ability to fund capital works in those years. The shortfall in capital funding would have contributed to the decline in Net Current Assets.

Capital Expenditure - General Fund	2016/17	2017/18
	\$'000	\$'000
Capital Expenses	27,154	27,200
External Funding Source:		
Loans utilised	2,175	5,253
Merger Grant (\$9m) Utilised	62	1,901
Capital Grants/Contribs Utilised	5,329	7,306
Net Operating Cash (see below)	15,691	3,889
Total Funding Sources	23,257	18,349
Shortfall in Funding (Reserves Utilised)	(3,897)	(8,851)
Operating Cash Flows available for Capex		
Net Cash from Operating Activities	32,846	9,513
Less: Capital Grants Received	(4,913)	(8,025)
Less: Merger Grants Received	(15,000)	
Plus: Merger Grant Operating Expenditures	2,758	2,401
Net Cash from Normal Operations	15,691	3,889

Review of Council Finances

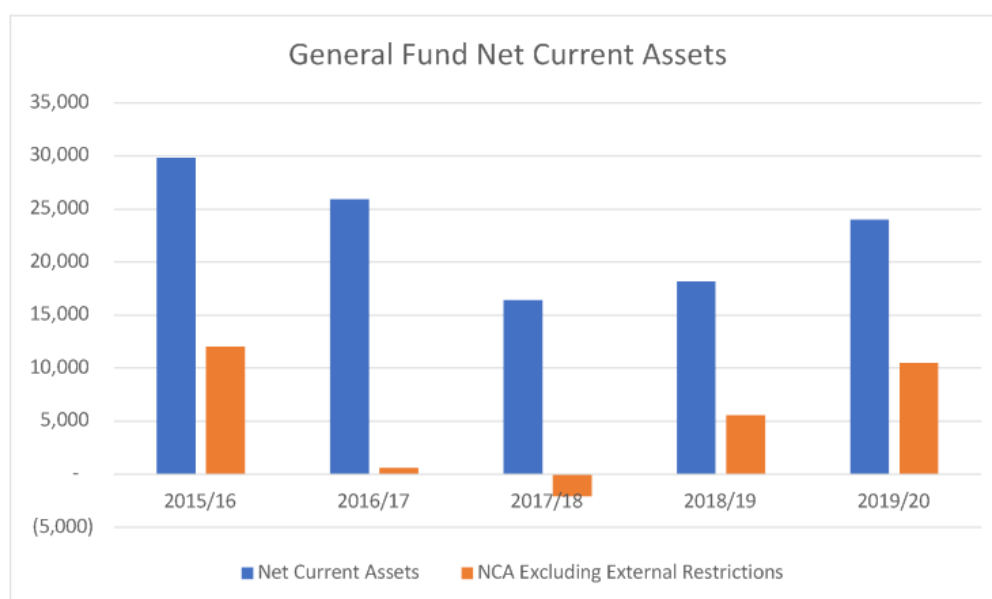
7. Net Currents Assets

The Net Current Asset balance is an important financial performance indicator because it is a measure of Council's capacity to fund its day to day working capital needs, meet liabilities arising in the next twelve months and its ability to fund reserves.

Included in current assets is cash that is externally restricted. External restrictions include unexpended grants, contributions and loans for specific purposes and are therefore not available to fund day to day working capital needs.

The following graph demonstrates the decline in Net Current Assets since merger and the recovery in the last two years. It also shows the impact of external restrictions if they are excluded from the measurement.

The decline in Net Current Assets by \$11.6m in the first three years since merger is due in part to Council adopting operating budget deficits and actual operating expenditure substantially exceeding budget, thus exacerbating the deficits, and major project expenditure overruns.



Note: For comparative purposes NCA in FY 2020 excludes contract liabilities under new Accounting Standards

This graph demonstrates that after excluding external restrictions, the Net Current Asset balance in FY2017 was borderline and turned negative in FY2018.

We are therefore of the view that Council did not have the financial capacity to fund internal restriction (reserves) in those years and that disclosed internal restrictions were being funded by cash needed for working capital.

Review of Council Finances

8. Reserves

Local Government "Reserves" are known as Internal Restrictions. As discussed above Council should only set aside reserves if there are sufficient unrestricted funds in excess of working capital needs.

Upon the formation of the new Council, the internal restrictions of the former ADC and GSC were extinguished, other than \$2.9m for the Employee Entitlements Reserve. This fact is disclosed in the final audited Financial Statements of ADC and GSC as at May 2016. The following table discloses internal restrictions as at 12 May 2016 and since merger.

Internal Restrictions	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Plant and Vehicles		2,240	-		885
Employee Leave entitlements	2,900	5,000	2,521	3,194	4,053
Infrastructure Replacement					3,317
Carry Over Works				2,368	1,136
Other				2,092	629
Total	2,900	7,240	2,521	7,654	10,020

Prior to merger internal restrictions for ADC totalled \$3.4m and GSC \$7.1m. As there was only \$9.2m in unrestricted Net Current Assets as at the date of merger, there is considerable doubt, as discussed above, as to whether these extinguished reserves could have been fully funded, had they been retained.

Even though most reserves were extinguished upon merger, ARC still continued to make project funding decisions based these extinguished reserves. For example, in Dec 2017 expansion of the Guyra Pre School was considered at a Councillor's Workshop and it was reported that "Council has approximately \$500,000 in reserves for the redevelopment of the Pre School Centre".

On 27 July 2016, Council considered a report that stated that part of the funding for new Kolora Aged Care facility would come from "Kolora Reserves \$1.37m". The adopted resolution stated "That the proposed means of funding the new Kolora Aged Care Facility as identified in this report be endorsed which includes the use of the Real Estate Reserve of \$1.5m".

On 28 Jun 2017 Council adopted a "Reserve Accounting Framework". This framework identified the process for establishing reserves and how they would be funded. For example, surpluses from Saleyards operations should fund the Saleyards reserve and as the "Plant and Fleet program operates as a self-contained business" any surplus generated from plant operations should be re-directed into a dedicated Fleet Replacement Reserve. It appears that this adopted framework was never followed, probably due to Councils incapacity to fund these reserves. The Employee Entitlements reserve was to be funded based on the aged profile of the work force but major movements suggest otherwise.

Plant and Vehicle acquisitions in FY 2017 and FY 2018 totalled \$3.2m and thus depleted the booked Reserve of \$2.2m. As Net Current Assets, excluding external restrictions, was neutral or negative in FY2017 and FY2018, we are of the view that the Plant and Vehicle Reserve was unfunded or relied on working capital for funding.

Review of Council Finances

9. Budget Monitoring, Reporting and Governance

For the first two years of the new Council, reports to Council supporting budget adoption provided very little detail in relation to specific capital projects and their source of funding.

The quarterly budget review reports were not timely, contained substantial inaccuracies and failed to predict the deficit outcomes.

Project ledgers lacked appropriate budget allocations, making monitoring difficult. Substantial Project overruns known to the ELT were not reported to Council.

Major Project management reporting was poor and lacked scrutiny, both internally and from a Council governance perspective.

10. Recommendations

As a result of issues identified during the review, we recommend that Council adopt the following recommendations:

- a) Council should adopt surplus budgets that ensure financial sustainability over the longer term.
- b) Council should adopt a Reserves policy that ensures a minimum of \$4-5m is available as unrestricted cash to fund working capital requirements before setting aside funds as Internal Restrictions.
- c) Establishment and funding of Reserves should be supported by Council resolutions.
- d) Council should request a fourth quarter budget review report to ensure that Councils financial position and performance is sound and that the budget for the ensuing year is based on current information.
- e) Council and the Audit and Risk Committee should ensure appropriate governance oversight and risk monitoring of major projects and budget reporting.
- f) Council should ensure that the budget approval and monitoring process incorporates detailed information in relation to major capital projects and funding sources.
- g) Management should establish an appropriate Project Management framework that is best practice, together with a reporting architecture that ensures accountability for budget variances.
- h) Management should ensure that quarterly budget reviews are complete, timely and accurate and reflect any adverse trends known to management.
- i) Projects should not be initiated in the Projects Ledger unless there is a fully funded budget allocation. The Project Ledger should be regularly reconciled with the General Ledger and adopted budget.
- j) Office of Local Government guidelines pertaining to Capital Expenditure Reviews should be applied to relevant projects.
- k) Council should ensure that sufficient resources are provided within the organisation to address the above recommendations.

Review of Council Finances

11. Acknowledgment

We would like to commend the Manager Financial Services and her team, particularly the Financial Accountant, for their valuable assistance during the course of the review

Because of the inadequate state of existing reports, it was necessary to recreate financial records, drill down into large and complex databases and compile spreadsheets to assist in achieving the scope of the review. The Finance team provided timely information and worked long hours to achieve the results.

TRIM:



POL183 - CORPORATE BANNER AND FLAG POLE SPONSORSHIP

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [DATE TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

1. PURPOSE

The upgrade of The Beardy Street Mall in 2004 saw the addition of a number of promotional banners and flag poles, which presented an opportunity for Council to offer the space to the local community for the promotion of their events and/or activities. In doing so, such promotion will help to maintain a feeling of activity and vibrancy in the CBD and broader community.

The purpose of this policy is to introduce a guide for how the local community and businesses may utilise the flagpole infrastructure by sponsoring the installation and hiring of flags, banners and poles throughout the Armidale business district.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to any events, community groups or individuals who wish to temporarily advertise or promote an event, theme or activity throughout the Armidale CBD.

3. POLICY INTENT

The aim of this Policy is to:

- Support the celebration and awareness of local people, places and cultural heritage, by providing an effective means of creating a strong visual presence of community activities, through the use of banners and flags around the CBD
- Provide Council with a guide for assessing and implementing banners and flag installations
- Provide Council and the community with a cost structure for the provision of hanging banners and flags
- Provide the local community with clarity of the purpose and acceptable use of the infrastructure
- Ensure public safety whilst banners and flags are being raised and utilised.

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. Provide Council with a framework for installing banners and flags being around the Armidale CBD on behalf of events, activities or community groups.
2. Outline conditions under which banners and flags can be permitted throughout the Armidale CBD that prevent the inappropriate or inappropriately positioned signage through the Armidale CBD.

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

Under the Community Strategic Plan – Growth Prosperity and Development Armidale Regional Council has a responsibility through the Tourism and Events strategy to market and promote the Armidale Region and its businesses and community activities and events.

5. POLICY

The use of the flagpoles and banners in the public space of the CBD will *primarily* be dedicated to supporting events or activities that are taking place within the region. These may be supported and/or hosted by local community groups, clubs or businesses. However, the primary message must be to emphasise the event or activity and be designed in a way that portrays this support. For example:

- the flags or banners can be used to promote local cultural or sporting events, activities or themes of a community group, and/or;
- a business may be the sponsor an event or activity and be represented in a way that reflects their association with the event they are hosting or sponsoring. For example: a sporting event, activity or conference. A business will not be permitted to advertise the company name/logo on its own.

6. PRODUCTION

- The messages on the flags or banners must be tasteful and must emphasise the event or activity, with the community group or business logo occupying no more than 20% of the total banner space.
- The flag poles are located though the Armidale Beardsley Street Mall and stand 9 meters high. Banners are constructed at 1.5m x 4.5m in size.
- Flag and banner artwork will require approval from councils Communications Staff to ensure compliance with the above prior to print production and installation.
- All banners and flags display periods will be at the discretion of Council, pending content, season, activity type and booking availability. Council supported events including (but not limited to) Christmas and ANZAC Day, will be given precedence over other bookings during these periods.
- Production, installation and removal costs will be the responsibility of the organisation promoting the event.

7. FEES

Fees apply to a standard display period of 2 weeks, with a maximum display period of four weeks (two consecutive 2 week periods), and will cover Council installation and removal costs only. All fees are required in full prior to the issue of approval.

For a list of fees and charges on the Council website, refer to the Armidale Regional Council Schedule of Fees and Charges under the heading of Economic Development & Marketing.

8. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Banners and flags need to be erected by Council staff under Safe Work NSW guidelines.

Banners and flags must comply with all copyright laws.

9. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

10. REPORTING

NIL

11. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Principal Advisor Communications – Armidale Regional Council

12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Application to hang banners on the flag poles in the Mall can be achieved by contacting Councils Communications team.

Flags are provided to and installed by the outdoor crews at the direction of the Communications Department.

- Applications cannot be accepted more than [12] twelve months in advance of the display period.
- Exact wording and layout shall be included in the application.
- Applications will be processed in order of receipt of payment.
- Approval or otherwise will be forwarded to the applicant in writing.
- Applications must be lodged at least [30] thirty days prior to the request.

13. RELATED PROCEDURES

Flag delivery, installation and removal procedure.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	Communications	
Responsible Officer	Joanna Harrison	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> [updated by policy owner]	<i>Council</i> [DD Mmmm YYYY]
Date/s of previous adoptions	[Dates of previous adoptions]	
Date of next review	[Two years from last adoption]	
TRIM Reference		

ARMIDALE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Grant opportunities - Stronger Country Communities Fund - Round 4 - Council submissions - June 2021

Applicant Body	Grant Opportunity - Funding Source	Description	Estimated Project costs & grant application amount	Estimated preparation costs for projects to be shovel ready (eg design costs, procurement, Council project management)	Total Project Costs	Land Owner	Lot & DP	Address	Asset Created to be maintained	Estim. Life (years)	Whole of Life Costs					Total whole of life costs (annual costs x estim. Life (years))
											Estim. Annual Depreciation	Estim. Maintenance (approx 2.5%-5% of cost)	Estim. Operating costs	Estim. Other costs	Total Estim. Annual Costs	
Armidale Regional Council	SCCF - R4 grant opportunities	Lynches Road Netball courts lighting installation	\$ 380,000	Included in cost estimate.	\$ 380,000	Council	Lot 5 DP 613886	110 Judith Street, Armidale, NSW 2350	Lighting towers & LED lights	25	\$ 15,200	Minimal expected (10 year warranty on lights). After 10 years, allow 2.5% maintenance \$80,000 x 2.5% x 15 yrs = \$2,000pa x 15 yrs = \$30,000.	Electricity consumption to be recovered from Netball Assoc	TBA	\$15,200 (first 10yrs depreciation only) + \$2,000 pa maintenance after 10 years.	\$ 410,000
Armidale Regional Council	SCCF - R4 grant opportunities	Jack Vallance Oval (JVO) upgrade - field renovation and lighting installation	\$ 400,000	Included in cost estimate.	\$ 400,000	Council	Lot 1 Sec 169 DP 758032, Lot 2 Sec 169 DP 758032, Lot 3 Sec 169 DP 758032	191-203 Dumaresq Street ARMIDALE NSW 2350	Lighting towers & LED lights, improved field condition	25	\$ 16,000	Minimal expected (10 year warranty on lights). After 10 years, allow 2.5% maintenance \$80,000 x 2.5% x 15 yrs = \$2,000pa x 15 yrs = \$30,000.	Electricity consumption to be recovered from Sporting group.	TBA	\$16,000 (first 10yrs depreciation only) + \$2,000 pa maintenance after 10 years.	\$ 430,000
			\$ 780,000	\$ -	\$ 780,000						\$ 31,200	\$ 4,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 35,200	\$ 840,000

Estimated project costs will be updated once firm quotes, project plans and scoping documents are prepared.

Note, not all grants allow for reimbursement of project designs, DA applications, other shovel-ready costs, so Council must fund those costs before the project commences, as part of Council's operating/capital budget.

ARMIDALE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Grant opportunities - Stronger Country Communities Fund - Round 4 - Community Group submissions - June 2021

ACCF Applicant	Grant Opportunity - Funding Source	Project plans	Estimated Project costs & grant application amount	Estimated preparation costs for projects to be shovel ready (eg design costs, procurement, Council project management)	Total Project Costs	Land Owner	Lot & DP	Address	Asset Created to be maintained	Estim. Life (years)	Estim. Annual Depreciation	Estim. Maintenance (approx 2.5%-5% of cost)	Estim. Operating costs	Estim. Other costs	Total Estim. Annual Costs	Total whole of life costs
Narwan Eels Rugby League and Sporting Club	SCCF - R4 grant opportunities	Newling Oval Lighting Installation	\$ 400,000	Included in cost estimate.	\$ 400,000	Crown Land devolved to Council	Lot 2 DP 1046262, Lot 3 DP 1055438	2350/86 Kentucky St, Newling NSW 2350	Lighting towers & LED lights	25	\$ 16,000	Minimal expected (10 year warranty on lights). After 10 years, allow 2.5% maintenance \$80,000 x 2.5% x 15 yrs = \$2,000pa x 15 yrs = \$30,000.	Electricity consumption to be recovered from Sporting group.	TBA	\$16,000 (first 10yrs depreciation only) + \$2,000 pa maintenance after 10 years.	\$ 430,000
North Armidale Tennis Club	SCCF - R4 grant opportunities	Upgrade 2 x clay courts to 2 x synthetic grass	\$ 140,000	Cost estimate includes 20% contingency & PM costs.	\$ 140,000	Council	Lot8831 DP 873355 PT Lot 907 DP755808	13 Rockvale Road, Armidale, NSW, 2350 11 Rockvale Road, Armidale, NSW, 2350	Tennis Courts	20	\$ 7,000	\$ 3,500	Electricity consumption to be recovered from users.	TBA	\$ 10,500	\$ 210,000
Hillgrove Progress Association	SCCF - R4 grant opportunities	Upgrade 2 x old clay/grass courts to 2 x synthetic multiuse court, inc fencing	\$ 380,000	Cost estimate includes 20% contingency & PM costs.	\$ 380,000	Council	Lot 1, Sec 13, DP758519	50 Brackin Street, Hillgrove, NSW, 2350	Tennis Courts & fencing	20	\$ 19,000	\$ 9,500	Electricity consumption to be recovered from users.	TBA	\$ 28,500	\$ 570,000
Armidale Riding Club	SCCF - R4 grant opportunities	New amenities, canteen, training and admin space for Armidale Riding Club, Riding for the disabled, showjumping club and pony club.	\$ 280,000	Cost estimate includes 20% contingency & PM costs.	\$ 280,000	Crown	Lot 7322 DP1166089 (West) Lot 2 Sec 181 DP 758032 (East)	41 LI Donnelly street, Armidale, NSW, 2350	Structures	30	\$ 9,333	\$ 7,000	Electricity consumption to be recovered from users.	TBA	\$ 16,333	\$ 490,000
Armidale District Cricket Association	SCCF - R4 grant opportunities	Armidale Sportsground Indoor Cricket Training Venue - Stage 4 internal amenities	\$ 95,000	Included in cost estimate.	\$ 95,000	Crown Land devolved to Council	Lot 1129 DP 39842	85D Douglas Street, Armidale NSW 2350	Internal facilities in the current building extension	20	\$ 4,750	\$ 2,375	Electricity consumption to be recovered from users	TBA	\$ 7,125	\$ 142,500
			\$ 1,295,000	\$ -	\$ 1,295,000						\$ 56,083	\$ 22,375			\$ 62,458	\$ 1,842,500

Estimated project costs will be updated once firm quotes, project plans and scoping documents are prepared.

Note, not all grants allow for reimbursement of project designs, DA applications, other shovel-ready costs, so Council must fund those costs before the project commences, as part of Council's operating/capital budget.



Armidale Regional Council
Rusden St
Armidale

Submission re: Koala Management Strategy Policy

As a rate payer of ARC with great concern for the loss of our fauna and flora, particularly the habitat of vulnerable and endangered species I thank you for the Koala Management Strategy Plan.

The plan gives an excellent description of the habitat required, and the significant decline in koala numbers. I agree that the cool country will be more important in the survival of koalas, as the coast continues to be developed, and habitat cleared, the west is affected by climate change with extreme dry heat that is not conducive to koala's survival. Dave Car's study from Stringyback Ecology, 'The Cool Country Koala Project' is evidence of the importance of the tablelands in of the survival of the species.

I have some concerns regarding the plan. It appears that most of the significant habitat is on private land. The legislation protecting this habitat is weak. I realize that the plan is based on state and federal legislation, but ask that you strengthen legislation wherever possible, while working co-operatively with landowners and property developers.

Travelling Stock Routes contain significant koala corridors and habitat. NSW government is currently offloading as much of this land as possible, selling it at give-a-way prices to neighbouring farmers. In discussion with local ecologists who have assessed the TSR's I ask that ARC have significant TSR's transferred to ARC, and conserve the land as wildlife corridors and koala habitat. Please contact me if you want to contact the ecologists who have assessed the TSR's.

Koalas are more likely to find suitable habitat in gullies and riparian zones, where the trees are more likely to survive droughts and heat. There is more likely to be moisture available in the lower altitudes. It is important to conserve these areas. Many trees on hill tops died in the last drought, as there is less moisture on hill tops.

I believe that the suggestion that biodiversity offsets serve any purpose is fiction. Any offset is already occupied by wildlife, including koalas. Newly planted offsets are of no use to this generation of koalas. Trees must be about 20 years old before they are available as feed trees. A young koala was found dead in the Armidale Pine Forest. The cause of death was determined to be eating the leaves of young trees which were toxic.

The protection of this iconic species is essential. Koala habitat must be protected at all costs. Protection of koala habitat will also support other native wildlife and birds

Mandy McLeod

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 29 May 2021 1:45 PM
To: Council
Subject: Koala Management Strategy submission

Attn: James Roncon, General Manager

I wanted to add my support for the strategy and congratulate the Council on work towards support of koalas within our region.

My husband and I attended the Koalas in the Spotlight event a few months ago and took the opportunity to follow up with a conversation and visit from Des Andersen from Landcare re: funding for tree planting and fencing on our property to provide habitat for koalas, native birds, bees and reptiles. The end of our property is opposite Imbota Reserve and falls within an identified linkage corridor.

I want to add that the Koala in the Spotlight event was very popular and we met quite a few new residents to Armidale. It is probably significant in promotion of the need for local land owners to support the corridors.

A 'Koala' installation in the Mall might also serve to promote their importance in the New England region. I refer to the painted, mosaic fiberglass koalas that are on display at Port Macquarie and Australian Botanical Gardens at Mt Annan.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mandy McLeod

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 30 May 2021 9:20 AM
To: Council
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Koala Management Strategy Policy

[REDACTED]
30 May 2021

We are writing to express congratulations and support for the new Koala Management Strategy Policy of the Armidale Regional Council. We are especially impressed by the presentation of scientifically factual map and other information backing up the strategy.

We have read the document with interest and have learned much about our local koala population and the threats facing it. It is clear that koalas in our cooler tablelands environment are becoming ever more important to the survival of the species as a whole, being relatively disease-free, well placed to survive ongoing climate heating, and geographically occurring at a crucial point between the more threatened coastal and inland populations to our east and west respectively. Koalas are iconic animals and of international renown and interest. To lose them would be a disaster, but to foster a healthy and large population could provide an important tourism boost to our area in future.

We are particularly interested in the idea of developing and protecting migration corridors across the region. At this property where we live close to Armidale, we continue to plant native trees and shrubs which hopefully will benefit koalas in the future, as part of tree cover restoration in places where native animals might need to move. Corridors of this kind will allow not only koalas to migrate more safely, and so increase their chances of surviving climate-related and other hazards. Such corridors would also benefit a wide range of bird species and other native fauna and flora, all of which have conservation value and all of which are to some extent threatened by uncontrolled development and land use. The strategy makes an excellent start to a better coordinated land use strategy to benefit all wildlife.

We will watch future progress of this Council initiative with interest.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Armidale
NSW 2350
Australia
Tel: (02) 522 0937

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Mandy McLeod

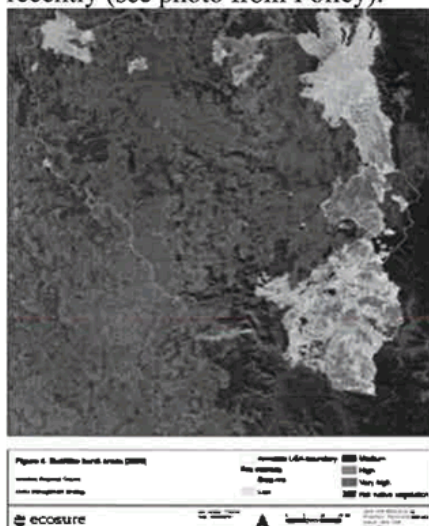
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 31 May 2021 9:31 AM
To: Council
Subject: Submission to support the Koala Management Strategy Policy

ATTENTION:

The General Manager
Mr James Roncon
Armidale Regional Council

Koala Management Strategy Policy

Having attended an event hosted by Southern New England Landcare and Armidale Regional Council last Saturday at Dangarsleigh, I commend the professionalism, enthusiasm and passion of Des Andersen and Mandy McLeod to build corridors of koala focussed vegetation across the New England area. This is particularly important following the devastating fires that destroyed so many koalas and their natural habitat recently (see photo from Policy).



The New England area, as highlighted in this Management Strategy, is now seen as a key component for the future of koalas with 5-10-18% of remaining koalas identified here. We are certainly looking forward to Des Andersen visiting our local area (Castledoye Rd / Milne Rd / Anderson's Rd) in the near future to engage other landholders to assist in this endeavour.

We should do all we can to save these precious koalas and I have faith and trust that in the hands of these people, good progress will be made.

PS. This is my very rushed effort to support this policy, having had my attention drawn to it on Saturday.

[REDACTED]

31/05/2021

General Manager
Armidale Regional Council
Rusden St, Armidale NSW 2350

Re: Submission to Draft Koala Management Strategy Policy

Congratulations to Armidale Regional Council for allocating resources for the preparation of this strategy. The importance of a Strategy / Policy to optimise koala protection in our area is highlighted in the statement (1.5.4) that Armidale is estimated to contain 5-10% of the NSW koala population. A report released 06/09/2020 by the World Wide Fund for Nature - Australia showed a 71% decline in koala population across six location in northern NSW, burned in last season's bushfires (<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-06/wwf-koala-loss-report-finds-71pc-decline-after-fires/12624938>). A follow up report on 07/12/2020 estimated that more than 60,000 koalas across Australia were impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfire crisis. Impacts identified were death, injury, trauma, smoke inhalation, heat stress, dehydration, loss of habitat, reduced food supply, increased predation risk and conflict with other animals after fleeing to unburnt forest (<https://www.wwf.org.au/news/news/2020/wwf-60000-koalas-impacted-by-bushfire-crisis#gs.2qk08c>).

The serious nature of the threat that human induced climate change poses to our koalas as well as to other species including humans themselves was acknowledged by Armidale Regional Council in its Climate Emergency Declaration, October 2019. Unprecedented severe drought conditions caused defoliation and death of many trees in prime koala habitat in the vicinity of Mt Duval and Newholme during that period, as is evident from the browning off of foliage on the lower half to 1/3 of Mt Duval in the photograph below (taken 17/11/2019 from Newholme).



It would be appropriate to include this photograph, taken by myself, in the policy document - you have my permission to do so.

In section 1.6 of the Policy, Threats to koalas in Armidale region, it should be noted that human induced climate change is causing habitat destruction and increasing the risk of catastrophic bushfire occur. It is puzzling to see that Climate change is identified as being low risk. This should be changed to high risk. I have seen submissions by Dave Carr of Stringybark Ecological and by Sustainable Living Armidale's Wildlife Habitat Group and endorse the content of these submissions.

Thankyou for the opportunity to comment on this policy.

Yours Sincerely,

Co-cordinator Sustainable Living Armidale Climate Action Group

Response to Armidale Regional Council Draft Koala Management Strategy

31/5/2021

I have been undertaking koala research in the ARC area and the broader Northern Tablelands region since 2016. This research includes the Cool Country Koala Project – Southern Area. This project searched for koalas or signs of koalas over 140 sites and documented koala use trees and the vegetation communities koalas were living in. I ran a koala tracking project around Mt Duval and northern peri-urban areas of Armidale using GPS collars to determine koala home ranges in the area. I also prepared the preliminary report (Carr and Wilkie, 2020) used by Council, SOS and Ecosure in preparing this report. I have also conducted many Koala SEPP assessments in the area covered by this strategy.

Comments

Introduction

The report refers to the Cool Country Koala project but references Cristecu et al, 2019. It appears that Ecosure have only used this report which covers the Ashford, Delungra and Tenterfield areas and not the report we prepared under the same project for the Armidale-Uralla, Walcha and Nowendoc areas. See References below.

What is the “New England Tablelands “ boundary in Figure 1? Electorate? Seems meaningless to the current strategy. Much better to use the New England Tablelands bioregion boundary.

1.5.2 Heinz reference to home ranges is unreliable as it was a very small study conducted with VHF tracking equipment.

1.5.3 Our tracking project also found that individual koalas have very strong preferences for food species which may be completely different to other koalas in the area. This may limit interaction between koalas and has implications for the importance of retaining a diversity of plant communities in a koala habitat.

Again, Ecosure have not referenced the local Cool Country Koala report which has the food species relevant to the Armidale LGA, instead using the Cristecu report which has very different species. Our report found koalas in this region use 35 species, not 28.

Eucalyptus moluccana and *Eucalyptus banksii* are spelt incorrectly. *Eucalyptus dalrympleana* should also include “*subsp. heptantha*”. Contrary to Table 1 we found *E. banksii*, *E. acaciiformis* and *E. radiata subsp. sejuncta* to be important local food trees.

1.5.4 The report does not acknowledge the nature of the koala populations on the Northern Tablelands as being sparsely distributed. Our research found that while koalas occur in a wide range of areas and vegetation types, they are usually present in sparse numbers. There

are only a few dense populations, such as around Mt Duval. This makes it very difficult to identify 'core koala populations' under the current SEPP (2020).

1.5.5 Again, Ecosure have referenced the wrong Cool Country Koala report.

The Northern Tablelands Koala Recovery Strategy referenced several times is no longer an active document, having been superseded by the Cool Country Koala projects and the SOS Koala Hub project. It was a useful strategy to guide these projects but now some of the information (habitat areas, corridors) is incorrect.

Research gaps – through our work we have also identified 2 other research needs:

- Whether feed-tree specificity is restricting dispersal of koalas to all available, but unoccupied, habitat.
- Relationships between populations in Armidale LGA and those in Delungra and Macleay Gorges.

Threats

I disagree with the risk ranking here. As we have seen, climate change is a very high risk, particularly where it increases the incidence of drought and bushfire. Drought leads to increased stress on koalas, resulting in death, kidney failure (often fatal), forced migration (exposure to vehicle strike and dog attack), and reduced fertility. Climate change is largely responsible for the loss or decline of populations in the Pilliga and around Gunnedah.

Bushfire has a very low incidence, but catastrophic outcomes for koalas. Anecdotal evidence from the Balala-Kingstown area indicates that koalas were once frequent in the area, but since a major fire in the 1970s, koalas have been very rare. A bushfire in the Mt Duval area has the potential to wipe out the major core population in Armidale LGA. This threat must be ranked high.

Disease, particularly Chlamydia, is taking a constant toll on koala populations. Although not as prevalent as coastal areas, the disease is present and serious and will be exacerbated in times of environmental stress. This should be ranked high.

As far as I am aware, there is no evidence that dog attack is a serious threat to koalas around Armidale. We have had no reports of dog attacks on koalas. More information is needed, but dog attack should be ranked as a low risk.

Drowning in swimming pools is not a threat in this area. I doubt if there has been a recorded incidence of this as so few people have pools. Leave this out of the threat list.

1.6.1 Actions to consider to mitigate clearing and habitat fragmentation must include planning restrictions on development, including minimum lot sizes, in koala habitat areas. This is an action well within the sphere of Council's interest and remit.

1.6.3

Need to spell out the "range of structures and mechanisms (that) can be implemented to help keep koalas off roads as well as change driver behaviour".

1.6.4

As mentioned above, bushfires are rare around Armidale, but have potentially catastrophic impacts for koalas. The core population is located in heavily timbered areas adjoining Mt Duval, which have not been burnt for many years. A single fire could wipe out our most important core population. This risk must be elevated to high, so we can take appropriate action to lower fire risk through prescribed and cultural burning.

1.6.5

Until 2018 we also thought climate change impacts on koalas posed a low level of threat. However, the 2018-19 drought was the worst on record and showed what is likely to become more common. Very large areas of core koala habitat had up to 95% loss of canopy and many tree deaths due to drought. Some of these areas have still not recovered. During this drought we tracked (with GPS collars) 2 koalas. Both females had joeys before and after our tracking project and managed to survive in sites with severe loss of canopy. They survived by utilising refuges in moister gullies or where trees had access to groundwater. These refuges occupied 5-10% of the landscape, so were disproportionately important to the survival of koalas. It is critical that this information is considered in future planning decisions, in order to retain and protect such refuge vegetation. Climate change is the number one and highest risk to the survival of koalas everywhere and we must consider it in all future decisions on koala management.

The Strategy refers to *E. camaldulensis* and *E. populnea* which do not occur in the Armidale LGA. While *E. viminalis* is used by koalas it is not the most important species. CSIRO has modelled the future distribution of many tree species in Australia. The future modelling of local key koala species must be included in this strategy. These species should be drawn from the Cool Country Koala _ Southern Project report, not the Cristecu report.

2.3 Land to which the strategy applies

Why have the different precincts? I understand why we used these zones in our report (Carr and Wilkie, 2020) but not why they are included in this Strategy. Is there any difference in how the Strategy is applied to the different precincts? If there are differences, they should be highlighted throughout this Strategy where relevant.

.4 Koala Habitat Mapping

Need to include a definition of "Core Koala Habitat" from whatever the SEPP of the week is.

Need to acknowledge Carr and Wilkie, 2020 as the source of all the spatial data and the precinct boundaries used in this report.

Are we including Uralla Shire in this Strategy? I would have thought it could not be covered as ARC can only deal with its own region?

Figs 5 & 6: It is important to note that PCT mapping in this region has an accuracy of <10% based on our experience. The new mapping (Eastern NSW PCT) may be more accurate but has not been tested. No decisions about PCT presence or absence should be based on mapped data alone.

Fig 7 looks good. Need to include a means that this can be updated as new information or research comes to light.

Mapping shown in Figure 8 is clearly wrong as it shows our core koala habitat around Mt Duval and 'Newholme' as tertiary habitat. The terms primary, secondary and tertiary habitat are not used again in this Strategy so I wonder what is the point of including them? I think Council will end up with people arguing that they should not have to do anything because they are only in tertiary habitat. I suggest leaving this out and deleting Fig 8.

Management and Monitoring

The key principles not principals.

Management principles look good. Need to include Colourbond fences as these are koala-impermeable. Covenants can be included in developments to restrict their use.

All management actions need to be linked to threats and prioritised according to the risk level of that threat. Management actions also need to be linked to the stakeholders who have a role in either. Causing that threat, or mitigating it. Although Council can only act on threats within their remit, they can play a coordinating or educating role with other stakeholders.

I would like to see a table that links threats, causes or drivers of threats, threat risk, management action and responsibility for management actions in addition to the current Table 3.

Table 3 is really good and should be the 'guts' of the strategy for Council implementation.

4.5 Should say "Work with Local Land Services to conserve habitat..."

6.2 In conjunction with SNLC and Armidale Tree Group.

11.1 Funding. Add "In partnership with SNLC and Armidale Tree group, use Charitable Trusts and Funds to encourage donations from the public and philanthropic organisations to support koala habitat conservation and restoration."

12. Add 12.3 "In partnership with University of New England, other Universities, local consultants and NT Koala Conservation project, actively develop research projects and seek funding to address the research gaps identified in this Strategy".

Table 4

Impediments to movement. Add something about colourbond fences.

4.3 Koala Habitat development applications

Criteria 1. Very important so these two maps need to be right. See my comments under Appendix 6 below in regard to the Corridor map.

The Core Koala Habitat map needs to be shown at the same scale and level of detail as the Corridor map in Appendix 6 so people can see where they sit when planning a development. The map in Fig 7 is not suitable for this purpose.

4.4.2

Need to say something about the security of any compensatory measures. It is no good if someone plants trees to offset the impact of a development then those trees are cleared a year later. Sites receiving compensatory measures must have security of tenure, management agreements or covenants.

4.5 Table 5 Is the replacement rate in trees or area? i.e. 1 tree replaced by 20 trees or 1ha replaced by 20ha?

References

Include:

Carr, D.B., Lemon, J.M., and Wilkie, A. (2017) Cool Country Koala Project (South)- Final Project Report and Koala Management Plans – Armidale-Uralla, Walcha and Nowendoc. A report to Northern Tablelands Local Land Services. Stringybark Ecological, Armidale, NSW.

Carr, D and Wilkie, A (2020) Armidale Regional Council Koala Management Strategy – Final report to Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. Stringybark Ecological, Armidale. [This is the source of most of the mapping data and the Precincts used in the Strategy]

Appendix 3

Council should actively work with stakeholder groups who do community engagement and education on a regular basis. These include:

- Armidale Tree Group,
- SNLC,
- NT LLS,
- Local consultants,
- Thalgarrh Field Studies Centre

Appendix 6

Habitat linkages map looks good but needs to show where Crown Lands, State Forests and NPWS land are also important linkages. For example, Tilbuster TSR is a critical habitat and corridor.

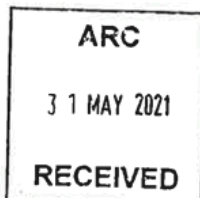
The following areas need to be added to this map.

The corridor area to the south of Armidale urban area needs to extend along Translator Hill to include Imbanja Lane and east to the railway line. On the western edge of the LGA, Tanglewood Rd is a very important corridor from Bundarra Rd to Old Inverell Rd. The area from Primrose Hill Rd/Ferris Lane going north to Claremont Rd, then east to Mt Duval, is a critical corridor.

The area between Mt Duval east through Sunnyside to Puddledock Dam is another critically important corridor and is a source of vehicle strike risk where it crosses New England Hwy. The corridor then continues east through fragmented woodland to Herbert Park Rd.

I am happy to discuss any of the comments. Call me on [REDACTED] email [REDACTED]

ARMIDALE NSW 2350



31st May 2021

The General Manager
Armidale Regional Council
PO Box 75A
Armidale NSW 2350

This letter is in regard to the proposed Koala Management Strategy.

Within the Armidale town area, there are a large number of factors that put the Koala at risk i.e. roads, development, cars, people, dogs as noted in the strategy.

There are opportunities for better Koala management in the area which include:

1. better management of public land
2. hazard reduction to reduce fire risk on public land
3. guidelines with encouragement and education for private landholders.
4. encouragement of safe habitat areas on public land away from risks eg roads, development, cars, people, dogs.
5. better fencing of public areas should be examined. Exclusion fencing is noted in Table 4 General Mitigation Measures on page 33 of the Strategy as being an effective management tool of protecting Koalas from "disturbance and indirect impacts"

The strategy focuses heavily on koala sightings as the key determinant of the koala population in given areas.

The Koala Management Strategy (refer to page 9) notes that the report may contain "observation bias". This observation bias is likely to have caused an over estimation of the Koala numbers within the Armidale area.

A program of tagging and monitoring individual koalas, would be a more accurate way of determining the population and movement.

My research for Trelawney Road is

- 1 Neighbour (Trelawney Road) has sighted one Koala in 40 Years
- 1 Neighbour (1 Blue Wren Drive) has, as part of a proposed development (residential house), had an inspection by a Fauna Expert stating that there has been NO signs of Koala activity but noted one sighting in 2004, which was deemed to be an itinerant koala

- there have been no sightings of koalas on 21 Trelawney Rd (our property, which we have owned for over 5 ½ years). The previous owners of 30+ years did not note any koalas residing on or traversing the property.

The Strategy, Figure 5 p 20, notes 1 Koala sighting in Trelawney road. This is likely to be another itinerant Koala as highlighted by the study completed by the Fauna expert, as mentioned above.

There is no historical data to indicate that our property is part of a Koala corridor therefore we request that our property 21 Trelawney Road (LAC 2019 DP 755808) be removed from the shaded area on the Koala Linkage Map.

We are primary producers. We have working dogs that are essential to our business and livestock as our total income. This is private freehold land. We object to proposals by authorities to force restrictions on our management, place covenants over our property or have our property be placed within any area which will be forced to "Avoid Development" in the future. See Note 3 - Management and Monitoring activities - page 25 of Koala Management Strategy).

We would have like to attend a community engagement meeting however the only event advertised was at Dangarsleigh Hall on May 29th 2021.

This meeting was

" aimed at landholders in the Dangarsleigh/Kellys Plains area, with the intention of raising awareness of, and developing Expressions of Interest for, koala habitat planning & conservation works on private properties."

There was no session advertised for other interested landholders.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and we look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Address]

[REDACTED]
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

31st May 2021

The General Manager
Armidale Regional Council,
PO Box 75A
Armidale NSW 2350

Dear Sir

RE Draft Koala Management Strategy

Please include the following information with our Submission that was delivered to Council today.

I write to you with concern over the draft Koala Management Strategy in its current form.

The boundary fence of our property [REDACTED] 502 Dunmore Dam Road, Armidale NSW 2350 appears to be within the shaded area on the Koala Linkage Map.

We are unsure how accurate the shaded overlay is, but we request that you remove the above property from any shaded area on the Koala Linkage Map, so that it is not included.

We are primary producers. Our property requires a maintainable boundary fence to be able to manage our livestock. Within the Strategy, it mentions restrictions on landholders. We are conservative however we need to be practical with the management of our fence lines.

We have owned the property for over 45 years and Koala's have not been observed on our property.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mandy McLeod

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 31 May 2021 9:02 PM
To: Council
Subject: submission re. Koala strategy

Attention: General Manager

I read through the draft Koala strategy prepared by EcoSure. I am pleased that the Council is preparing a Koala strategy and that EcoSure appears to have consulted with many people interested in Koalas.

However, the draft strategy can be improved. There are two matters, in particular, that I would like to draw to your attention.

1. The proposed strategy does not cover the whole Shire. The focus on the vicinity of Armidale needs to be justified, and the Strategy needs to include provisions, and a timetable, to consider the needs of Koalas outside of the specified zones. I am particularly concerned that the plight of Koalas may be worse outside the specified zones than within them. I have a property about 40 km west of Guyra. While I haven't seen a Koala on the property, I am aware that Koalas are known to occur in the locality, but I don't think that they receive much consideration.
2. The strategy misses an opportunity to embrace a more holistic concept of nature conservation by considering the needs of all our fauna, which of course includes other threatened species such as threatened woodland birds. The fostering of conservation initiatives that benefit all wildlife species should be a guiding principle.

Thankyou for providing me with the opportunity to make a submission.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Armidale

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Armidale

NSW 2350

31st May 2021

MR JAMES RONCON GENERAL MANAGER ARMIDALE REGIONAL COUNCIL

RE: DRAFT ARMIDALE KOALA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

I would like to make some comments on the proposed Koala management strategy.

1. We as community members would love to see the Koala population thrive. However, trying to build corridors and habitat within town boundaries I believe would be endangering the koala population because of the increased risk of death or injury from vehicle traffic and town dogs.

2. In 2015, prior to building my home on our 20ha block, I was required to complete a fauna study for my DA. The expert who did the report said there was a sighting of 1 koala in 2004 and it was most probably an itinerant koala. He also stated in the report there were no signs of any koalas living in this area. There were no visible signs such as scratching on trees indicating koalas living there. Nor have we seen or any of our neighbours any in the ensuing years. How can we be sure about the veracity of the reported sightings of the Koala numbers in the report? Is it possible the same Koala could have been sighted and recorded on more than one occasion?

3. I would like to suggest an alternative strategy, THE ARC take over the State Forest controlled Pine Forest and that a study be done into the removal of the pine trees within the Armidale Pine Forest as the trees there reach the end of their natural life. The trees can then be replaced with edible species for koalas. The area then can be exclusion fenced to keep out predators and vehicles. If this proposal is adopted, it should not affect the current users of the Pine Forest by the different community groups who currently use this wonderful 170 hectare forest.

The people of Armidale and visitors can then have a dedicated Koala Habitat that is fully sustainable within easy reach of the city. What a great tourist attraction and learning centre it could become for the benefit of the Koala population and the whole New England region for many years to come.

4. Increasing corridors and dense planting of Eucalypts could also be detrimental in times of extreme bushfire conditions. If proper management strategies are not put in place, we could see total devastation of habitat and possibly koalas as was seen in the devastating fires of the summer of 2020.

As a private landholder I am particularly concerned about amendments to the Bush Fire codes. There are flow on effects for fire risk, control of vegetation and increased insurance costs if you are in these proposed Koala zones.

Regards

[REDACTED]

PS I look forward to any public forum the council would like to hold to discuss this strategy further.

Wildlife Habitat Group submission to ARC re Koala Management Strategy



Wildlife Habitat Group (WHG) is an action group of Sustainable Living Armidale. We thank Council for the opportunity to engage in the consultation process concerning the Koala Management Strategy Policy

The purpose of this Koala Management Strategy, as outlined on the Armidale Regional Council website, is 'to encourage the conservation, management and

rehabilitation of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to support a permanent free-living population over their present range in Armidale local government area (LGA). Combined with other initiatives across the state the intent is to reverse the current trend of koala population decline'. The purpose is a worthy one and deserving of wholehearted community support.

The Strategy's explanation of the challenges of planning for Koala Management in the context of the State's repeal of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2019 and lack of any guidelines or provisions as to what might be included in the replacement policy underlines the importance of Local Government in this significant environmental area. WHG encourages Council to apply pressure to State Government to ensure the SEPP which it introduces is robust, based on science and fit-for-the-purpose of achieving protection for koalas and their habitat.

The Strategy reflects commendable consultation with community groups, including the Armidale Tree Group. The Council's acquisition of the Crown Land located in south Armidale adjoining 29 and 39 Braund Street and 22 Springhill Lane, Armidale and its revegetation provides an excellent example of a positive, proactive response to community concerns on the part of ARC.

WHG's submission concerns 5 main considerations:

1. Discrepancies between the Strategy and our understanding of koala populations and habitat
2. Climate change as a risk factor: 'high' or 'very high'
3. The area covered by the Strategy
4. The role Council could play in advising developers (our experience with Edgar Street)
5. 'Offsets' and 'pre-emptive' clearing of land (Airport)
6. Koala management as an opportunity to protect areas of high ecological value

Consideration 1: Discrepancies between the Strategy and our understanding of koala populations and habitat

WHG members have used the 'Cool Country Koala Project (South)' (Carr, D.B., Lemon, J.M., and Wilkie, A (2017)) in submissions and have attended SLA forums with Dave Carr and John Lemon. Some observations from these experiences which are not included in the Ecosure document include:

- the idiosyncratic of individual koalas in choice of food species (of which there are 35 in the LGA) and the importance of retaining a wide diversity of choice
- the generally sparse distribution of koala populations in our LGA

Wildlife Habitat Group submission to ARC re Koala Management Strategy

- the relationship between the koala populations in Armidale LGA and those in Macleay Gorges and up towards Delungra which is still being investigated
- Mt Duval and 'Newholme' have been identified as core habitat rather than 'tertiary habitat' (Figure 8)
- Food trees take 20-30 years growing to be edible
- TSRs (such as Tilbuster) are vital as habitat and as corridors; other significant corridors are Translator Hill-Imbanja Lane-railway line; Tanglewood Road; Primrose Hill Road-Claremont Road- Mt Duval; Mt Duval-Sunnyside-Puddledock Dam- Herbert Park Road

Consideration 2: Climate change as a risk factor: 'high' or 'very high'

Section 1.6 of the Strategy: Threats to koalas in Armidale region (p.11) rates 'climate change' as 'low risk'. Members of WHG have an acute understanding of the catastrophic loss of koalas in the Gunnedah area and in the Pilliga attributable to climate change (as established by the Upper House Inquiry into Koalas). Climate change is associated with an increase in drought and bushfire. The effect of drought in creating increased stress on koalas through reduced fertility, organ failure and forced migration is well-known. The 2018-19 drought was the worst on record and severe canopy loss was observed in many areas across the LGA. Koalas were compelled into lower, moister areas where trees had access to groundwater. These vital *refugia* must be protected by Council planning decisions and 'climate change' should be rated 'high' or 'very high' as a risk factor.

Consideration 3: The area covered by the Strategy

Strategy 2, while commendable in basic intent, is an area of concern for WHG.

2.3 Land to which the strategy applies

This Strategy applies to private or public land (excluding state forest and national parks) within the Armidale LGA demarcated as:

- *Precinct 1*
- *Precinct 1a (5 km buffer area outside Precinct 1)*
- *Precinct 2 (predominately zoned RU1)* (p.18)

WHG urges Council to develop informed considerations for the **whole of landscape** in the LGA. Indeed, it would appear impossible for the Strategy to achieve its stated aim 'to encourage the conservation, management and rehabilitation of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas **to support a permanent free-living population over their present range in Armidale local government area**' without a broadening of scope.

In all likelihood, koalas and their habitat are significantly threatened outside the management zone and under-reporting (and intentional non-reporting) must be considered obstacles to a coherent management plan. Council is urged:

- to implement strategies to widen the data-base to include the entire LGA
- to undertake the (further) development of plans with landholders across the LGA
- to include consideration of strategies to extend Council protection to Travelling Stock Routes

Wildlife Habitat Group submission to ARC re Koala Management Strategy

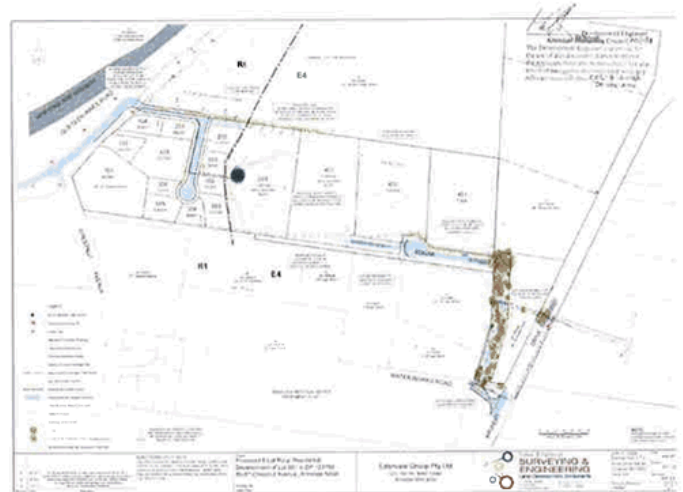
- to include Guyra and the rural townships throughout the LGA in management planning and reporting strategies
- to ensure the Management Plan has the flexibility to incorporate new data expeditiously

Consideration 4: The role Council could play in advising developers

WHG encourages Council to routinely assist developers to explore alternatives to plans which will impact negatively on koala habitat.

In 2019 the loss of trees along Edgar Street and the plans to replace the existing lane with a two-lane road was the catalyst for the formation of WHG.

A resident living adjacent to the lane arrived home to find trees being felled. At a meeting of 20 residents of the neighbouring community on 14 July 2019 it was decided to pursue the matter with the aim of minimising the loss of habitat and focusing on the movement of koalas along the lane. WHG engaged in many consultations, public meetings, representation to Council and submissions



Trees along the lane which would have been lost with widening.

Eventually, our assumption that 'the developer' was the instigator of the clearing and the plan to widen the road proved not to be the case and alternatives which will protect the habitat of the owls and echidnas which



live in the lane and retain it as a corridor for koalas are now being pursued. If Council were to routinely explore alternatives with developers similar positive outcomes could be anticipated in other circumstances.

Wildlife Habitat Group submission to ARC re Koala Management Strategy

Consideration 5: Koala Habitat compensatory measures: 'Offsetting' – the Airport

4.5.2 Objectives

Offsetting should be considered a last resort of the development application process where proponents should first seek to avoid and then minimise any impacts from a development. (p.38)

WHG members endorse this objective. Our experience with 'offsets' includes the clearing of trees to the south of the Armidale airport which happened in the week commencing Monday 12 August, 2019.

'The Armidale Express', in an article *Armidale Regional Council's ecologically friendly business park* (August 23, 2019), reported that the Mayor, Councillor Murray, observed that 'the site was assessed by ecologists as highly degraded, from years of grazing and invasion by perennial weeds.'



However, the land cleared was Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland, an endangered ecological community listed under both NSW and Commonwealth environment legislation.

Although the article stated that 'an ecologist was present on site to monitor the trees for any native animals before and during their removal' WHG is aware of at least two glider possums which were rescued by passers-by and later released.

Of further concern is our understanding that the current access onto Kia Ora Road from the highway will be closed and residents on Kia Ora Road will access the highway from within the proposed industrial estate. This would cause the loss of further native habitat.



WHG is concerned that ARC used a lack of legislative clarity to guide the decision-making process which has resulted in the unfortunate decision to clear an EEC rather than remove trees as required for necessary infrastructure.

Wildlife Habitat Group submission to ARC re Koala Management Strategy

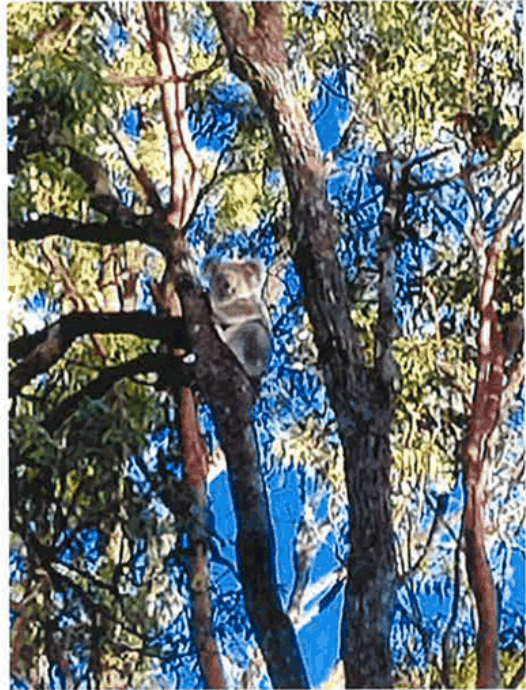
In January 2021 WHG was informed that The Croft (to the south of the Airport) was to be protected as an 'offset'. Recently we have heard, informally, that an area to the north of the airport is to provide the 'offset'.

As yet we have been unable to confirm this, or to ascertain what covenants may be in place to protect this 'offset' area.

In this, as in other matters, the creation of a strong legislative framework by the State Government is to be actively encouraged.

Consideration 6: Using Koala Management planning to protect areas of high ecological value

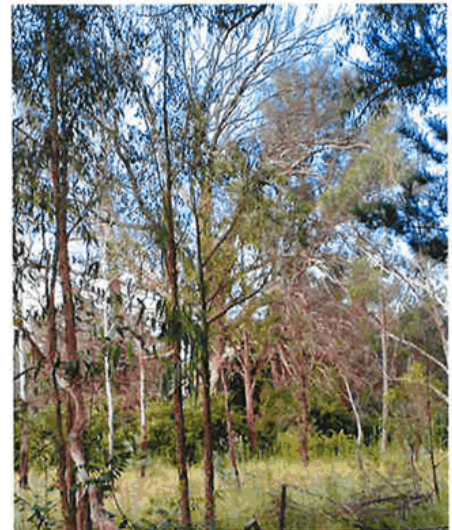
One such area occurs on the eastern outskirts of Armidale linking adjacent bushland between Rockvale Road, Box Hill Drive and Apple Tree Drive; a biodiversity 'hot spot' used by a range of woodland bird species including varied sitellas and speckled warblers which are both listed as Threatened (vulnerable) species and visited by koalas as seen in the photo above taken on 28 February 2021 (when the sighting was reported to Council)



Within 200 metres of this sighting the tree (middle of adjacent image) was adversely impacted by the drought in 2019 but was still a significant habitat tree which had been observed being used by small birds including yellow robins and threatened species such as the varied sitella and speckled warble.

This adjacent photo was taken on 28/02/2021

The photo below, the tree destroyed, was taken 19/03/2021



Wildlife Habitat Group submission to ARC re Koala Management Strategy

WHG urges ARC to take the range of actions available to it to ensure development conditions which guarantee protection of threatened species and their habitat together with corridor linkages. In the above instance the roadside vegetation along Apple Tree Drive, Rockvale Road and Box Hill Drive must be protected and road widening must not be considered.

While encouraging the State Government to create the legislative conditions conducive to protection of koalas on a state-wide scale is obviously important, ARC is encouraged to implement the strategies currently available to it: from restricting the use of colour bond fencing to including planning restrictions on developments, especially minimum lot sizes in areas of koala habitat. The long-term security of all 'compensatory measures', whether tree planting or establishing offsets, must be guaranteed with security of tenure, management agreements or covenants.

The value to the community of protection of our charismatic koala cannot be over-estimated. The opportunities for eco-tourism are likewise immense: we can offer visitors the chance to see iconic species in close proximity to our many other attractions.

31ST May 2021

Guyra NSW 2365

(reply address please note)

To the General Manager, Armidale Regional Council

Comments on the Koala Management Strategy , Armidale Region

Armidale Region is not the ENTIRE ARMIDALE REGION. WHY.

This in itself is a reason to redo this report because Koala are in every area this Report misses, and Mis - States as Armidale Region. When it isn't Armidale Region. It is Armidale City to which boundary area that is known by

- rivers, creeks, wetlands, into gorges of World Heritage Listed nature.

- towns, property boundaries etc, which c ask be attained from Shire maps, superimposed over the Inappropriate Mapping on every Map without reference to Koala known Areas AT ALL, that should be LISTED, DEFINED, BOUNDARY IDENTIFIED, AREA IDENTIFIED AREAS KNOWN TO LOCAL COMMUNITY.

- No Area Designated for Koala Habitat Preservation listed at all.

WHY has this report reached Final Draft status. It is completely inappropriate and I oppose this inappropriate Report from Ecosure, NSWDPIC, SNEL, ARC, AND LLS. If it suggests lack of LOCAL KNOWLEDGE it also doesn't include Indigenous Management insight at all.

I do fear the threat to Koala reading a paid for document written under NSWDPIC, and ARC because the inability to Source Local Knowledge will always lessen the need to EDUCATE THE ENTIRE AREA about KOALA HABITAT threat being from many Sources not even mentioned in this Final Draft Report.

I ask for David Carr and his Team to offer their own Research. And it is offered to SNEL to share to Local Landholders in this ENTIRE ARMIDALE REGION to Ebor, Ben Lomond, Black Mountain, Invergowrie, Wandsworth into Western Gwydir River catchments in Armidale Region. The LLS can share their SURVEY written by David Carr, where Landholders are mailed this Survey of HIGH IMPORTANCE, to include pre 2019 into 2021 Drought. Yes. Into 2014 Drought. Into 2004 Drought. Etc. Where a historical perspective can ascertain the current and many Threats to Vital Upper Tributary Catchments serving Koala and Platypus Habitat. Vulnerable to Humanity, unwilling to completely alter Land management to finally say this statement very very very clearly to Armidale Regional Council.

This council as a Local Government council have known Koala are under threat in NSW itself. Yet they have taken no notice of a necessary need to at least offer Land Zoned 4, Zoned 4 as Specifically for Koala Habitat Preservation, where limited infrastructure can be built on Zone 4 Land, where zero plants are removed. And Humans finally begin to build small homes above the Earth Surface, using hopefully Recycled material. Using No New Timber Products sourced from Koala Habitat Forestry Areas that are needing immediate Protection from a Mass Consumption Current Modern Human Being, unaware their personal impact is upon Rare and THREATENED and Endangered Wildlife, needing IMMEDIATE HABITAT PROTECTION, Stated as FOREVER UNDER PROTECTION. To begin from 1943 to 2021. When Chemicals became used inappropriately over fragile aquifer fed Catchments of Upper Tributaries, sharing Catchment Flow into Wild areas that are poisoned and unable to grow Biodiverse Species, due to poor soil quality. Poor Soil Quality reduces Biodiversity and so reduces Wildlife Biodiversity associated with species Loss in areas called Catchments.

Add inappropriate management of Australia, and island Continent known as the Driest Inhabited Continent on Earth. Yet treated as if it is Glacial and Mass Snow Melt fed. Inappropriate management includes into 2021, post the WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY IN THIS REGION INTO 100 % OF NSW, where ZERO management alteration has occurred. And next Dry Time will result in Harm and Loss to more Habitat and more Wildlife, including Koala and Platypus.

No Change in Management means No Change in Result next Dry Time.

Never ever noticed by Data Collection method by Screen View Inside Office Research. Who are Ecosure.

Ecosure is one of Australia's largest fully certified environmental consultancies helping government and the private sector achieve desired outcomes.

Who are Ecosure.

Ecosure can help process thinning applications for approval.

Ecosure has developed a mapping system for property-scale PMAVs to correct mapping errors at the on-ground scale, resulting in significant increases in Category X areas. This method is cost-effective for landholders as it can be completed without a field visit by using aerial imagery.

Ecosure has developed a mobile mapping system for iPhone and android systems that works in areas without phone coverage. Using this app you can accurately determine on-ground clearing boundaries to maximise your grazing and agricultural activities.

Ecosure has completed many of the surveys for rural landholders to allow them to clear land....

The vegetation offset framework has the ability for landholders to receive income for putting up their land for offsets. This can be achieved by dealing with companies directly through advanced offsets, or by applying for financial offset payments the government has banked away.

Ecosure can:

- Identify what offsets are available on your property
- Help with the surveys required to meet the advanced offset requirements
- Help with negotiations and management plans to receive offset payments.

Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear Oh Dear. Oh Dear.

What a Handy Business Ecosure offers Wildlife Habitat desecration ability.

Then it claims it "...shall bear no responsibility or liability for any errors , faults, defects, or omissions in the information" offered.

20 year history.

Wildlife under Threat even more from the 20 year effort of a Consultant Firm busy working for which Enterprise please, this time a council uses Ecosure to develop a Koala Management Strategy. How. Oh Dear God. How can I assist MY ENTERPRISE, named WILDLIFE, with a Local Government report using this Consultancy Firm serving everything other than VITAL HABITAT PRESERVATION AT ALL COST.

I really DO OPPOSE THIS REPORT FROM FIRST INTRODUCTION, SAYING ECOSURE, DPIE, LLS, SNEL, ARC, and not David Carr, Richard Morseley, Elizabeth O'Hara, Landholders across the ENTIRE Region named "Armidale Region ". Believed by Ecosure, DPIE, SNEL, LLS, ARC to be Armidale City and an unknown undefined Boundary, never showing CURRENT KOALA AREAS ONCE IN AN ENTIRE REPORT FOR FUTURE KOALA MANAGEMENT. NB " MANAGEMENT ". NOT KOALA HABITAT PRESERVATION OFFERING THE CORRIDOR LINKAGE THROUGH THE ARMIDALE REGION.

I will vehemently oppose this Report in next Council meeting.

I will add my own Research missing from this Report by a company paid often to serve clearing vegetation legally for any purpose where Other Enterprises gain an advantage and Wildlife LOSE HABITAT legally ?

Funnily enough, it reads well. But. When you view the maps, they show zero Koala word. Habitat is not listed on any provided map which has no defined anything. Anything. Anything. As in NOTHING is DEFINED in this deplorable attempt to Strategize Koala " MANAGEMENT ", not implore NECESSARY

HABITAT PROTECTION, PRESERVATION, CORRIDORS, INTO LINKAGES DISCUSSED WITH LOCAL LANDHOLDERS who are PAID TO LEAVE KOALA HABITAT AREAS ALONE by Government paying for Fencing of any Avenues where they know, or used to know, Koala travelled THROUGH THEIR LAND.

Oh Dear God, I Pray for WILDLIFE CARE I Do.

Dear God. Please Assist Humanity Immediately to Use INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE TO PROVIDE OUR WILDLIFE AN AVENUE OF EXISTENCE INTO THE FUTURE. P L E A S E. P L E A S E. P L E A S E.

DEAR GOD. PLEASE BRING INDIGENOUS LAW AND CARE FOR COUNTRY MANAGEMENT INTO EXISTENCE IMMEDIATELY. IMMEDIATELY. IMMEDIATELY.

Figure 1. The map shows the New England Region. And Armidale Region as Armidale LGA boundary. Armidale Region is Armidale Region to me. I was drawn to offer comment on Armidale Region Koala Management Strategy. It isn't mapped is it, in any map numbered from Figure 1. To Figure 8 in the document labeled Armidale Region Koala Management Strategy.

If Koala have 10 km radius range of territory per male, that yes, intersect , and do need to intersect, then " Koala Sightings" are how many different Koala.

If a Koala Sighting is from a Researcher which Koala is travelling over which area being from 5 km up to 10 km in radius around a moving territory.

Koala move territories and need to move now. Due to Human Impact on their Habitat trees that include Stringybark Trees that are being lost to Drought and Livestock impact seen as Ringbarking even today. Yes. Today. 31st May 2021. Some ridgelines have not regrown around Mt Duval. Areas adjacent to Tilbuster Ponds have not recovered from the 2019 into 2020 Drought around Armidale. Other areas of impact unknown by Koala Surveys not yet undertaken in the ENTIRE REGION are along the Aberfoyle Catchments. The Ben Lomond Catchments. Black Mountain Catchments. Wandsworth Catchments. Ebor areas where Fires burned out Koala areas under government protection.

The Armidale Maps state how many different Koala sighted by Researchers or Community or which. Are they the traveller Koala, or different Koala. Or same Koala seen many times. The Awareness is necessary to determine how many were around pre the WORST Dry Drought in History in our Region. Compared to when. 2020. 2021. 2019. 2018. 2017. 2016. 2015. 2014. 2014 is another Drought time, where Armidale area was forced on to Level 5 Water Restrictions. Nothing changed in policy then. Regarding Catchment Flow into Armidale households.

Nothing in Policy has changed since 2019 into 2021 Drought times, where Armidale Regional Council always plan around Armidale or possibly include

Guyra Urban township, called Guyra, but meaning Costa Group number 1 River sourced Extraction Enterprise. GUYRA community Number 2 River Sourced Extraction Enterprise. Then the Rural Areas Number what when Waters from vital Upper Tributary Catchments serve farmers how much actual Flow from Vital Upland Wetland Catchments entering Farming Enterprises as unlimited access entry from these sources:

- Rivers.
- Creeks.
- Bores
- Aquifer Network Aquifers named Deep Aquifer into completely different flow paths into streams into east or west flow Catchments from Central Divide Wetlands that are basically forgotten as the very sources of Catchment Flow from highest altitude level to lower level Catchments, entering springs, or creeks, or rivers along east or west flow Catchments that have no Protection at all from excess extraction.

In Australia, Aquifers serve our island Continent called the Driest Continent on Earth, inhabited by a excess extraction Human Species I name Roman Empire Law Mind. Correct. This species of Human entered a Dry Inhabited Continent and began removing the Original communities of Native Inhabitants. Early settlers of this species killed mass Koala in areas that surrounded Wetlands, Rivers, Creeks, Catchments below high ridge tops, and took out Platypus as pelts stacked on trucks, piled high with pelts of Platypus and Koala.

This species of Human then removed the First Nation peoples who tried to remain on their Traditional Lands they took great care to leave as natural as possible.

Do you notice Today. I do. Finally. I do.

Today our council named Armidale Regional Council support illegal extraction of deep aquifer flow, that enters Tilbuster Ponds Catchments. Gara River Catchments entering Malpas Dam. Gara River Catchments below Malpas Dam. Where forests of Stringybark as the main Eucalypt species, adjacent to Tilbuster Ponds Catchments, are very much compromised by a late Level 5 Water Restrictions level placed on Armidale City, which by then, was also serving Guyra township, Costa Group enterprises, and other enterprises that were given access to Catchment Flow during the WORST DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY IN THIS REGION.

Armidale City went on Level 5 in October 2019. Guyra Township went on Level 5 Water Restrictions in June 2019. Malpas Dam was in the stages of building a pipeline from Malpas Dam to Guyra Water Treatment Works, which ended in August 2019. Guyra and Costa Group began extraction from Malpas Dam from August 2019. On Level 5 was Guyra. Armidale went on Level 5 in

October 2019.

What relevance is this to a Koala Management Strategy offered by Armidale Regional Council.

What does it mean when Armidale City are given Rights other species do not have available when a level stated as 53% is the cut off level to the ENVIRONMENT below Malpas Dam. The obvious impact is the dead forest areas from the Top of the Tilbuster Ponds Catchments, to the area near Sunnyside Turnoff, into Ridgelines entering Mt Duval mountain.

I spoke to a farmer near Sunnyside who said he always heard Koala but hasn't heard them since 2019 Dry Drought ended above him in March 2021. NB March 2021.

Another farmer of Generational kind spoke to me about their Koala they often see pre WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT. But haven't seen since that devastating Drought that only filled dams to full level in March 2021.

Another farmer I went to visit on Maybole Mountain said their Upland Wetlands only filled in February 2021. Dry up until February 2021.

Another farmer I interviewed about Catchment Flow in the Abbington Creek lower level Tributary to the Gwydir, said, the Abbington Creek had not flowed at all since an upstream farmer illegally built 3 dams on the Upper Tributary Abbington above where this farmer's property adjoined the Gwydir River system. He spoke about the farmer holding flow in 3 dams upstream from him. What does a farmer do to Upper Tributary Catchments when audits are not necessary 're Catchment flow from Vital Upper Tributary beginnings, that include Mother of Ducks Lagoon and an illegal extraction, which had been planned by ARC and Costa Group. Where 2 Licences has not been APPROVED as infrastructure around Search Bores continued, despite community asking questions about Costa Group accessing Groundwater from Aquifers beneath a Protected Upland Wetland serving East and West flow Catchments.

I am getting to a issue in a moment.

I began researching the Catchments around Mother of Ducks Lagoon before that devastating 2019 into 2020 into 2021 dry Drought time when EVERY Upland Wetland was Dry in a time of need for any migratory bird. Many on farm dams were also dry. Farmers drilled bores in that Drought year that impacted Catchment Flow for over a year since good rain fell over the highest areas of this ENTIRE Armidale Region. Catchment Flow is not included in any Research reports, or DA Applications. This is a serious concern to me, observing Enterprises gain Privelege while Native Species suffer Groundwater Table lowering and bores serve Enterprises water. With No Limits applied.

This must cease soon. Must. Our Entire Region is a Vital Upper Tributary

Catchments area, serving East and West flow Catchments via stream surface flow, and aquifer network flow we do not understand waters our Landform.

My Research is nearly completed. It will include impact from Renewables.

Renewable Energy Impact on Vital Upper Tributary Catchments is not included in this Koala Management Strategy at all. Yet it is a contributor to impact on Vital Upper Tributary Catchments. Correct. I can offer Correct because it took over 18 months for Catchments to become full enough to fill a very high positioned pair of very small Upland Wetlands, only filled in February 2021.

Windfarms cannot be built at our area of Upper Tributary Catchments. Cannot. Not can Solar Farms impact our REQUIRED COOL CLIMATE TEMPERATURES.

These two Threats to Catchment Flow have not been even mentioned in the Koala Management Strategy for Armidale City and surrounding City areas. A tiny sample that reflects the Attitude on our ENTIRE region, where Armidale is a State operating its own Agenda, without consulting other areas. This is common in this amalgamated council we are trying to separate from entirely.

Armidale Regional Council are against Wildlife you see. Correct. They do offer Privelege to Urban community. Correct. They have not altered much regarding how Urban community can replace River sourced Catchment Flow by installing Rainwater Tanks. Correct.

They are inadequate planners who approve projects without vital Upper Tributary Catchments Research that involves Vital Upper Tributary Catchments every single DA Application that requires Catchment Flow via one particular Catchment, very much over extracted by a Mass Consumption species, which ignored the WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY IN THIS REGION.

The WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY was THE WORST EVER. During that time Armidale city community delayed necessary Level 5 Water Restrictions.

During this devastating Drought, Costa Group accessed 2 illegal sites, for Water to be available to grow tomatoes Hydroponically. NB Hydroponically. Hydroponically.

The other site was accessed in a bore hidden from view, and under camera surveillance. A local went into this property and drove into an area he wasn't supposed to enter. Tanker trucks were taking dam water from a dam adjacent to Tingha Road, west of Guyra. This man said Tankers were taking bore water when the dam was emptied by Tankers taking water to Costa owned farms growing tomatoes. Tomatoes. Tomatoes.

You see. I have no Trust in this despicable council named Armidale Regional

Council.

No trust at all in Management. Zero.

No trust in the current Manager of Business. Who used a set of lies to hasten a issue away from Costa Group. Knowing an arrangement had been made, without community consultation, or research on the ability of Catchments deep below a Protected Upland Wetland. Correct. Using "cost" as a excuse to not offer a very significant large Upland Wetland, a Protected Nature Reserve, a Wetland held aside for Internationally Protected Migratory Birds. A major Aquifer Network System of aquifers that are necessary to serve Catchments not even close to Guyra. These include flows into Limestone Creek. And into the Gwydir Wetlands. Known by local Indigenous Elders I spoke to during the discussions our group had about trying to Save Mother of Ducks Lagoon from being used as an Emergency Bore Site, next time it was Dry Drought times.

The Business Manager in Armidale Regional Council is needing to be investigated for breach of authority. I am concerned this occurs more often than known. You see. Mother of Ducks Lagoon was a Lake of Permanency. Prior to 1902. Prior to 1962 into 1963. Then the Nature Reserve finally ceased extraction from the Drainage that the then council took into their control. While locals asked questions about why the Lake was being Drained again. Again. Again. Again.

If illegal activities occur more often than reported or investigated, then I am OPPOSING this Draft Report that Ecosure have written, and DPIE, ARC, LLS, SNEL, have associated themselves with. A significant issue in this Draft Report is the 2 MAIN MAPS NECESSARY TO BE SEEN AS THE RELEVANT MAPS, are in the Appendix at the end of this Draft Report.

I am opposed to SNEL doing any Research on our area. They are under guidance from Local Government.

I am Opposed to LLS having anything to do with our area because LLS serve farmers over HABITAT PRESERVATION. E.g.. Trees not on Landholders Land Can be removed easily by Landholders building fenceline bordering roads, called TSR's. Or adjacent to TSR's. They allow Chemical HOSING of Toxic chemicals in TSR's and Roads as Laneways that are Vital Habitat Areas for Wildlife. But are HOSED by LLS personnel badly trained to actually spray Blackberry and other plants named weeds that are needed as the Biodiverse plants NATURE offers HERSELF as a need regard 're soil mineral balance via Tap Root plants that are named weeds, when offered for Nature to mineralise land that isn't in the Landholder Ownership.

LLS are a uninformed entity using outdated practices to serve Landholders needs such as Vegetation Clearing of vital mature Trees used by Wildlife. The incidence of mature tree removal by Landholders who are replacing boundary fencing adjacent to roads is High. Yet No one cares about our Native Species serving Habitat needs for MIGRATING MOVING WILDLIFE POPULATIONS,

who are never Considered, Migratory or Moving Populations. The Indigenous First Nation peoples travelled up and down Waterways to occupy then rest areas they occupied. Wild species do the same moving method to assist the occupied land to Rest, and Restore itself, where populations of insects breed up again, to be available for Wildlife when they return.

Unfortunately the Roman Empire Law Mind Human Species did not understand Australia herself. Nor her Native inhabitants. These Native Inhabitants are labelled Rare, Threatened, Endangered, On the Brink of Extinction, while Landholders still clear Native vegetation. And are supported by Ecosure, sure Mate, we can assist you to clear Native veg.

So I do Oppose Ecosure, For Sure. Read their Advertisements please. They are a very much human serving consultancy firm, working for the DPIE , who are undermining our Vital Upper Tributary Catchments.

Armidale Regional Council I need separating from our own Vital Upper Tributary Catchments area, please very soon please. Add the male members of the council called councillors. If a vote was noticed last meeting of council, in May 2021, it is needing a revote by a Referendum vote from our entire area named Armidale Region. This is important this recent meeting because Guyra MUST separate from a council serving hideous agendas, that will harm our area.

I oppose any consultant offered via Armidale Regional Council. Full Stop. Full Stop. Full Stop. Why.

The 2 maps on the Last page are the Koala Management Strategy in full view of people who Love our Native Koala Cared for. The 2 maps in the Poendix of a Final Draft Report are needing to BE THE REPORT itself. So Ecosure were not needed by ARC at all.

So I fully support David Carr, Elizabeth O'Hara, Richard Morseley, Armidale Tree Group, the many groups planting Habitat Trees as Volunteers. The group's who offer time to Research Koala Presence in Armidale City areas that reach Tilbuster Ponds areas, devastated by the WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY IN THIS REGION, where ARC delayed Level 5 Water Restrictions to Armidale City. Which left a vast Tilbuster Ponds Catchment area without a forest covering itself, in the vital lower Upland Wetland area, above where Search Bores in Armidale are positioned and hopefully capped and labelled Off Limits Forever and Ever.

Catchments are Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems. Government does not recognise Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems. That includes DPIE. ARC. LLS. SNEL.

Ecosure will impact our Koala populations because they cannot say these words.

- leave Habitat Trees alone.

- leave Habitat Trees alone

- leave Habitat Trees alone

I can see a hideous Report serving Development already planned, and ARC knows they need an outside Consultant who can get the Draft Plan Approved by this council who are illegally extracting Catchment Flow from Protected Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems, and getting out of being investigated.

I pray our Guyra area can Separate from Armidale Regional Council immediately please, I Pray.

I pray for our Future under government rule.

I pray Daily for Mother of Ducks Lagoon to become a Lake again, so she CAN serve our Vital Upper Tributary Catchments well into a Future already planned by a council I do need separate from the Vital areas missed in a Draft Report being Ben Lomond, Black Mountain, Ebor, Wandsworth, into Gwydir Wetlands, and a Upper Macleay system serving a World Heritage Listed Gondwana Rainforests Oxley Wild Rivers National Parks.

I pray for Platypus existing in the current area named Armidale LGA area. I pray for us to be Released immediately from Armidale LGA area, and I pray the current council members can get an investigation happening soon. Please soon. Soon please soon.

I willingly offer Solutions to a Irrelevant Report.

The 2 maps at the end of a Report on Koala MANAGEMENT, not PRESERVATION, are the Needs for the current Koala populations, Please. The 2 maps in the Appendix can be removed from a Draft Management Plan Please. Please. Please.

The 2 maps are the RELEVANT part of Koala PRESERVATION EFFORTS by these people and groups who Love our Native Species far more than Government departments, and consultants receiving payment for Draft Reports for Koala " Management ", not the necessary " Presrvation" NECESSARY FROM NOW.

I am offering one solution for KOALA PRESERVATION IN THE ENTIRE ARMIDALE REGION.

ZONE 4 is any Land in our ENTIRE Region. It can Serve a very important species Forever if We All undertook a message from the Driest Drought in History.

Almost every National Park burned in NSW in 2019. Into 2020. Into Today, where trees begin to grow themselves into canopy layered forests, burned to stumps in the area east of Armidale and Guyra, under National Parks.

Koala lost many in a Dry Drought. Then in Fires. The ADDED not Added ISSUE in KOALA MANAGEMENT of a Travelling moving species is the Waratah RINGLOCK fence. No one has even mentioned this particular choice of fencing. Now used predominantly by farmers. They Restrict movement of Species called Native WILDLIFE CALLED KOALA. They must move along Restrictive Fencelines due to the inability of Koala to climb over these awful fences now dominating everywhere in rural NSW. They are Death Traps to our larger Wildlife Species. And to Livestock in Fires. These Fires will Destroy MORE Habitat because Australia isn't changing Land Management at all. It is getting WORSE AND WORSE. Worse and Worse. Cropping limits Water Holding Ability and is spreading across this Vital Upper Tributary Catchments area. Where once Upland Wetlands served All lower level Catchments. Correct.

The Threats continue. They are NOT LESSENING. NB Threats to Native Habitat not under Protection already, continue. And National Parks are under threat from far too many management practices, unaware Vital Upper Tributary Catchments serve well beyond areas considered beneath.

Australia is Aquifer Network System fed Nation. Once Cared for by a Culture honouring this Country. I need these Mangers managing our Vital Upper Tributary Catchments. Not any government past, current, or near future.

I do need Indigenous Native Title immediately in place and Indigenous Knowledge Holders becoming important voices for Care for Country. I pray this will become sooner than later.

I OPPOSE the Ecosure Draft Report. I OPPOSE the involvement of DPIE, ARC, LLS and SNEL.

I support these people and groups to serve the Koala present in the areas they have researched already, shown in 2 maps in the Appendix of this stated as Final Draft Report.

David Carr please do the Report stating Koala Habitat Preservation as the name of a Koala PRESERVATION Strategy of extremely High Need from Right Now. 31st May 2021.

Richard Morseley please become the council representative for Koala Habitat Preservation. Please.

Volunteers such as Elizabeth O'Hara, Helen Webb and the Groups already planting Habitat areas around Armidale city must be the people preferred to offer Appropriate Care of KOALA HABITAT and Koala populations into a Future they offer very well already. The other person necessary is Debra OBrian. She must, must stay strong and Support Koala Habitat Preservation Forever and Ever please Debra.

Hideous plans I am watching from Now. Hideous hideous hideous plans are

always coming from this council I need under investigation for illegal extraction of deep aquifer waters beneath a Protected Upland Wetland Nature Reserve, in place for Migratory Birds under International Agreements of Law with Asian countries.

Signed

Ali Cairns BSc

Environmental Kinesiologist for Land Care to the All. To the All. To Platypus Koala Habitat FOREVER cared for by Us All.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT, WHY AREN'T THEY,

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT, WHY ARE DEVELOPERS STILL CLEARING SUBDIVISIONS IN KNOWN KOALA HABITAT AREAS.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT, THEN WHY ARE BIG DOLLAR COMPANIES GIVEN FULL SUPPORT AND WILDLIFE STILL HAVEN'T GOT AREAS ALREADY SET ASIDE FOR HABITAT FOR MIGRATORY WILDLIFE KNOWN AS NEEDING CORRIDORS, AVENUES, TREE HABITATS ALREADY ZONED, FOR KOALA PRESERVATION, INTO ZONE 4 AREAS, NOT KNOWN BY THE COMMUNITY IF I AM ONLY HEARING ABOUT ZONE 4 AT A OPEN HOME DAY, WHERE THE PEOPLE IN ZONE 4 RESIDENTIAL AREAS ARE COMMENTING ON RESTRICTIONS TO TREE REMOVALS, YET KNOW THE AREA IS KOALA INHABITED, YET WANT TO REMOVE TREES FOR THEIR BENEFIT.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT THEN WHY ARE'T THEY THE PRIORITY,

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT THEN WHY ARE WE NOT ASSISTING THEM TO LIVE AS WELL AS WE DO,

IF WILDLIFE HAVE HOMES REMOVED, ARE WE REPLACING MATURE TREES THAT KOALA NEED FOR THEIR VERY SPECIFIC DIETS THAT ARE EATING A VARIETY OF EUCALYPT LEAVES THEY SELECT DAILY, AND DO KNOW THEY DO REQUIRE THAT PARTICULAR LEAF THAT PARTICULAR DAY.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT THEN WHY IS ARMIDALE THE CENTRE OF A KOALA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, AND NOT THE ENTIRE ARMIDALE REGION, WHICH HAS KOALA THROUGHOUT THE REGION NAMED ARMIDALE REGION. MISNAMED IN A REPORT THAT IS IRRELEVANT AS IT IS.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT, THEN WHY AREN'T 40 KM SIGNS, WITH KOALA SIGNS BESIDE THEM, ALL OVER URBAN ARMIDALE, URBAN BLACK MOUNTAIN, URBAN BEN LOMOND, URBAN EBOR. WHY AREN'T SIGNS ALL OVER THIS VERY IMPORTANT COOL CLIMATE KOALA INHABITED AREA. WHY, ARMIDALE REGIONAL COUNCIL, AND GUYRA SHIRE COUNCIL BEFORE THAT.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT, THEN WHY ARE THEY STILL THREATENED BY CURRENT MODERN HUMAN, WHO ARE THE WORST EVER FORM OF CURRENT HUMAN SPECIES DUE TO THE EXPECTATION NOW PREVALENT IN EVERY HOME, WHERE WILDLIFE ARE LISTED AS THREATENED, AND NOT MANY ARE ALTERING THEIR CURRENT LIFESTYLE, ARE THEY COMMUNITY, ARE THEY COMMUNITY, ARE THEY COMMUNITY. IF THE COMMUNITY SAW SIGNS OF KOALA OR PLATYPUS OR QUOLL OR EVEN GREY KANGAROO AND RING TAIL POSSUMS, OR REGENT HONEYEATER, OR SWIFT PARROTS, OR EVEN WEDGE TAILED EAGLES, OR ANY SIGN SAYING OTHER SPECIES NEED OUR ATTENTION, IS THIS A METHOD OF EDUCATION THE CURRENT MODERN HUMAN BEING NEEDING TO AWAKEN TO THE VERY SERIOUS ISSUE THAT OUR NATIVE, NB. NATIVE, ORIGINAL, TINY, HIGHLY EVOLVED, MARSUPIAL, INTO LARGEST ANIMAL BEING THE RED KANGAROO, AND NO HOOFED ANIMAL EVER IN THIS LAND AT ALL, NO CAT PREDATOR AT ALL, NO FOX PREDATOR AT ALL, NO WILD DOG OF DOMESTIC MIXED GENETICS KIND AT ALL, A MARSUPIAL WOLF LONG GONE, THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE GONE, THE CURRENT POPULATIONS OF HUMAN SPECIES MASS CONSUMPTION CURRENT MODERN SPECIES THAT IS EXPANDING INTO LARGER HOMES, USING MASS EXTRACTION OF RESOURCES FROM

WHERE, FROM WHERE, FROM WHERE, PLEASE WHERE. FROM HABITAT STILL NOT UNDER FULL PROTECTION AND STATING " FULL PROTECTION FOREVER, FOREVER, FOREVER. "

IF WILDLIFE ARE RARE AND NO-ONE CARES ABOUT KOALA IN OUR ENTIRE REGION, BECAUSE THEY DO KNOW HOW RARE THEY ARE AFTER 2019 DRIEST DROUGHT IN HISTORY IN OUR COOL CLIMATE REGION, INTO 100 % OF NSW. THEN FIRES BURNING VAST AREAS OF NATIONAL PARKS AND OTHER RESERVES THAT WERE NOT PROTECTED LIKE PROPERTIES OWNED BY HUMANS WERE, BECAUSE WILD OR NOT HUMAN OCCUPIED AREAS ARE NOT EVEN CONSIDERED WORTH SAVING WHEN RFS LIGHT UP SMALL PATCH FIRES TO CREATE FIREBALLS IN CATHEDRAL ROCK AREA, WHICH COMPLETELY BURNED. AND NB, THIS HEATH, WET FOREST WOULD NOT HAVE BURNED UNLESS IT WAS DELIBERATELY LIT BY A VERY VERY VERY CRIMINAL, WHO I HOPE IS IN PRISON FOR 38 YEARS, THE TIME IT WILL TAKE THIS PRECIOUS PRECIOUS PRECIOUS RARE FOREST OF A VERY DIFFERENT KIND IN OUR ENTIRE REGION TO GROW BACK INTO A WET , HEATH FOREST OF EXTRAORDINARY KIND, THAT HAD A ORIGINAL NATIVE FOREST THROUGHOUT THE AREA STATED AS **CATHEDRAL ROCK NATIONAL PARK**. THIS FOREST WAS ABLE TO SURVIVE A DROUGHT , BUT UNFORTUNEATLEY HUMANITY CANNOT BELIEVE A FOREST OF ORIGINAL , NB, ORIGINAL KIND CAN ACTUALLY SURVIVE A DRY DROUGHT. THEY CAN. AND DO. IT WOULD HAVE SURVIVED, THIS CATHEDRAL ROCK NATIONAL PARK. BUT, NB, BUT RFS CANNOT TEACH RESPECT FOR SMALL SPOT FIRES OVERLOOKED BY HELICOPTORS CREATING UP LIFT VORTEX SPIRAL FLAMES OVER SMALL SPOT FIRES, 3 MEN NEARLY HAD PUT OUT. THE CRIME CONTINUES TODAY, WHERE HUMANITY BELIEVE THE MASS HARM OFFERED BY THEMSELVES IS FREE OF BLAME, AND ALL THE BLAME IS ON PROTECTED AREAS. NOT THIS DISGRACEFUL HUMAN RACE WHICH IS THE WORST SO FAR EVER ON EARTH, YOU SEE. AND STILL NOT NOTICING THE IMPACT IT IS HAVING ON A ISALND CONTINENT ONCE SO WELL CARED FOR, IT GREW VAST NUMBERS OF PLATYPUS, KOALA, QUOLL, WEDGE TAILED EAGLE, POWERFUL OWL, EVERY KNOWN GLIDER STILL EXISTING IN THIS ISALND NATION, UNDER VERY INAPPROPRIATE RULE BY FOREIGNERS, WHO STILL REMOVE NATIVE ORIGINAL INHABITANTS, WHILE WILDLIFE STILL REMAIN UNDER THREAT. UNDER THREAT. UNDER THREAT.

UNDER THREAT MEANS UNDER THREAT. IN ENGLISH, IT MEANS UNDER THREAT OF HARM AND LOSS. HARM AND LOSS ARE THE METHODS USED BY FOREIGNERS WHO NOW INCLUDE MASS CONSUMPTION CHINA, AND MASS CONSUMPTION WORLD POPULATIONS WANTING WESTERNISATION BECAUSE MOBILES ADVERTISE THE GOOD LIFE IS MASS CONSUMPTION, NOT MINIMISATION OF A KIND THAT IS SO IMMEDIATELY NEEDED AND NECESSARY, WE ALL MUST MINIMISE OUR INDIVIDUAL IMPACT ON EARTH HERSELF. YES, YES, YES.

UNDER THREAT COMES IN MANY FORMS, ENTERING INTO RAPID RATE OF REMOVAL IN CURRENT TIMES, WHERE ONE MACHINE REMOVES A FOREST IN EXTREMELY RAPID TIME, YET HUMANS NEVER NOTICE BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT PERSONALLY IMPACTED. CORRECT.

ONE METHOD I DO NOT APPRECIATE AT ALL. IT IS CALLED CONSULTANCY REPORTS FOR APPROVAL BY OTHERS WHO NEED INCOME OVER HABITAT OF HIGHEST VALUE THESE DAYS. THESE DAYS. THESE DAYS. THESE DAYS, THE CONTINUAL CRY FOR WILDLIFE PRESERVATION IS IGNORED STILL.

IF CONSULTANTS NEED JOBS THEN THAT SAYS IT ALL. FULL STOP. I KNOW OF 2 CONSULTANT ENTERPRISES DOING THE KOALA ASSESSMENT FOR THEIR CLIENTS. WHERE THE RESEARCH AREA WAS RESTRICTED TO ONE PROPERTY. IT IS OBVIOUSLY NOT WELL KNOWN, MALE KOALA JOURNEY A 10 KM RADIUS AROUND HOME TERRITORIES THAT MOVE ACROSS THE LAND. YES. MOVE ACROSS THE LAND. OUR NATIVE SPECIES ARE MIGRATORY, AS ARE ALL WILDLIFE SPECIES. ALL WILDLIFE SPECIES MIGRATE AROUND AREAS NOW OCCUPIED BY THESE HUMAN AREAS :

- URBAN AREAS
- PROPERTIES RANGING FROM 1 ACRE TO 40,000 ACRES
- PROTECTED AREAS CALLED NATURE RESERVES, CONSERVATION AREAS, NATIONAL PARKS
- HIGHWAYS AND MAIN ROADS, AND GRAVEL ROADS THAT CAN BE TRAVERSED AT 80 KM / HR.

IF WILDLIFE ARE UNDER THREAT ACROSS OUR KOALA HABITAT AREA, THEN WHY AREN'T KOALA HABITAT ZONES IN PLACE ALREADY, IN A VERY NECESSARY COOL CLIMATE REGION, THE ARMIDALE REGION IS SUPPOSED TO BE.

IF WILDLIFE ARE UNABLE TO EXIST IN AREAS WITH LIVESTOCK BEING CATTLE, THEN THAT REMOVES THOSE AREAS FROM HABITAT FOR A RARE AND THREATENED SPECIES.

IF WILDLIFE ARE UNABLE TO EXIST ON CATTLE PROPERTIES, THEN ARE CORRIDORS PLACED WELL ON CATTLE PROPERTIES WHERE RESEARCH CLAIMS LIVESTOCK CALLED CATTLE CAN MAIM OR INJURE OR KILL KOALA BY TRAMPLING THEM WITH HARD HEAVY HOOVES THAT FOLLOW INJURED KOALA UP A TREE IN A Paddock CLEARED OF FOREST. IF THE KOALA ISN'T ALREADY A HIGH PRIORITY SPECIES, THEN WHEN WILL IT BE. NB I HAVEN'T YET READ THE LATEST POLICY OFFERED TO FARMERS AND POLLIES, WHO CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY WE MUST HONOUR A KOALA SPECIES OVER AND ABOVE OUR ENTERPRISE. FROM 14 TO 48 YEARS AGO, WHEN THE KOALA WAS UNDER THREAT FROM CLEARING AREAS ADJACENT TO WATERWAYS THEY DO NEED TO BE NEAR, IF A RAIN DRY TIMEFRAME CANNOT OFFER NIGHT DEW MOISTURE, MOST SPECIES IN AUSTRALIA CAN EXIST ON DAILY. IF IT IS AVAILABLE DAILY FROM TREES CAPTURING MIST, OR FOG, THAT DRIPS INTO THE LAND NEAR A TREE, A FOREST ONCE ENABLED. TOO FEW EFFORTS AT ANY REGENERATION ATTEMPTS TO EITHER FENCE OFF CORRIDORS OF CURRENT MIXED SPECIES EUCALYPT, OR PLANTING SPECIFIC KOALA HABITAT AREAS, AFTER THE WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY IN OUR ARMIDALE REGION IN 2019 INTO MARCH 2021, YES. MARCH 2021. SAYS NO LOCAL GOVERNMENT OR HIGHER LEVEL GOVERNMENT HAS DONE ENOUGH TO SECURE THE HABITATS, NOW GETTING FEWER THAN EVER, THAT ALL AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE WILL NEED FOR THE FUTURE I AM STATING AS A NECESSARY SEVENTH GENERATIONAL FUTURE. THE SEVENTH GENERATIONAL FUTURE IS A INDIGENOUS STYLE OF FUTURE MANAGEMENT WHERE THE VIEW WAS ALWAYS TO OFFER CARE BACK TO NATURE FOR ALL RECEIVED FROM EVERY NATURAL SOURCE. THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL KNEW HOW TO CARE FOR COUNTRY, AND ARE VITAL TO INCLUDE IN ANY DISCUSSION ABOUT OUR KOALA SPECIES CONTINUING INTO AT LEAST 100 PLUS YEARS FROM WHEN. WHEN IS THIS TIME-FRAME WHERE THE LACK OF CONCERN CONTINUES INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF AREAS THAT ARE NOT UNDER GOVERNMENT LAW PROTECTION ALREADY.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT THEY MUST BE THE PRIORITY CONCERN FROM NOW.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT THEN INDIGENOUS CONSULTATION IS ESSENTIAL FROM NOW. THERE ARE NO REFERENCES THAT SAY THE BANBAI NATION, ANAIWAN NATION, DUNGHUTTI NATION, GUMBAYNGIRR NATION, KAMILARDI NATION, GAMILARAAY NATION, GOMERAI NATION, NGORABUL NATION, AND OTHER CONNECTING FIRST NATION PEOPLES, HAVE BEEN INVITED TO COMMENT ON YET ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO SUPPOSEDLY SAVE THE KOALA SPECIES, WHILE CONTINUING TO THREATEN, UNDERMINE, CLEAR, REMOVE, ALTER, DRAIN THIS VITAL UPPER TRIBUTARY CATCHMENT AREA OF WETLANDS TO THE MOREE PLAINS, AND TO THE SEA OF TWO KINDS. ADD THE WORLD HERITAGE LISTED AREA OF RARE GONDWANA FORESTS NOW FACING TOXIC LEACHING FROM A NEW IDEA, WHERE LAND THAT WAS PURCHASED BY ARMIDALE REGIONAL COUNCIL TO POSITION A REGIONAL, NB REGIONAL LANDFILL UPON. I NEED TO VIEW THIS CONSULTANT REPORT AND ADD IT TO A OMBUDSMEN REPORT I AM UNDERTAKING ON BEHALF OF MY ENTERPRISE, NAMED " WILDLIFE ".

IF WILDLIFE CALLED PLATYPUS ARE ALSO UNDER A SIMILAR THREAT TO KOALA SPECIES NEEDING HABITAT OFFERED INTO THE SEVENTH GENERATIONAL FUTURE, THEN WE MUST BEGIN VERY DIFFERENT MANAGEMENT FROM NOW. FROM NOW. FROM NOW. HOW. WELL YOU HOLD EVERY INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR LAND SURFACE ABUSE INTO EXCESS EXTRACTION ISSUES THAT INCLUDE THE METHODS AUSTRALIA WATERED ITSELF BY. IF THE PLATYPUS EXISTS IN THE ARMIDALE REGION, WHY ISN'T IT PART OF A KOALA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY. IF WATER COURSES ARE REQUIRED TO FLOW OVER SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE LAND FORMS, WHERE THE WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY IN THIS REGION COULD NOT FORCE URBAN WATER USERS TO SUPPLY THEIR OWN WATER SUPPLY, VIA RAINWATER TANKS. WHY HAVEN'T THEY PURCHASED THEIR OWN RAINWATER TANKS ANY OTHER RATE PAYER OUT OF URBAN AREAS MUST DO THEMSELVES. IT IS OBVIOUS PEOPLE BELIEVE GOVERNMENT CAN CREATE WATER FLOWING INTO TAP EASY METHOD EVERY AUSTRALIAN HAS AVAILABLE NOW. WELL. GOVERNMENT ARE UNABLE TO ASSIST CATCHMENT FLOW AT UPPER TRIBUTARY CATCHMENT LEVEL, THE LEVEL NEEDED TO BE NOTICED. NB UPPER MEANS UPPER MEANS HIGHEST ALTITUDE, MEANS ALL LAND HIGHER THAN ANY OTHER, MEANS LEVEL WITH VITAL UPPER TRIBUTARY BEGINNINGS, ALREADY THREATENED BY THE ALLOWABLE EXTRACTION RATE PRESUMED ENDLESS.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT THEN WHY IS ECOSURE SELECTED AS THE EXPERT ON KOALA MANAGEMENT, AND TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR MISSING VITAL INFORMATION FREELY AVAILABLE FROM LOCAL FARMERS, AND LOCAL RESEARCHERS, AND LOCAL OLDER PEOPLE, AND LOCAL INDIGENOUS ELDERS, AND LOCAL GENERATIONAL LOCALS, WHO WILL KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT CURRENT PRESENCE OF KOALA OR PLATYPUS. CORRECT. WHY ARE THE LOCAL PEOPLE NEVER EVEN

ASKED ABOUT KOALA OR PLATYPUS POPULATIONS BY LOCAL COUNCIL. THE EASY METHOD IS A SURVEY FORM SENT IN THE MAIL TO LOCAL RESIDENTS, AND SENT TO EVERY LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER, FOR LOCALS TO FILL IN. TO SEE IT VISUALLY IS TO READ IT, THEN CONTEMPLATE IT, THEN CHOOSE TO REPLY TO A FORMED SURVEY ASKING IF KOALA OR PLATYPUS ARE OBSERVED BY YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW. LOW COST. PRECISE. AND NOTED BY EVERY MEMBER IN COMMUNITY. UNFORTUNATELY, LOCAL COUNCIL DO NOT OFFER THIS OPTION. THEY PREFER PAYING A CONSULTANT FROM OTHER AREAS TO OFFER ADVICE KNOWN BY MANY WILDLIFE CARER GROUPS, SNEL, DAVID CARR, ELIZABETH O'HARA, LOCAL FARMERS I HAVE SPOKEN TO, LOCAL RESIDENTS IN BLACK MOUNTAIN. LOCAL PEOPLE KNOW THE LOCAL AREA, TALK, PEOPLE TO SPEAK TO, AND THEY UNDERSTAND THIS VERY IMPORTANT REGION IF THEY ARE FARMERS WHO WORK OUTSIDE ALL DAY, AND MUST MANAGE LAND AND LIVESTOCK, USING WEATHER AS THE GUIDE. THEY ALWAYS MOVE ACROSS THEIR LAND AND NOTICE THE ANY THING THEY USUALLY VIEW, DAY BY DAY. GENERATIONAL FARMERS CAN OFFER INSIGHT INTO THE PRESENCE OR DECLINE OF SPECIES CALLED MIGRATORY KOALA, MIGRATORY BIRDS, MIGRATORY PLATYPUS WHO MUST MOVE UP AND DOWN RIVERS AND CREEKS TO REST THEIR PLACES AS A AREA NEEDS TIME TO REPOPULATE WITH FOOD. THE HUNTER GATHERER LIFESTYLE IS THE LIFESTYLE OF WILDLIFE. KNOWN WELL IN ANIMAL RESEARCH WORLD. NOT KNOWN WELL IN URBAN TOWN AND CITY WORLD, WHERE A WAY OF LIVING IS NOW INSIDE MORE THAN OUTSIDE. WHERE SHOPS PROVIDE HUMAN AND LIVESTOCK, PET NEEDS. NOT WALKS ACROSS COUNTRY ANY MORE.

THE WORSENING NATURE OF CURRENT MODERN HUMAN IS DISCONNECTION WITH NATURE, NATURAL CYCLES, WEATHER NOTICED RATHER THAN BROADCAST, WEATHER EXPERIENCED OUTSIDE, NOT UNDER SHELTER. EG. VERY COLD WINTERS ARE AN EXPERIENCE IN A SHELTERED HOME WITH HEAT. FOR LIVESTOCK OR WILDLIFE, THE VERY OBVIOUS LACK OF FOREST, OR REGENERATION AROUND A FEW MATURE TREES IS NOT NOTICED BY ALMOST EVERY FARMER USING ANIMALS AS THEIR INCOME SOURCE. IN MY GUYRA AREA I SEE TOO FEW ATTEMPTS TO GROW SHLETER SHADE CORRIDORS LINKING TO MORE. TO VIEW TOO FEW AREAS UNABLE TO SELF REGENERATE IN PADDOCKS SET STOCKED WITH HARD HOVED HEAVY CATTLE, OR NIBBLING SET STOCKED SHEEP, IS SURELY A MANAGEMANT METHOD OF LONG AGO. NO. IT IS STILL A PREDOMINANT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, EVEN AFTER THE WORST, NB THE WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY. WHERE TOO FEW ARE COMPLETELY CHANGING MANAGEMENT TO INCLUDE ALAN SAVOURY MOVEMENT MANAGEMENT. DR. JUDI EARL'S HOLISTIC MOVEMENT MANAGEMENT. DR IAN REEVES VERY PRECISE UNDERSTANDING OF OUR SHALLOW AQUIFER NETWORK SYSTEM LANDFORMS. INTO THE WATER MISMANAGEMENT BY ARMIDALE REGIONAL COUNCIL, WHERE ILLEGAL EXTRACTION WAS REPORTED ONCE. ONCE. WAS IT ONCE. NO. IT WASN'T. THIS PARTICULAR COUNCIL NEED AN INVESTIGATION INTO ILLEGAL APPROVAL OF WATERWAY CARE TO ALL CONCERNED ALONG EVERY WATERWAY, AND EVERY LANDFORM CATCHMENT. YES. AN INVESTIGATION INTO RAPID APPROVAL METHOD WITHOUT APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH OFFERED AT ALL. AT ALL.

THE KOALA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY I OPPOSE IN THIS WAY.

FIRSTLY, ARC ARE INAPPROPRIATE CARERS TO VITAL UPPER TRIBUTARY CATCHMENTS SERVING EAST AND WEST FLOW VITAL UPPER TRIBUTARY CATCHMENTS. APPROVALS REGARDING WATER SECURITY FOR INTERESTS THAT ARE NEW TO THIS VITAL UPPER TRIBUTARY AREA, WHERE ONCE LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT WAS OFFERED SIMPLY, ALLOWED CATCHMENTS TO FLOW CONTINUALLY, EVEN IN A DRY TIME. THEN GUYRA SHIRE COUNCIL APPROVED THE FIRST 5 ACRES OF COSTA TOMATOES. I AM UNABLE TO COMMENT ON ANY DA APPLICATIONS OF THAT DECISION MADE WITHOUT IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH DONE ON UPPER TRIBUTARY CATCHMENTS ALSO SERVING GUYRA TOWNSHIP, AND ARMIDALE CITY, WITH MANY SCHOOLS THAT ARE PRIVATE SCHOOLS, AND INCLUDE UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION. THESE YOUNG PEOPLE NEED EDUCATING ABOUT LIVING IN URBAN AREAS SUPPLIED BY WATERWAYS ALSO SERVING CATCHMENTS, SERVING PLATYPUS AND KOALA AND ALL OTHE ORIGINAL NATIVE SPECIES, SHOWING DECLINE SINCE WHEN. SINCE WHEN. SINCE WHEN. I CAN MUSCLE TEST WHEN. 2021 TO 2012 TO 2005 TO 1905.

ARC HAVE ILLEGALLY TAKEN UNLICENCED DEEP AQUIFER WATER FROM AQUIFERS BENEATH A PROTECTED UPLAND WETLAND. CORRECT. THIS UNLICENCED WATER WENT TO COSTA GROUP TOMATO FARMS, TO CROP TOMATOES HYDROPONICALLY. IN THE WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT IN HISTORY IN THIS AREA UPPER TRIBUTARY RIVERS AND CREEKS WENT DRY. WHERE EVERY PROTECTED UPLAND WETLAND FROM URALLA TO GLEN INNES WENT COMPLETELY DRY. WHERE FARMERS SOLD ANIMALS THAT WERE SEEDSTOCK ANIMALS TAKING 10 YEARS TO OFFER GENETICS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE SEEDSTOCK TO MEAT PRODUCERS. WHERE TOMATOES WERE GIVEN PRECEDENCE OVER THE ENVIRONMENT. WHERE JOB LOSS WAS EVERY OTHER ENTERPRISE GROWING MEAT, WOOL, INTO CAFÉ SHOPS CLOSING, OR REDUCING STAFF TO THE MINIMUM. TO JOBS IN GLASSHOUSES OFFERED TO FOREIGNERS. TO JOB LOSS IN THE AREA OF TECHNOLOGY, AND THE AREA

OF LABOUR. WHERE FOREIGNERS SEEM TO BE SOUGHT, RATHER THAN LOCAL PEOPLE. WHERE ENVIRONMENT NEEDS WERE TO SERVE URBAN COMMUNITIES RIDICULOUS AMOUNTS OF WATER FROM A RIVER CATCHMENT SOURCE. WHERE PLATYPUS WERE SEEN DEAD IN THESE WATERWAYS. GWYDIR RIVER NEAR BUNDARRA. WHERE ELSE. WELL. WHERE ELSE. WHERE ELSE. WELL. LOCALS KNOW, IF YOU ASK THEM.

ADD FORESTS LOSING FORESTS. EG. STRINGYBARK IN THIS LIVESTOCK PREDOMINANT CATTLE AREA WILL CONTINUE TO LOSE STRINGYBARK SPECIES, EVEN WHEN IT ISN'T SEVERE DROUGHT. A RECENT RESEARCH JOURNEY SAW RECENTLY PULLED BARK FROM STRINGYBARK TREES SCATTERED ON A PROPERTY. NB SCATTERED. NO ATTEMPT AT REGENERATION ON THIS PARTICULAR PROPERTY ON ROCKVALE ROAD. SAD TO SEE STRINGYBARK ALREADY BEING STRIPPED BY LIVESTOCK IN THE START OF THE COOLER MONTHS. WHERE THE PREFERRED CROPPING METHODS NOW USED MORE OFTEN, THAN MOVEMENT REST CARE METHODS RETAINING ESSENTIAL GRASSCOVER PERMANENTLY AVAILABLE, ARE THE COMMON SIGHT NOW. SOFT SAPPY GREEN GROWTH IN A TIME CATTLE ONCE ATE SEED HEADS AND DEAD STEMS OF GRASSES GOING INTO WINTER REST, CREATES A MINERAL IMBALANCE IN CATTLE AND SHEEP, WHICH ISN'T NOTICED BY MANAGERS. SO THEY HAVE TO SOURCE FIBRE NEEDS FROM STRINGYBARK SPECIES IN PADDOCKS OPEN TO BE CHEWED AND STRIPPED INTO SERIOUS RING BARKING ISSUES SEEN IN DROUGHTS. THESE ARE SERIOUS ISSUES BEING IGNORED BY MANAGERS OF ENTERPRISES WHO DO NOT CARE ABOUT TREES CURRENTLY PRESENT AND OFFERING THE LAND SHADE, SHELTER AND WICK WATER SERVICE TO DEEP AQUIFER NETWORKS VIA ROOT SYSTEMS BELIEVED SHALLOW BY HUMANS.

THE MONOCULTURE EUCALYPT SPECIES WILL BE THE SMOOTH BARKED SPECIES ONLY SOON, WHEN THE STRINGYBARK WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SURVIVE SHREDDING OF OUTER NECESSARY BARK LAYERS, DROUGHT MORE OFTEN, LOWER GROUNDWATER TABLES MORE OFTEN, AND NOT ONE FARMER TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION TO PRESERVE BIODIVERSITY OF THE "SURVIVOR" SPECIES I CALL THE EUCALYPT. THE "SURVIVOR" SPECIES I NAME IT BECAUSE LOSS OF SPECIES IS A MISSED ASPECT IN OUR IGNORANCE AND OUR IRREVERENCE TOWARD AUSTRALIAN NATIVE FLORA SERVES AUSTRALIAN NATIVE FAUNA. WHERE OBVIOUSLY LESS BIODIVERSITY IS IMPACTING NUMBERS OF MANY WILDLIFE LISTED AS THREATENED, RARE, ENDANGERED, INTO BRINK OF EXTINCTION MESSAGES. SIMPLY READ, THEN IGNORED BY TOO MANY OF US LIVING TOO WELL IN THE MASS CONSUMERSIM, MASS EXTRACTION WAY WE LIVE IN, WHERE WE NEVER QUESTION WHERE ALL THE RESOURCES COME FROM, WE CONSUME EN MASSE. ALL TOGETHER. EVERY SINGLE HUMAN BEING'S RESOURCE CONSUMPTION, MULTIPLIED BY THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN NSW, AUSTRALIA, ETC. WE ARE NOT TAKING NOTICE OF OUR MASS CONSUMERISM LIFESTYLE WHEN WILDLIFE CONTINUE TO FACE THE THREAT OF EXTINCTION, AND HUMANITY WORSEN THEIR IMPACT.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT THEN HOW DO WE ASSIST THEM FROM NOW.

- LIVE AS SIMPLY AS POSSIBLE. EVERY ONE OF US. BASE DAY BY DAY LIVING ON NEEDS ONLY. YES. NEEDS ONLY. NEEDS ARE WATER, FOOD, SHELTER, CLOTHING. EVERYTHING ELSE IS PRIORITY CHOSEN.
-
- NO PLASTIC BY 2022. NONE. HEMP WILL BECOME THE SAVIOUR CROP AND IT CAN ASSIST OUR LAND TO BECOME PLASTIC FREE BY 2030 OR 2048. THAT IS WHEN EARTH WILL NOT CREATE GAS EXTRACTED FROM ILLEGAL UNRESEARCHED COAL SEAM GAS MINING, ALREADY POISONING OUR VITAL UPPER TRIBUTARIES SERVING THE DARLING FOOD BOWL BY USING URANIUM, ENABLED BY AUTHORITY APPROVAL. OBVIOUSLY WITHOUT THE NECESSARY YEARS LONG ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH THAT WAS SO NECESSARY TO CEASE COAL SEAM GAS MINING IN AUSTRALIA ITSELF. AUSTRALIA IS A ANCIENT LAND NOT SERVED MASS GLACIAL OR SNOW MELT. IT IS A AQUIFER FED NATION, BEING MISTREATED DAILY DUE TO LACK OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH AND LACK OF DISCUSSION WITH INDIGENOUS FIRST NATION PEOPLES, WHOSE WATERWAY KNOWLEDGE EVERY AUSTRALIAN NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND VERY VERY VERY WELL.
- RAINWATER TANKS NEEDED ACROSS AUSTRALIA. PREFERRABLY STAINLESS STEEL WHICH CAN BE RECYCLED INTO NEW RAINWATER TANKS AFTER THEIR ABILITY TO HOLD WATER CEASES. PLEASE NOT PLASTIC. A 25,000 L RAINWATER TANK CAN SERVE 2 PEOPLE EASILY. A GARDEN CAN BE WATERED WELL BY USING THICK THICK MULCH AND REDUCING LAWN AREA TO PATHWAYS THROUGH MULCHED AREAS. WHERE TREES SHADE THE LAND PLEASE. THE TREES ALSO SERVE NATIVE SPECIES PLEASE.
- POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE IS AGRICULTURE UNABLE TO BECOME THE SIMPLE GRAZING MOVEMENT METHOD OF LOW COST AND LOW IMPACT ON LAND ITSELF. CHEMICALS WILL BE UNAVAILABLE SOON DUE TO MANY

SUCCESSFUL LAW SUITS WON BY MANY COMPLAINANTS GATHERING NUMBERS AND USING FEW LAWYERS TO WIN CASES FOR CHEMICAL DAMAGE TO WATERWAYS, PLATYPUS POPULATIONS, WILDLIFE PROTECTED AREAS, RIVERS AND CREEKS, HUMAN BLOOD ANALYSIS SHOWING THE SAMPLES HIDDEN FROM RESEARCHERS WHO ARE PAID TO ONLY OFFER THE REQUIRED INFORMATION SERVING CHEMICAL COMPANY NEEDS. AUSTRALIA WILL FACE MASS LAW SUITS VERY SOON BECAUSE IMMUNE SYSTEM DIS-EASES WILL BE TRACED TO THE CHEMICAL RESIDUE IN FOOD LABELLED FROM A VERY SOON TIME, WITH THE LIST OF APPLICANTS APPLIED TO LAND GROWING FOOD FOR PETS, HUMANS, LIVESTOCK, AND IMPACTING AUSTRALIA'S WETLANDS ALREADY. THE VERY CONCERNING CHEMICAL ISSUE IS NOTICED ON THE ABC LANDLINE SERIES WHERE THE QUITE OBVIOUS REASON THE UNITED KINGDOM FARMERS WILL REFUSE AUSTRALIAN PRODUCTS, USING 20 BANNED CHEMICALS THE UK DO NOT USE OR ALLOW INTO THE UK SOIL SYSTEM, SERVED BY WATERWAYS THAT ARE ALREADY POLLUTED WITH EXCESS HUMAN CHEMICAL USEAGE INTO WATERWAYS THAT ARE INAPPROPRIATELY TREATED WITH POISONOUS CHEMICALS KILLING MARINE OCEAN WILDLIFE HUMANS EAT EN MASSE.

NEXT UP ARE ARMIDALE REGION'S APPROVERS OF BORES THAT WILL IMPACT VITAL UPPER TRIBUTARIES ALSO SERVING A WORLD HERITAGE RARE NOW GONDWANA RAINFOREST AREA IN THE OXLEY WILD RIVERS AREA. ARC HAVE NO RESEARCH AT ALL ON CATCHMENT FLOW SERIOUS ISSUES WHERE THE WORST EVER DRY DROUGHT WAS IGNORED BY ARMIDALE CITY WHO CHOSE TO LEAVE LEVEL 5 UNTIL OCTOBER 2019. WHEN GUYRA UPSTREAM, SAME CATCHMENT, SAME RIVER SYSTEM, WENT ON LEVEL 5 IN JUNE 2019.

IF WILDLIFE ARE IMPORTANT THEN ECOSURE MAY BE NEEDING TO OFFER RESEARCH MAPPING THAT IS AT LEAST UNDERSTOOD, NOT, NOT EVEN WORTH PAYINF FOR. HOW MUCH DID ARMIDALE REGIONAL COUNCIL PAY ECOSURE FOR MAPPING THAT IS COMPLETELY IRRELEVANT, WHEN MAPS IN THE APPENDIX OFFER MORE INFORMATION THAN ANY MAP OFFERED BY A CONSULTANT COMPANY WHO SUPPORTS NATIVE VEGETATION REMOVAL AND SUPPORTS BIODIVERSITY SCHEMES THAT THREATEN ALL AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE. YES THEY DO. A EUCALYPT TAKES UP TO 40 YEARS TO MATURE THESE DAYS. THAT IS EVERY SINGLE HABITAT TREE MUST BE PRESERVED. MUST BE PRESERVED FOR KOALA THAT MOVE AROUND MORE OFTEN THAN WE REALISE, BECAUSE THE TREES THEY NEED ARE LEAVING AREAS ONCE BIODIVERSE IN EUCALYPT SPECIES. NOW BIODIVERSE COMMUNITIES ARE THREATENED BY A HUMAN RACE UNABLE TO CHANGE EVERY ASPECT OF HOW THEY LIVE, AND HOW THEY MANAGE LAND IN NSW, THE STATE ABOUT TO LOSE KOALA IF COMPANIES LIKE ECOSURE ARE GIVEN ANY AVENUE INTO KOALA MANAGEMENT. PLEASE REMOVE ECOSURE FROM OUR VERY IMPORTANT COOL CLIMATE, VITAL UPPER TRIBUTARY CATCHMENT AREA, TRYING TO SERVE THREATNED SPECIES CALLED KOALA AND PLATYPUS, NEEDING ALL WATERWAYS AND ASSOCIATED HABITATS LEFT AS THEY ARE, FOREVER AND EVER, AND EVER.

Mandy McLeod

From: mandy.mcleod@armidale.nsw.gov.au
Sent: Tuesday, 1 June 2021 9:33 AM
To: Council
Subject: Koala Management Strategy Policy

To the General Manager, Armidale Regional Council,

RE: Koala Management Strategy Policy

Thank you for the opportunity to review the strategy. The strategy contains a large amount of information regarding proposed koala habitat and potential protection zones. Unfortunately most of the important diagrams are difficult to read and interpret. Especially figures 5 to 8 which form the basis of most of the recommendations for the strategy. This is especially important for property owners who are potentially impacted by the defined areas earmarked for development minimisation. The importance of these parts of the document are highlighted in table 3 'Management actions'. Which implies that actions will be taken based on the defined areas. It is of key importance for land owners to be aware of the impacts of being placed in a Koala Habitat Protection zone as noted in appendix 1. Especially given these residents will now be placed at higher risk to bush fire and unable to manage their land under previous legislations (LLS act and 10/50 clearing rules for bush fire protection as noted in the strategy). This leads to 2 main questions regarding the strategy:

- 1) If current residents in the habitat protection zone or corridors are impacted by bush fire and it is shown that clearing of native vegetation on their property would mitigate the risks to their assets (under exiting 10/50 rules) – will council accept financial losses for placing them in these zones?
- 2) Given this major change to land use possibilities for these residents will there be compensation available to them for this change in land use and the extra restrictions that this strategy places on them?

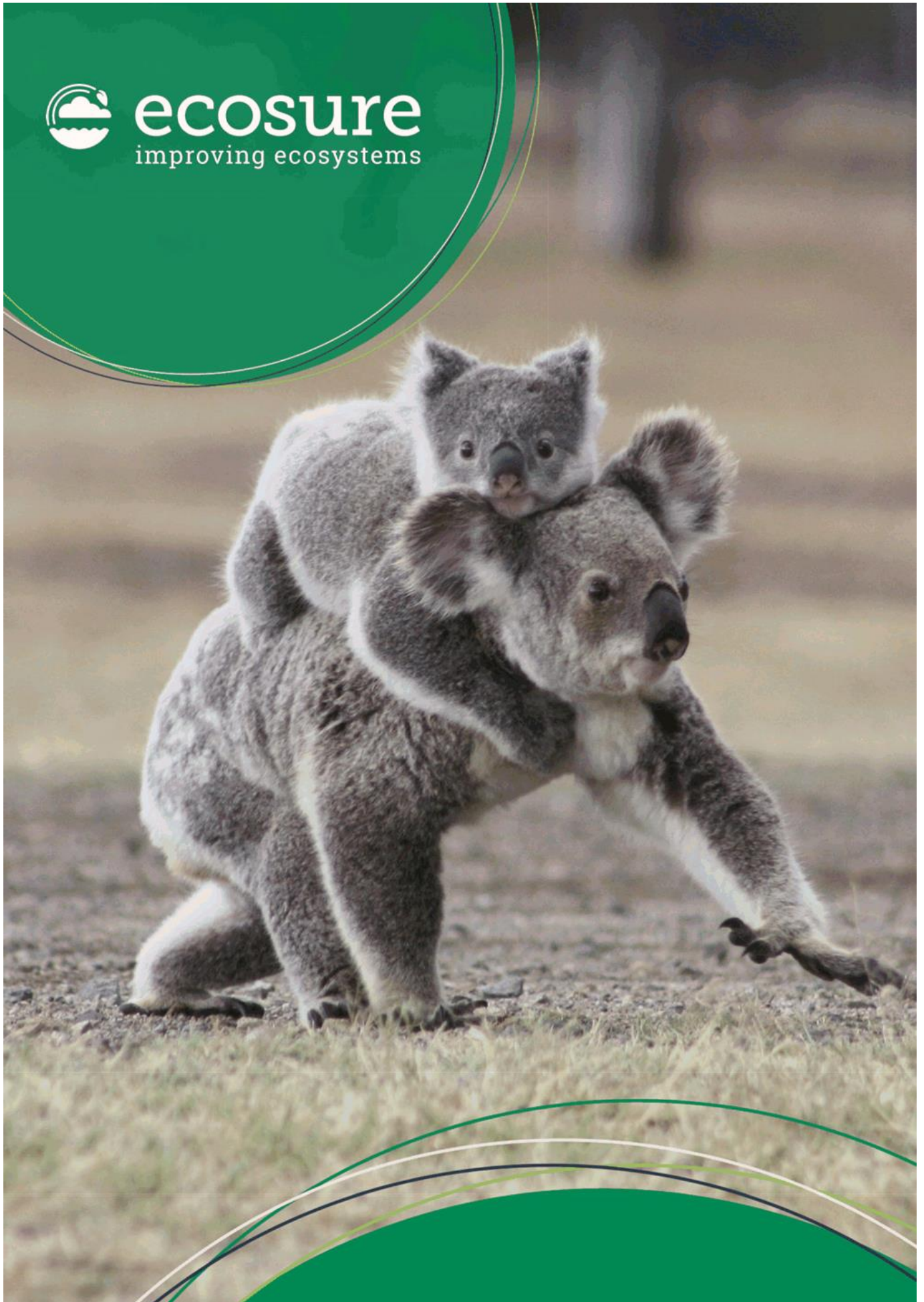
This strategy is biased towards the impact of current land use on the Koala population and does not explain the impacts of this policy on the landowners who will be impacted by such a policy change/implementation. Great clarity in the definition of the koala protection zones is required before a clear and honest recommendation can be made regarding this strategy. I encourage council to provide greater clarity regarding the proposed zones so that the impacts to some of the residents of the council area can be understood more fully.

Yours sincerely,





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Acknowledgements

Ecosure acknowledges the New South Wales Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Armidale Regional Council for the provision of data layers used in the Koala Management Strategy mapping and analyses.

We would also like to thank Armidale Regional Council for their assistance in developing this Koala Management Strategy along with the Southern New England Landcare and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services.

Cover image: Darren Doyle

Glossary, acronyms and abbreviations

ARKS	Areas of Regional Koala Significance
APZ	Asset Protection Zone
BC Act	NSW <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>
BOS	Biodiversity Offset Scheme
BDAR	Biodiversity Development Assessment Report under NSW BC Act
CKPoM	Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management
Council	Armidale Regional Council
DA	Development Application
DBH	diameter at breast height
DCP	Development Control Plan
DPIE	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
DAWE	Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment
EP&A Act	NSW <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>
EPBC Act	Commonwealth <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
the Guideline	Koala Habitat Protection Guideline
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KTP	Key Threatening Process under the NSW BC Act
LEP	Local Environment Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
LLS Act	NSW <i>Local Land Services Act 2013</i>
NPW Act	NSW <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i>
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Services
NSW	New South Wales
NTKRS	Northern Tablelands Koala Recovery Strategy
PCT	Plant Community Type



the Strategy	Koala Management Strategy
SAT	Spot Assessment Technique
SEPP 2019	State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2019
SEPP 2020	State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2020
SEPP 2021	State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2021
SIS	Species Impact Statement under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017
SNELC	Southern New England Landcare
SOS	Saving Our Species Fund
TfNSW	Transport for New South Wales
ToS	Test of Significance under the EP&A Act
WIRES	NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Services

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1 Introduction

The koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) is an iconic Australian marsupial. The koala population's decline in abundance and distribution leaves the species vulnerable to extinction under the New South Wales (NSW) *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act), the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

Armidale Regional Council (Council) is within the New England and Northern Tablelands region and covers an area of 8,621 km² (

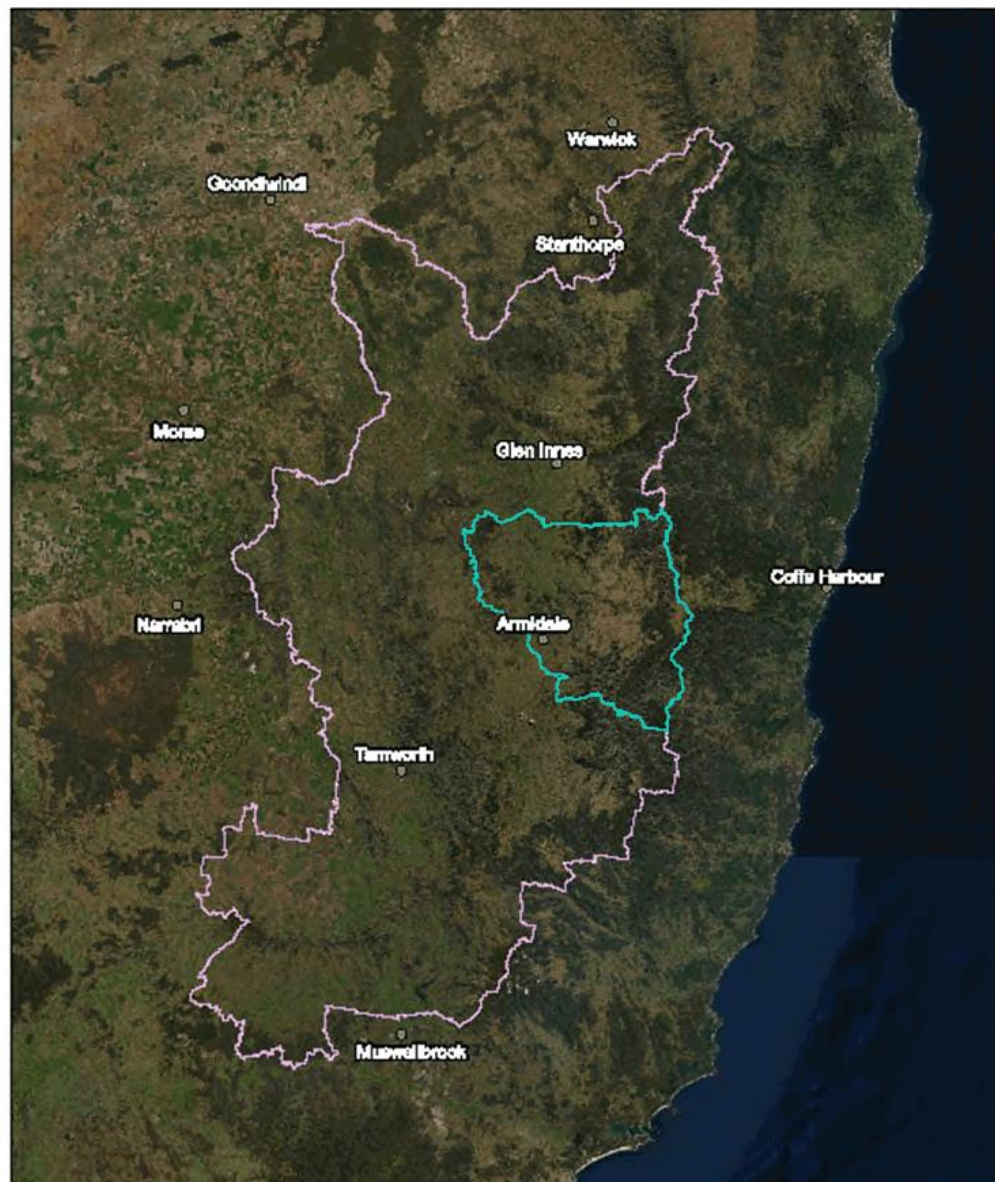


Figure 1: New England Tablelands and Armidale LGA

Armidale Regional Council
 Koala Management Strategy



Job number: PR5858
 Date: 22/02/2021



0 20 40 60 km

GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: GDA 1994
 Units: Meter

Data Source: © State of New South Wales (Department of Planning, Industry and Environment), 2021; © Ecosure 2021.
 ECOSURE does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information displayed in this map. Any person using this map does so at their own risk, and should consider the content of the report that this map supports. ECOSURE shall bear no responsibility or liability for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information.

). The Northern Tablelands region has been identified as an important area for the future of koalas. A number of koala studies have been undertaken in the Northern Tablelands region with funding from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and Northern



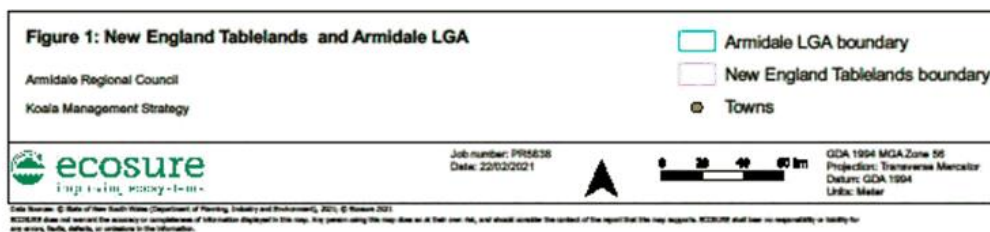
Tablelands Local Land Services (LLS). The Saving our Species Iconic Koala Project 2017-2021: Securing Koalas in the wild for the next 100 years (SOS Iconic Koala Project) sets out broad conservation actions for koalas across NSW. In the 2020-21 financial year, the Northern Tablelands Koala Conservation Project was partly funded by the SOS Iconic Koala Project. Council is also part of the Northern Tablelands Koala Recovery Strategy 2015-2025 (NTKRS) along with five other local governments; Inverell, Tenterfield, Glen Innes Severn, Uralla and Walcha (Hawes et al. 2016). As part of the NTKRS, the LLS Cool Country Koala Project 2018-2019 delivered baseline knowledge of koala distribution and abundance within the Northern Tablelands region (Carr et al 2017 and Cristescu et al. 2019). Additionally, mapping of koala priority areas and usage patterns including ongoing koala tracking projects have and are being undertaken around Armidale (Carr 2020).

Before these studies, koalas' distribution and status in the Northern Tablelands was poorly understood (Hawes et al. 2016). Enhanced understanding of koala populations will allow the Armidale community to deliver better strategic conservation decisions for koalas and koala habitat in the region.

The timing and development of this Koala Management Strategy has been complicated by the NSW Government's recent repeal of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2019 (SEPP 2019) in November 2020. SEPP 2019 was replaced by State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2020 (SEPP 2020) which replicates the objectives and provisions of the former State Environmental Planning Policy No. 44 – Koala Habitat Protection (SEPP 44). This includes the processes for preparing koala plans of management, determining whether land contains potential or core koala habitat and determining development applications associated with core koala habitat.

As of 17 March 2021, the Koala SEPP 2021 reinstates the policy framework of SEPP Koala Habitat Protection 2019, with the Koala SEPP 2020 applying to Primary Production, Rural Landscape or Forestry areas outside the Sydney Metropolitan Area and Central Coast.

This Koala Management Strategy has been strongly guided by the intent of SEPP 2019 regarding the definitions of koala habitat including alignment with the draft Koala Habitat Protection Guideline (not adopted) (DPIE 2019a). It is understood that the NSW government is proposing to prepare a new Koala SEPP in 2021, however, at this time there are no guidelines or provisions as to what might be included in the policy.





1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Koala Management Strategy (hereafter called the Strategy) is to encourage the conservation, management and rehabilitation of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas to support a permanent free-living population over their present range in Armidale local government area (LGA). Combined with other initiatives across the state the intent is to reverse the current trend of koala population decline.

This Strategy is guided by the planning principles in the draft Koala Habitat Protection Guideline (the Guideline) which are:

1. Understand and identify areas of habitat that meet the definition of core koala habitat and other habitat values (including habitat linking areas and underutilised koala habitat).
2. Avoid inappropriate land uses or intensifying land uses in koala habitat areas through appropriate landscape planning.
3. Encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide core habitat or likely habitat for koalas.
4. Minimise potential impacts to koalas and their habitat through design that avoids fragmentation or direct loss of koala habitat and maintains the function of koala habitat.
5. Implement best practice measures to manage identified threats, particularly bushfire and drought in the prevailing climate, to koalas and their habitat.
6. Use compensatory (i.e. offsetting) measures only where they can be shown to meet the aim of the Strategy.
7. Use adaptive management strategies to monitor, evaluate and deliver appropriate planning outcomes for koalas in the Armidale region.

1.2 Strategy aims

Within the Armidale LGA, there are two areas (Precinct 1 and 1a, and Precinct 2) where this Strategy will apply (**Error! Reference source not found.**). The main aims of the Strategy are to:

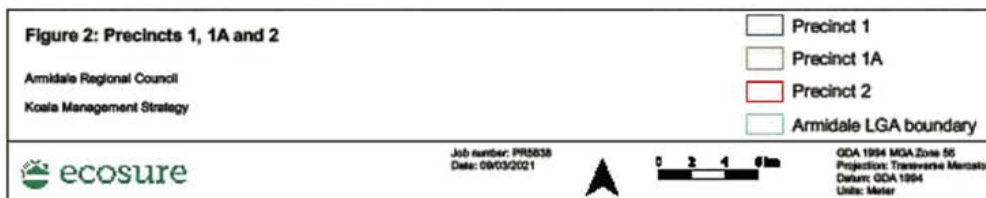
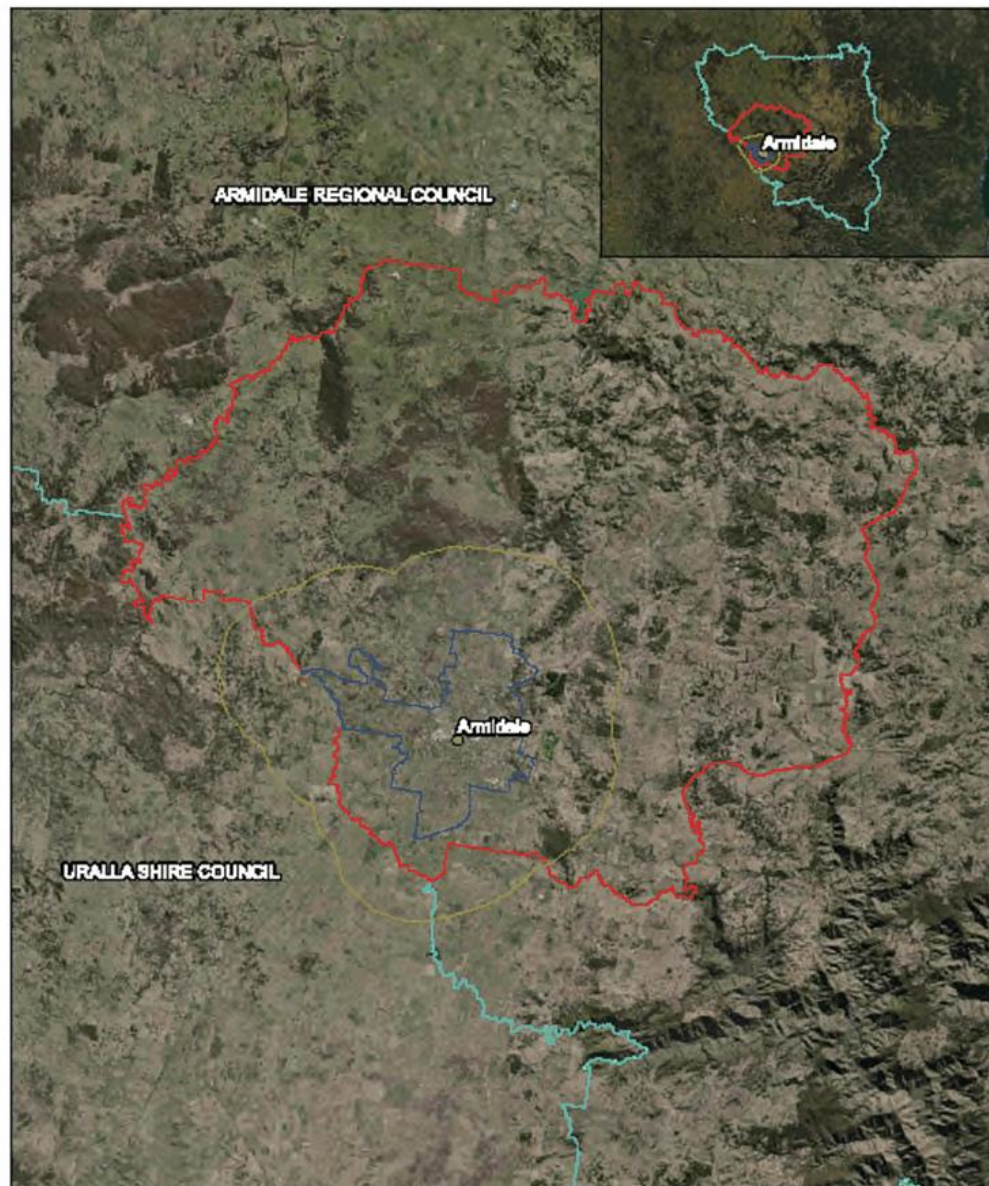
- identify areas of protection that meet the definition of core koala habitat that are on private or public land (excluding state forests and national parks)
- identify areas with other habitat values (i.e. habitat linkages, impact buffers, areas sufficient for population expansion or recovery, underutilised koala habitat that koalas may move into)
- provide management recommendations for planning frameworks for the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP)
- establish a landholder education program including awareness of koalas, habitat management, rehabilitation and koala corridor management in Precinct 2

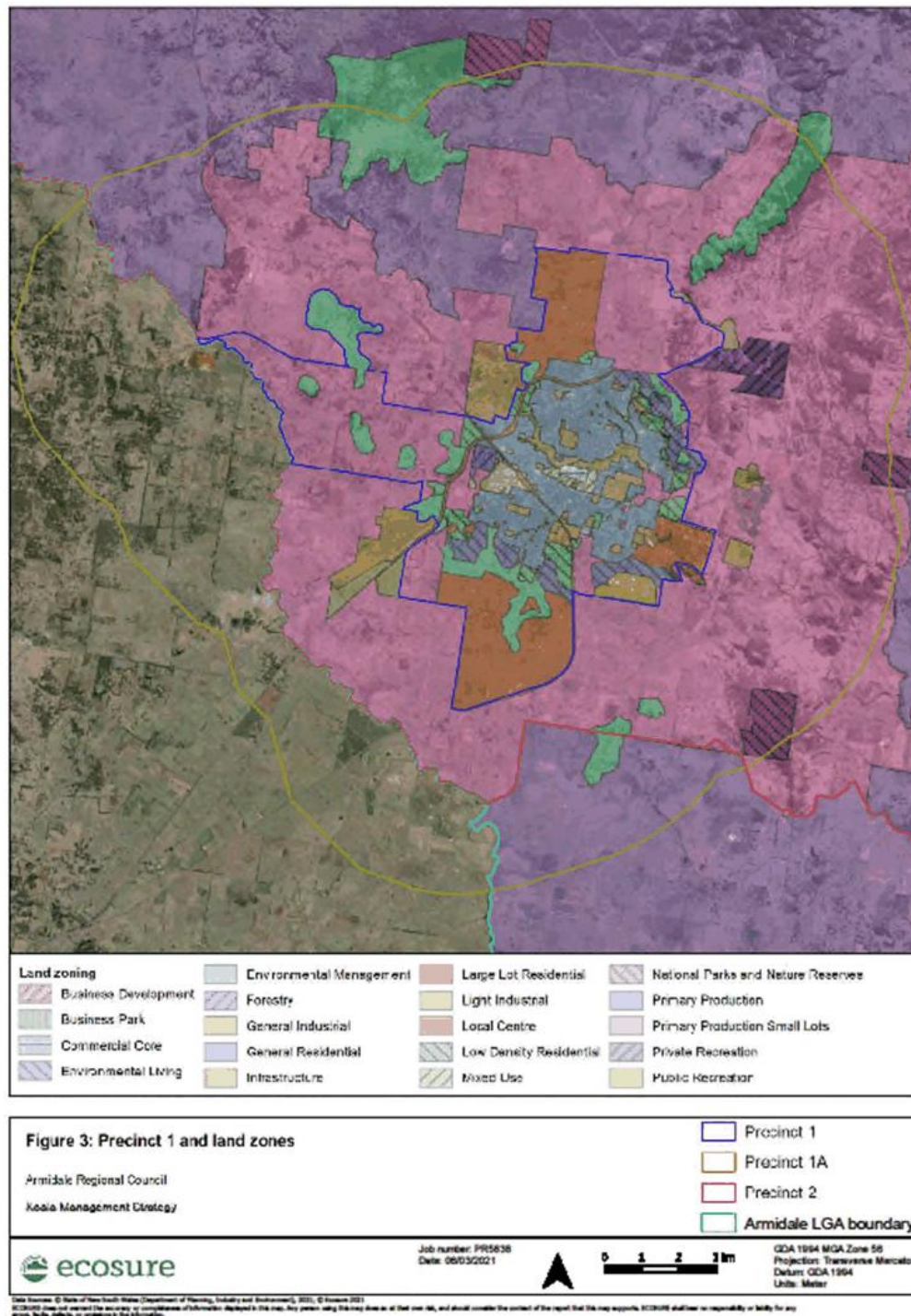


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- identify key threatening processes
 - establish procedures to secure and manage koala populations into the future
 - specify requirements for land use/activity assessment inside and outside core koala habitat and areas with other habitat value
 - provide the next steps for Council in management of koala habitat and strategic planning.

The existing land uses within Precinct 1 and 1a are provided in **Error! Reference source not found.** Precinct 2 is predominantly zoned Primary Production of which Council has planning control over the use of land, subdivision and building development in this zone.

Whilst Precinct 1a, as shown in Figure 2, overlaps part of Uralla Shire Council LGA, this Strategy does not apply to that area.





1.3 Legislative context

Appendix 1 provides an overview of the legislation relevant to the operation of this Strategy and which relate to the management and conservation of koalas and their habitat in the Armidale LGA.

1.4 Limitations of methodology

This Strategy has utilised methods in accordance with best practice and incorporates the provisions in SEPP 2019 and SEPP 2020. Future legislative changes (e.g. SEPP 2021) have not been considered in the development of this strategy, any future changes to legislation may require a revision of this strategy.

1.5 Koala ecology and status in the Armidale region

1.5.1 Koala ecology

Koalas are mostly nocturnal and usually arboreal, feeding almost exclusively on *Eucalyptus* leaves. Koalas are solitary, living up to 12 years in the wild, much longer in captivity. They are distributed along the east coast of Australia, Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia. As marsupials, they give birth after 34-36 days gestation, where the young joey then grows in the pouch for another six months. They are capable of moving around on the ground where they are vulnerable to fire and attack from predators.

1.5.2 Home range

Koalas are solitary living in a network of overlapping home ranges, allowing contact between individuals for mating. Koalas in the Northern Tablelands areas are generally sparsely distributed with home range reflecting the resource ability for required food, shelter and space for successful reproduction. As a result, a relative abundance of healthy large food and shelter trees allows koalas to have smaller home ranges than would an area with less resources (Callaghan et al. 2011). In one study (Heinz 1999) koalas within the Northern Tablelands strategy area recorded home ranges of 35-50 ha, varying in size between summer and winter. In the recent north Armidale radio tracking project koalas were found to have home ranges from 1-4 km² (ie >100ha) (Carr 2020).

Males have larger home ranges encompassing several female home ranges. They mate in spring. Males begin mating at three to four years of age, whereas females begin, and can breed, when they are two years of age, generally giving birth to one or two joeys once per year, for the next 10 to 15 years. The young are weaned at 12 months when it takes up its own home range overlapping the mother. At two to three years these young disperse (often many kilometres) to take up a new home range (McAlpine et al. 2007, Dique et al. 2004).

1.5.3 Diet

The koala is a folivorous arboreal marsupial primarily restricted to eucalypt woodlands and

forests containing their preferred food tree species (Lee & Martin 1988). Within a given area only a few of the available eucalyptus species will be preferentially browsed, while others, including some non-eucalypts, may be incorporated into the diet as supplementary browse and/or utilised for other purposes (Lee & Martin 1988; Hindell & Lee 1990; Phillips 1990; Callaghan & Thompson 2000; Phillips & Callaghan 2000). Koalas will preferentially use trees between 33-97 cm diameter at breast height (DBH) but will also use larger trees 60-90cm DBH (Roberts 1998; Heinz 1999 in Hawes 2016).

Due to their highly specialised diet, food availability is a key determinant of high koala habitat quality (Moore & Foley 2000).

Koalas can exhibit preference for particular foraging trees from a group of the same species which may also vary between seasons. Carr (2020) found that individual koalas have a strong preference for food tree species which may be completely different to other koalas in the same area which may limit interactions between koalas. New foliage, leaf moisture and the palatability of young and old trees contributes to foliage selection (Reckless et al. 2017). High nutrient soils affecting palatability of the leaves, forest area and landscape configuration are also considered to be involved (McAlpine et al. 2007). Better quality habitat for koalas is considered to be in lower elevation alluvial soil plains, which coincides with areas that have been historically cleared for agriculture or grazing (Cristescu 2019; Hawes et al. 2016).

Altered water regimes from agricultural practices have changed water availability and led to the death of eucalypt and acacia woodlands, further reducing the suitability of available food and shelter trees (McAlpine et al. 2009). It was previously believed koalas rarely drink water with observations of drinking in captivity considered 'unusual' or koalas seen drinking from pools or water bottles attributed to heat stress. However, a recent study revealed koalas were observed (44 records) to drink by licking trees during or immediately after rain even when free standing water was available. It is likely this behaviour has probably gone unnoticed because observations are rarely undertaken during heavy rainfall (Blake 2020).

Field surveys by Carr et al (2017) and Cristescu et al. (2019) found koalas in the Northern Tablelands were using (i.e. including shelter trees) 35 different tree species; the most common included *Eucalyptus caliginosa*, and *E. blakelyi*. Hawes (2016) identified 14 preferred koala food trees in Armidale. A list of the likely primary and secondary feed trees for the Armidale area (Table 1) takes into consideration the SEPP 2019 koala tree species (Appendix 5) and previous studies for the region.

Table 1 Koala feed trees in Armidale (Source: DPIE 2020a, Carr et al 2017, Cristescu et al 2019; Hawes et al 2016)

Primary species	Secondary species
<i>Eucalyptus acaciiformis</i> (Wattle-leaved Peppermint)	<i>Angophora floribunda</i> (rough-barked apple)
<i>Eucalyptus blakelyi</i> (Blakely's red gum)	<i>Angophora subvelutina</i> (Broad-leaved Apple)
<i>Eucalyptus bridgesiana</i> (apple box)	<i>Eucalyptus banksii</i> (Tenterfield woollybutt)



Primary species	Secondary species
<i>Eucalyptus caliginosa</i> (New England stringybark)	<i>Eucalyptus dalrympleana</i> (subsp. heptantha) (mountain white gum)
<i>Eucalyptus melliodora</i> (yellow box)	<i>Eucalyptus laevopinea</i> (silver-top stringybark)
<i>Eucalyptus nicholii</i> (narrow-leafed black peppermint)	<i>Eucalyptus macrorhyncha</i> (Red Stringybark)
<i>Eucalyptus radiata</i> (Narrow-leaved Peppermint Gum)	<i>Eucalyptus michaeliana</i> (Hillgrove gum)
<i>Eucalyptus stellulata</i> (black sally)	<i>Eucalyptus moluccana</i> (grey box)
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> (ribbon gum)	<i>Eucalyptus nobilis</i> (forest ribbon gum)
<u><i>Eucalyptus youmanii</i> (Youman's stringybark)</u>	<i>Eucalyptus notabilis</i> (mountain mahogany)
	<i>Eucalyptus nova-anglica</i> (New England peppermint)
	<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i> (messmate)
	<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i> (white sally snow gum)
	<i>Eucalyptus prava</i> (orange gum)
	<i>Eucalyptus retinens</i> (Hillgrove box)
	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> (forest red gum)

1.5.4 Koala status in Armidale region

The Northern Tablelands region has been identified as an important area for the future of koalas, with Armidale being described as having a robust koala population (Carr et al 2017, Cristescu et. al. 2019) and estimated to contain 5-10% of the NSW population (Rennison & Fisher 2019). Further to this, Adams-Hoskings et al. (2016) identified the New England Tablelands as the only bioregion on the east coast of Australia with evidence of a stable population from both expert elicitation and records trend data. The study concluded this may be due to the reduced population and development pressures on koalas in the Armidale region compared to those populations on the coast. Similarly, the cooler tablelands may also help koalas avoid heat extremes associated with a changing climate (Adam-Hoskings et al. 2016).

Council has had an online Koala Sightings Register operating since 2010. There are several clusters of koala sightings around Armidale in Precinct 1. Common sightings are in the northwest including the University of New England grounds, northeast around Rockvale Road and the Archery Reserve, and to the south, near the cemetery and Bona Vista Road. In Precinct 1a, koala sightings exist in the northwest region around Duval Nature Reserve and Dumaresq Dam Road and to the south in the Imbota Nature Reserve. It should be noted that this data from the Koala Sightings Register may contain observation bias as records coincide with human populated centres, concentrated along roads and on cleared land where koalas are most likely to be observed.

1.5.5 Collaboration and research



Numerous collaborative and research projects have been ongoing in the region in the last five years. The Northern Tablelands Koala Conservation Project is being part-funded by the SOS Iconic Koala Project. Council is a part of the Northern Tablelands Koala Project Partnership which includes the NSW DPIE, Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, Uralla Shire Council, Southern New England Landcare and local ecologists. In order to deliver a range of conservation and engagement programs in the region, a Koala Conservation Project Officer has been employed through Southern New England Landcare, whom Council will work with to share in kind resources.

Council is also part of the Northern Tablelands Koala Recovery Strategy 2015-2025 (NTKRS) along with five other local governments; Inverell, Tenterfield, Glen Innes Severn, Uralla and Walcha (Hawes et al. 2016). From the NTKRS, the Cool Country Koala Project 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, delivered baseline knowledge of koala distribution and abundance across the Northern Tablelands (Carr et al 2017, Cristescu et al. 2019; Shultz et al. 2020). Additionally, mapping of koala priority areas and usage patterns including ongoing koala tracking projects have and are being undertaken around Armidale (Carr 2020).

DPIE's SOS Iconic Koala Project also funded a study which identified Areas of Regional Koala Significance (ARKS) and priority threats to key koala populations through mapping areas of koala occupancy which were at a risk of decline (DPIE 2020b). The New England Tableland bioregion supports two ARKS, Armidale and Severn River Nature Reserve. The "Blinky Drinkers" project, funded by DPIE, installed eight koala 'blinky drinkers' in targeted known koala habitat areas affected by drought and the summer bushfires in 2019. Wildlife cameras were also installed on four of the 'koala drinkers' to determine what came to the 'koala drinkers' and how often they were used.

In a 2015-17, Quollity Koala Corridors and Questions Project, a Southern New England Landcare (SNELC) and Citizens for Wildlife Corridors project funded by the NSW Environmental Trust, surveyed eleven properties in the corridor between Dangars Falls and Tilbuster during the 2015-16 summer. As a result, nine of these properties revealed evidence of recent koala activity, or the actual presence of at least one koala. In June 2017, landholders of the eleven properties surveyed in 2015-16 were contacted to follow-up on 'citizen surveys' for koalas during the 2016-17 period. Four landholders reported sightings of koalas (SNELC 2016). As part of this project landholders will rehabilitate 18 sites on 11 properties in this corridor.

Research gaps in the Northern Tableland studies and others in NSW include:

- koala usage/occupancy across the entirety of the landscape, outside existing project areas;
- seasonal or temporal changes in feed/shelter tree selection (Hawes 2016);
- whether food tree specificity is restricting dispersal of koalas to all available, but unoccupied, habitat;
- use of and dispersal across non-feeding habitat such as Travelling Stock Routes (Shultz 2020);

- minimum habitat patch size;
- genetic information including source populations (Shultz 2020);
- cumulative impact of threats (including drought and heat stress);
- identification of climate refugia (OEH 2019).

1.6 Threats to koalas in Armidale region

Threats to koala populations have a range of spatial scales, ranging from continental (e.g. climatic influences) to site level (e.g. vehicle strike and habitat loss). The influence of scale is important to recognise when addressing threatening processes in order to direct the right kind of mitigating actions.

It is well established that the most rapid declines in koala populations in NSW have been in high-density urban and remnant populations which have experienced rapid conversion from rural to urban environments (McAlpine et al. 2006; Adams–Hosking 2017).

There are eight key threats to koala identified in this strategy including, habitat destruction, road mortality, disease, bushfire, human induced climate change including drought, dog attack, injuries from livestock and drowning in swimming pools. These are detailed further in the sections below. These threats were assessed in the Framework for the Spatial Prioritisation of Koala Conservation Action in NSW (DPIE 2020b) and were assigned to four risk rank categories as defined in Table 2.

Table 2 Threat risk categories for ARKS (Source: DPIE 2020b)

Area risk rank	Criteria	Description
Very High	Top 25% of risk range	The threat category has an overwhelming influence on koala persistence in the area.
High	Top 50% of risk range	The threat category has a marked influence on koala persistence in the area.
Moderate	Lower 50% of risk range	The influence of the threat category in the area is noticeable, but not prevalent in the area.
Low	Lower 25% of risk range	The threat category is absent, or insignificant in the area.

Using the Armidale ARKS regional scale assessment, local studies and local expert opinion, the eight threats were assigned to the following risk categories:

- high risk - habitat destruction and climate change (including drought, heat stress, large scale bushfires)
- moderate risk - disease, roads and bushfire
- low risk - dog attack, injuries from livestock and drowning in swimming pools.

1.6.1 Habitat destruction, fragmentation and degradation



Although extensive clearing and modification of native vegetation has occurred historically within the Northern Tablelands, habitat loss is an ongoing issue and was identified as the key threat to the persistence of the Northern Tablelands koala population (DECC 2008) as well as being a key threatening process under both the BC Act and EPBC Act. The ARKS profile considered fragmentation to be a high threat risk in Armidale (DPIE 2020b).

Land clearing is often focused disproportionately on flatter, more fertile areas, which constitute high quality habitat for koalas. As koala habitat is reduced, koala population sizes will decline, and the likelihood of local extinction is increased.

In the Armidale LGA, the proposed changes north of Rockvale Road, west of the highway bypass and south around Kelly's Plains Road and Translator Hill, is likely to reduce and fragment koala habitat in these areas if not protected. This impact will include:

- Direct loss of core and supporting habitat due to residential and road infrastructure development.
- Potential fragmentation of habitat from road upgrades on principal roads and new roads and development.

The distribution of koalas within their entire population range is not continuous due to habitat fragmentation, and has led to isolated subpopulations, with likely lower genetic diversity (Reckless et al. 2017). Ensuring habitat linkages remain intact is critical for dispersal of individuals and maintenance of genetic diversity within the population. Actions to prevent habitat loss or fragmentation include covenanting properties, voluntary conservation agreements, land acquisition, revegetation (planting) and restoration of existing degraded habitats through weed management.

Spatially mapping threats to koalas including clearing of vegetation, mining exploration, urban expansion areas or changes to zoning can help understand the scale of and where the threat may be highest.

1.6.2 Disease

Disease has been identified as a driver of the decline of some koala populations (Brown et al 1987; Rhodes et al 2011; Kollipara et al. 2013). Koala are susceptible to several diseases, however the main threat is infection by bacteria of the genus *Chlamydia*, or *Chlamydiosis*, which occurs in most wild koala populations (Polkinghorne et al. 2013). Two species of *Chlamydia*, *C. pneumonia* and more commonly, *C. pecorum*, have been identified in koala populations (Kollipara et al. 2013; Devereaux et al. 2003). Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service (WIRES) advise that 50% of koalas coming into their care show signs of Chlamydiosis (Hawes 2016). Both the Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carer group and WIRES cite the majority of the deaths of rescued koalas has been from illness resulting in 'poor condition'. According to care groups, *Chlamydia* is the major illness affecting the local koala population, mortality often results from stresses due to *Chlamydia* or Lymphoma (pers. comm. Des Anderson 2021, 26 March). The ARKS profile considered disease to be a moderate threat risk in Armidale (DPIE 2020b).



Chlamydiosis is a debilitation disease, causing elevated rates of infertility and mortality (Hanger & Loader 2009); and is likely to be influenced when exposed to environmental stressors such as habitat loss and fragmentation (Brearley et al. 2012, Rhodes et al. 2011), and harassment by predators, nutritional and climatic stress, or overcrowding (Phillips 1997, Melzer et al. 2000, Phillips 2000, Lunney et al. 2012). Whilst the current antibiotic treatments for koalas are improving and producing fewer side effects, recent research also shows promising signs for a *Chlamydia* vaccine (Phillips et al. 2020a). Despite this, the understanding of the threat posed by disease, and its interaction with other threats, is still poorly understood.

1.6.3 Road mortality

Determining a clear number of koalas injured or killed by vehicles is problematic because many are likely to go unreported. However, vehicle strike is frequently one of the most reported causes of injury and death by wildlife rehabilitation groups and is considered a key threat to NSW koalas (OEH 2018). Local wildlife care groups consider roadkill as the second most common cause of injury or death. Northern Tablelands Wildlife Care group noted that the animal corridor, tunnel and barrier fence significantly reduced injury and death at “Devil’s Pinch” 20km north of Armidale on the New England Highway (pers. comm. Des Anderson 2021, 26 March). The ARKS profile considered vehicle strike to be a moderate threat risk in Armidale (DPIE 2020b).

Road-associated koala mortality is influenced by a variety of factors. Vehicle speed, high traffic volume, road verge width, road fencing, availability for fauna crossings (e.g. culverts) or season (i.e. breeding season) may increase the probability of koala vehicle strike (Dique et al. 2003). Wildlife vehicle strike tends to occur in specific locations or ‘hotspots’ (DPIE 2020c), where roads cut through koala habitat.

Construction of road and residential infrastructure are likely to increase traffic volume, resulting in greater risk of vehicle-collisions for koalas in areas proposed for development in Armidale. A range of structures and mechanisms can be implemented to help keep koalas off roads as well as change driver behaviour.

Further information on roads and mitigating impacts on koalas can be sourced on the NSW Koala Country website at

<https://koala.nsw.gov.au/resources/>

1.6.4 Bushfire

The 2019-2020 fire season was one of the worst recorded in history for eastern Australia. According to the IUCN, bushfires are listed as the predominant threat associated with koalas (Woinarski & Burbidge 2016 in Charalambous & Narayan 2020). The ARKS profile considered wildfire to be a moderate threat risk in Armidale (DPIE 2020b).

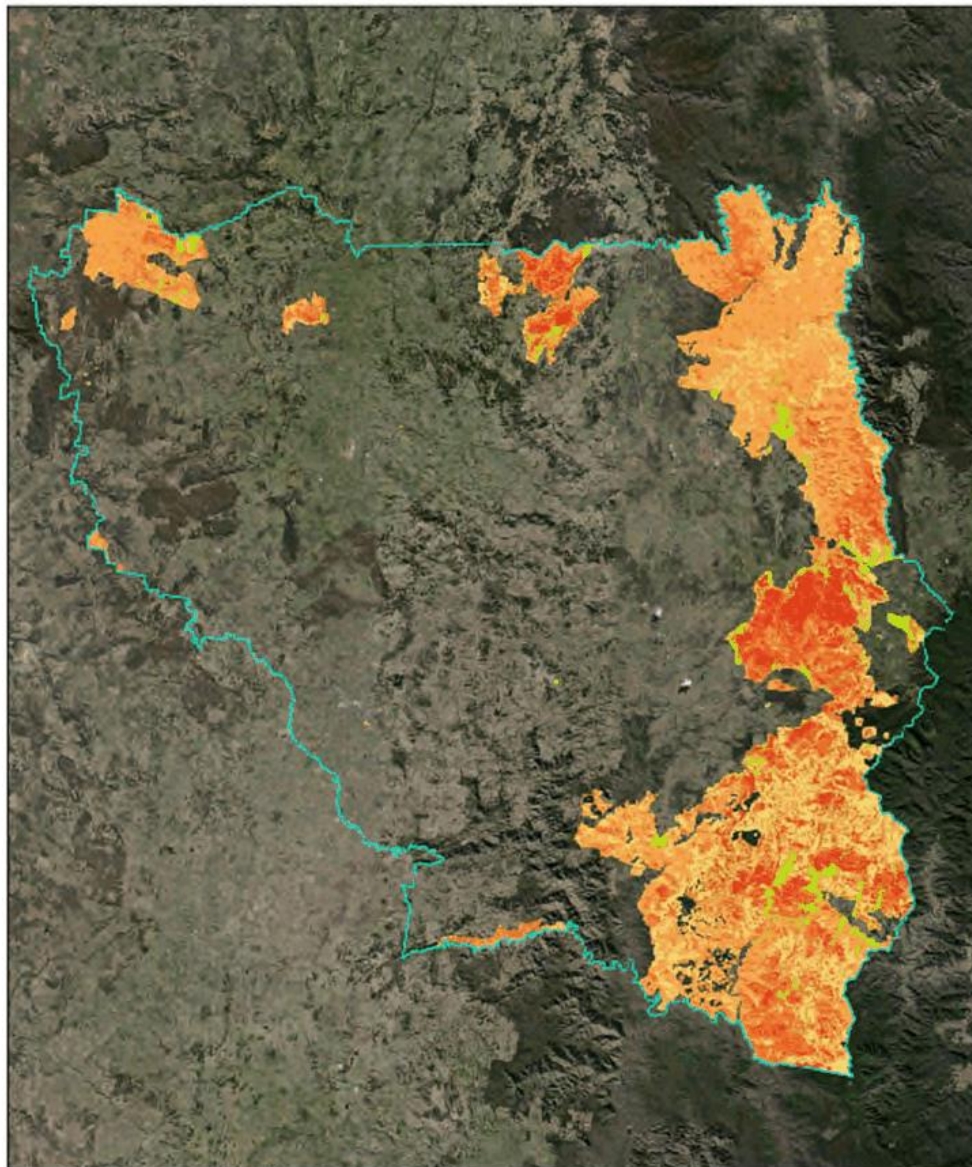
Following the extensive bushfires of the summer of 2019-2020 koala populations and numbers across NSW and other states have been severely affected, with the recent NSW Parliamentary Inquiry finding that at least 5,000 koalas died in the bushfires (DPIE 2020d; NSW Government



2020). Large and intense wildfires that burn into the canopy kill koalas either through direct flame contact or inhalation of smoke and ash, however there is some evidence that koalas can survive high intensity fires by seeking refuge in riparian areas, gorges, rocky outcrops or wombat burrows (DPIE 2020b).

The 2019-2020 fire ground included over 3.5 million hectares, or 25%, of the most suitable koala habitat in eastern NSW. This includes moderate, high and very high suitability habitat. Koala regions with the greatest percentage of the best koala habitat in the fire ground are the North Coast, Central and Southern Tablelands, Central Coast and the South Coast. The Northern Tablelands had 34% of its koala habitat within the fire ground (DPIE 2020d) and Armidale LGA was burnt across 214,365 ha or 27% of the LGA (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Overall, the New England Tablelands lost 7.31% of its koala population due to fire since October 2019 (Lane et al. 2020).

Hazard reduction burns too, are a risk to koalas if not properly managed, with fire intensity driven fragmentation resulting in disjunct populations (Phillips et al 2020). Reinstating cultural burning practices may minimise the risk of catastrophic wildfires which creates healthier more productive landscapes for animals (Allam 2020).





1.6.5 Human induced climate change, including drought

Climate change is recognised as an emerging threatening factor for koalas. Higher temperatures are associated with heat stress events, increases in fire occurrence, reduced relative humidity or drought. Drought or wildfire followed by weed invasion all contribute to changes in habitat structure and quality.

Temperature is a major factor in koala viability because they are limited in their capacity to cope with very hot days. Animals also stop eating in very hot weather to avoid heat stress or come to the ground to drink directly making them susceptible to predation (Crowther et al. 2014; Degabriele and Dawson 1979 in Reckless et al. 2017).

Koala mortality during heatwaves can be minimised where habitat quality is high such as riparian and drainage lines. *Eucalyptus viminalis*, *E. camaldulensis* and *E. tereticornis* are all key koala refugia species for climate change adaption based on predicted distributions (Gordon et al. 1988 in Reckless et al. 2017).

Trees utilised for roosting and shelter may also differ from those used for diet (Reckless et al. 2017). This is important when considering management for climate change adaption, as high-quality habitat is essential in refugia or corridors to help koalas cope with associated heat, humidity or drought.

Detailed studies of the impact of climate change on the chemical composition of tree species preferred by koalas are now warranted to guide future local revegetation strategies and to better assess areas for koala conservation in the future (Reckless et al. 2017). Modelling studies suggest the distributions of other favoured food species, such as *E. viminalis*, *E. populnea* and *E. tereticornis*, will likely contract eastwards and southwards, and have a fragmented distribution by 2070 (Adams-Hosking et al. 2012).

Drought affected dieback (where deterioration in the canopy can result in death of trees) is regularly reported to the Armidale Tree Group, from areas such as Gara, near Imbota Nature Reserve, west of Uralla and Rockvale (Carr 2017); these represent areas in Precinct 2 of the Strategy. In a community survey conducted by the NTLLS, the following species were reported as most affected by dieback: yellow box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*), Blakely's red gum (*Eucalyptus blakelyi*), New England peppermint (*E. nova-anglica*), New England stringybark (*Eucalyptus caliginosa*), black sallee (*Eucalyptus stellulata*) and white gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*), all significant koala feed trees.

Mitigating the impacts of climate change is not directly considered as part of this Strategy however, a monitoring program should assist to identify any impacts of climatic events on koala populations.

The ARKS profile considered climate change to be a low threat risk in Armidale (DPIE 202a). Despite this valuation, the effects of anthropogenic climate change combined with other threats has been modelled (Briscoe et al. 2016 and OEH 2016b in Reckless et al. 2017) and shows significant, possibly severe, reduction in the suitability of habitat across NSW. However, this modelling also found New England Tablelands to be key refugia for the state.



1.6.6 Dog attack

Wild dog or domestic dog attacks on koalas can be a major threat to koalas. At regional scale the ARKS profile for Armidale considered dog attack to be a high threat risk (DPIE 2020b). At a state-wide level an analysis of dog attack data from the NSW BioNet (post 1990) showed that 80% of recorded dog attacks occurred within and around 200 m of urban, large lot residential and rural small holdings zoned land.

Although koalas can defend themselves, attacks are likely to come from larger dogs (>10kg) or by more than one dog. Dog bites may not always be visible on a koala, with internal damage or infection hidden by their fur.

There are numerous campaigns designed to build awareness in communities about how to protect koalas, including making properties koala friendly and ensuring pets are kept responsibly within key koala areas. Further information on management of dogs and koalas can be sourced on the NSW Koala Country website at

<https://koala.nsw.gov.au/resources/>

1.6.7 Drowning in swimming pools

An increase in residential suburban space near koala habitat, exacerbated by habitat loss and fragmentation, will cause koalas to travel across the residential landscape more frequently. Although limited data exists for this threat and is likely to be a low risk, the risk of koalas drowning in residential pools increases as building densities increase and cannot be disregarded.

Koala friendly community campaigns should include information regarding pool construction, fencing and escape mechanisms.

1.6.8 Injuries from livestock

Injury and mortality from cattle or horses has been reported by veterinarians, farmers and wildlife carers. Cattle trampling of koalas was considered quite common around northern NSW, with eight killed in the last 15 months (Rebgetz 2017); one koala rescuer comparing it to the frequency of dog attacks (Mitchell-Whittington 2017).

It is thought when koalas source water from farm dams and water points shared with livestock they may be susceptible to head tosses or kicks from cattle or horses (D Anderson 2021, pers. comm. 23 March). Another veterinarian suggests that cattle may confuse koalas with a threat like a small dog (Mitchell-Whittington 2017).

2 General provisions

2.1 Name of the strategy

This document is called the Armidale Koala Management Strategy 2021.

2.2 Application of the strategy

This Strategy was adopted by Armidale Regional Council at its [insert meeting] held on the [insert date] and approved by the Director General, DPIE on the [insert date].

2.3 Land to which the strategy applies

This Strategy applies to private or public land (excluding state forests and national parks) within the Armidale LGA demarcated as:

- Precinct 1
- Precinct 1a (5 km buffer area outside Precinct 1)
- Precinct 2 (predominantly zoned RU1 [Primary Production under the Armidale Dumaresq LEP]) (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

2.4 Koala habitat mapping

Koala habitat mapping was undertaken using Plant Community Type (PCT) mapping with vegetation communities (PCTs) containing koala food tree species identified as koala habitat. The PCT mapping was sourced from DPIE (date 2015), as no PCT data was currently available for the Armidale region in the NSW SEED data sharing site. The koala habitat mapping was based on a spatial analysis of the the data provided by DPIE to include PCTs that contained koala food tree species and koala records (Carr and Wilkie 2020)

“The results of the koala habitat mapping are presented in the following figures:

- Figure 5 illustrates all available PCTs containing koala habitat, along with koala sightings. (NB: only BioNet sighting records with accuracy over 10,000m were removed in this case).
- Figure 6 illustrates core koala habitat (or highly suitable koala habitat as defined by SEPP 2021).
- Figure 7 illustrates areas of core koala habitat from Figure 6 with the addition of potential koala habitat in Rural Areas as defined under the SEPP 2020.

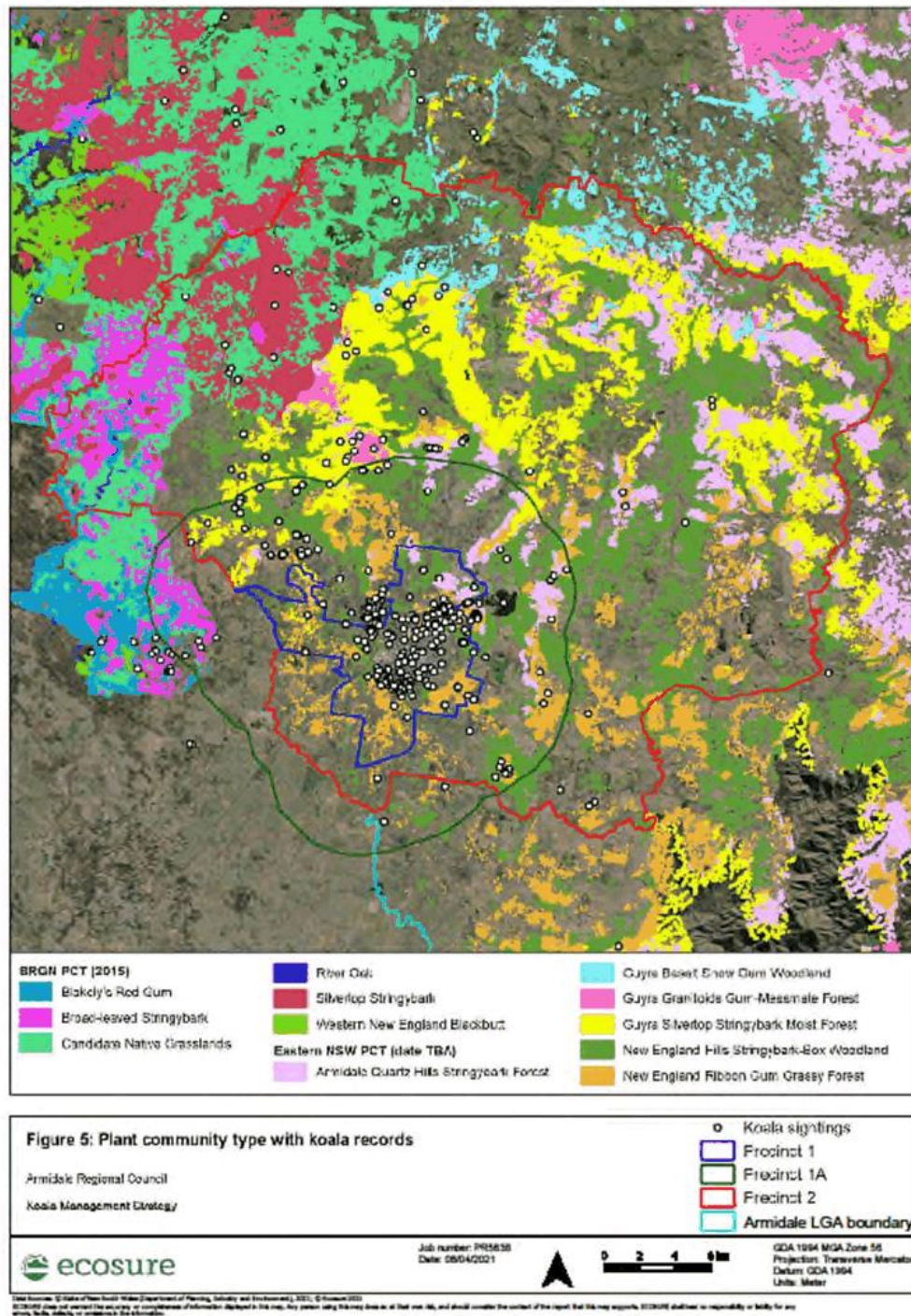
Core koala habitat mapping was derived by an GIS analysis using the PCTs and koala records in BioNet to derive areas considered to meet the core koala habitat definition in SEPP 2021. Additionally, an assessment of the remnant size of koala habitat areas was undertaken to help

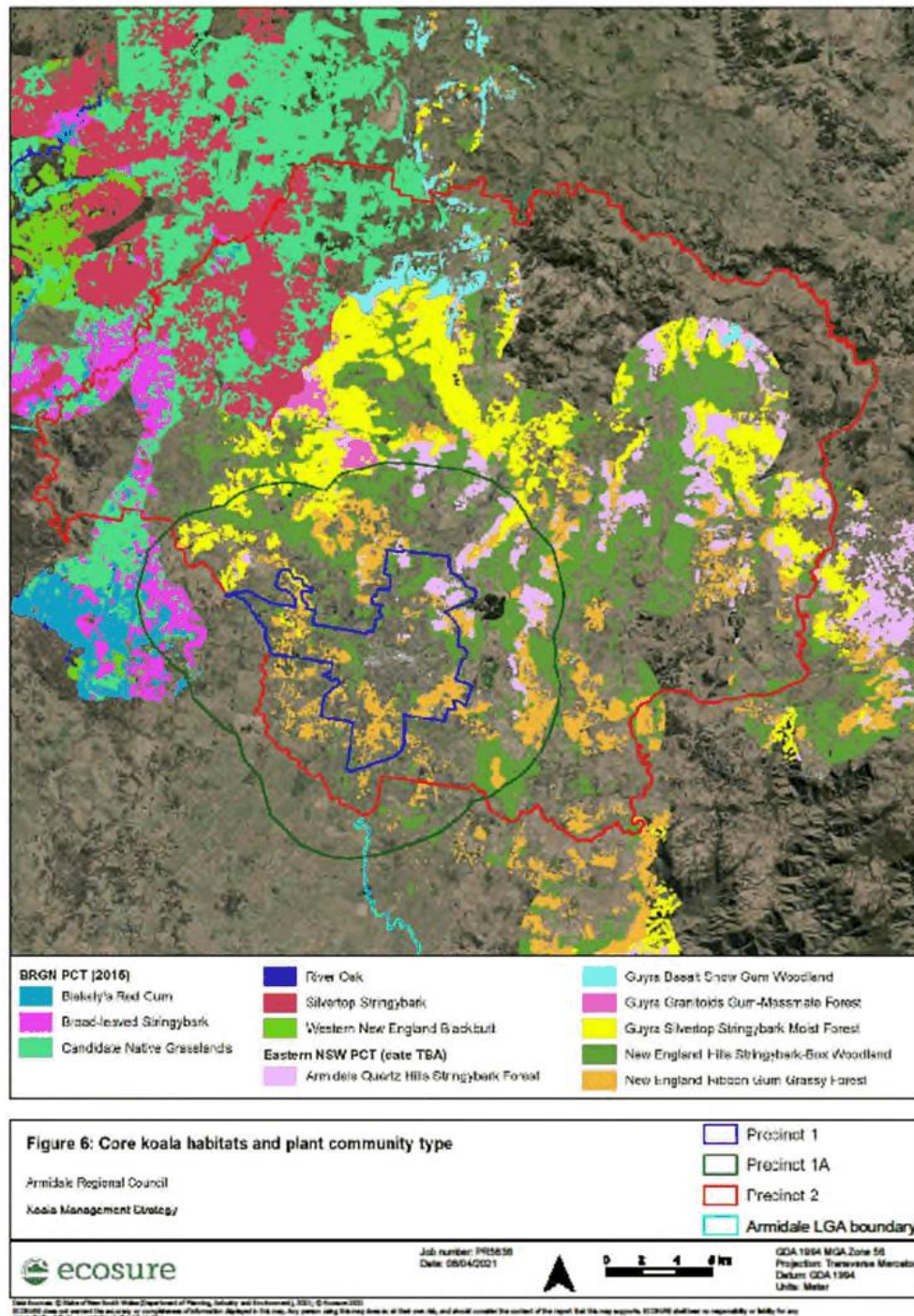


define suitable koala linkages (DPIE 2019b):

- Koala sightings with core habitat patches bigger than 380 ha
- Koala sightings with core habitat patches in size range of 100 ha to 380 ha and smaller patches that were not contiguous and less than 50 m apart
- Koala sightings with core habitat patches in size range of 30 ha to 100 ha and all non-core habitat patches bigger than 30 ha.

Refer to Appendix 2 for a map of koala habitat, linkages and potential areas for tree planting derived by council, along with the zones (i.e. Crown land, State Forest and/or forested remnants) that can function as linkages.





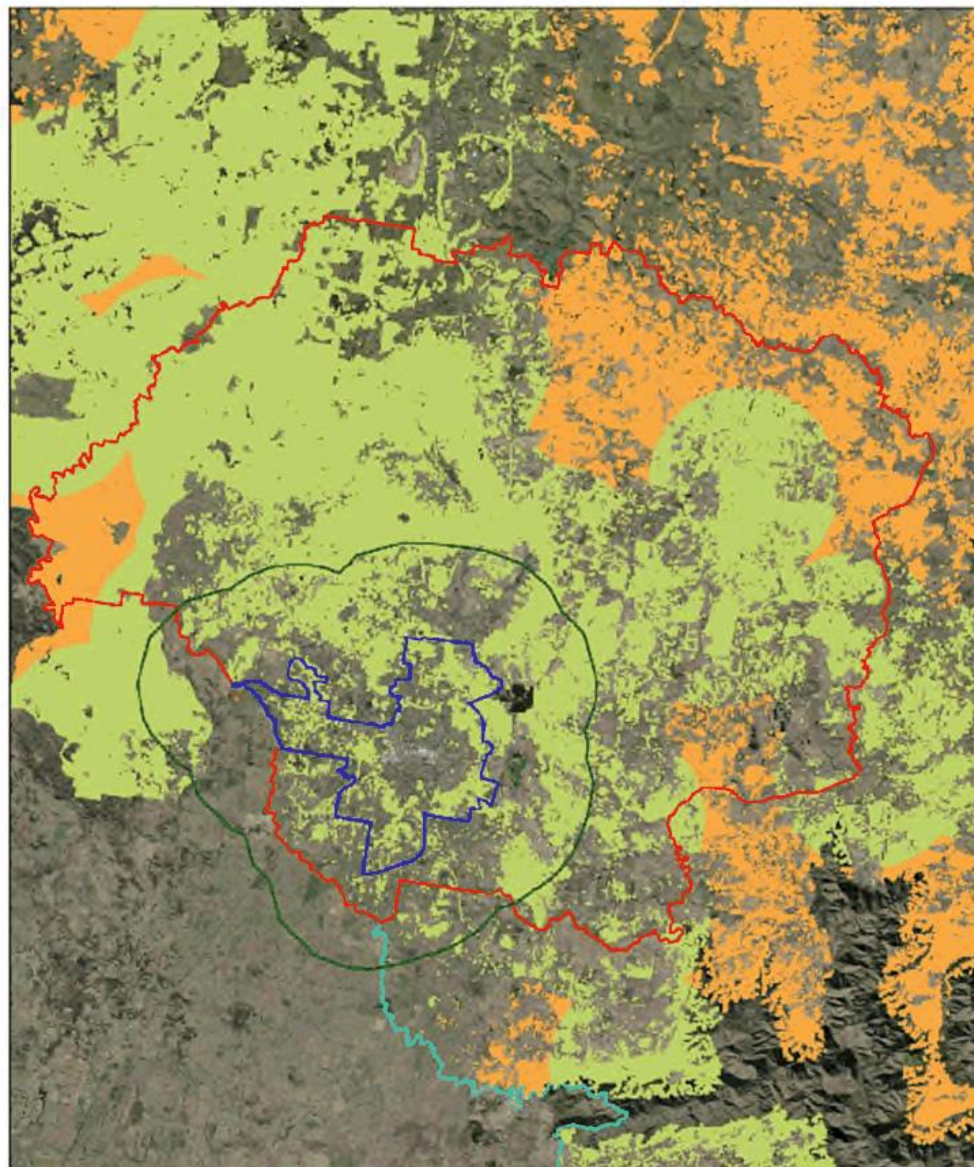


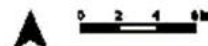
Figure 7: Core and suitable koala habitat

Armidale Regional Council
 Koala Management Strategy

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Core koala habitat |  Precinct 1A |
|  Suitable koala habitat |  Precinct 2 |
|  Precinct 1 |  Armidale LGA boundary |

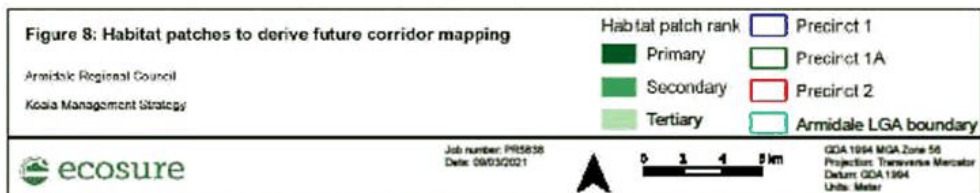
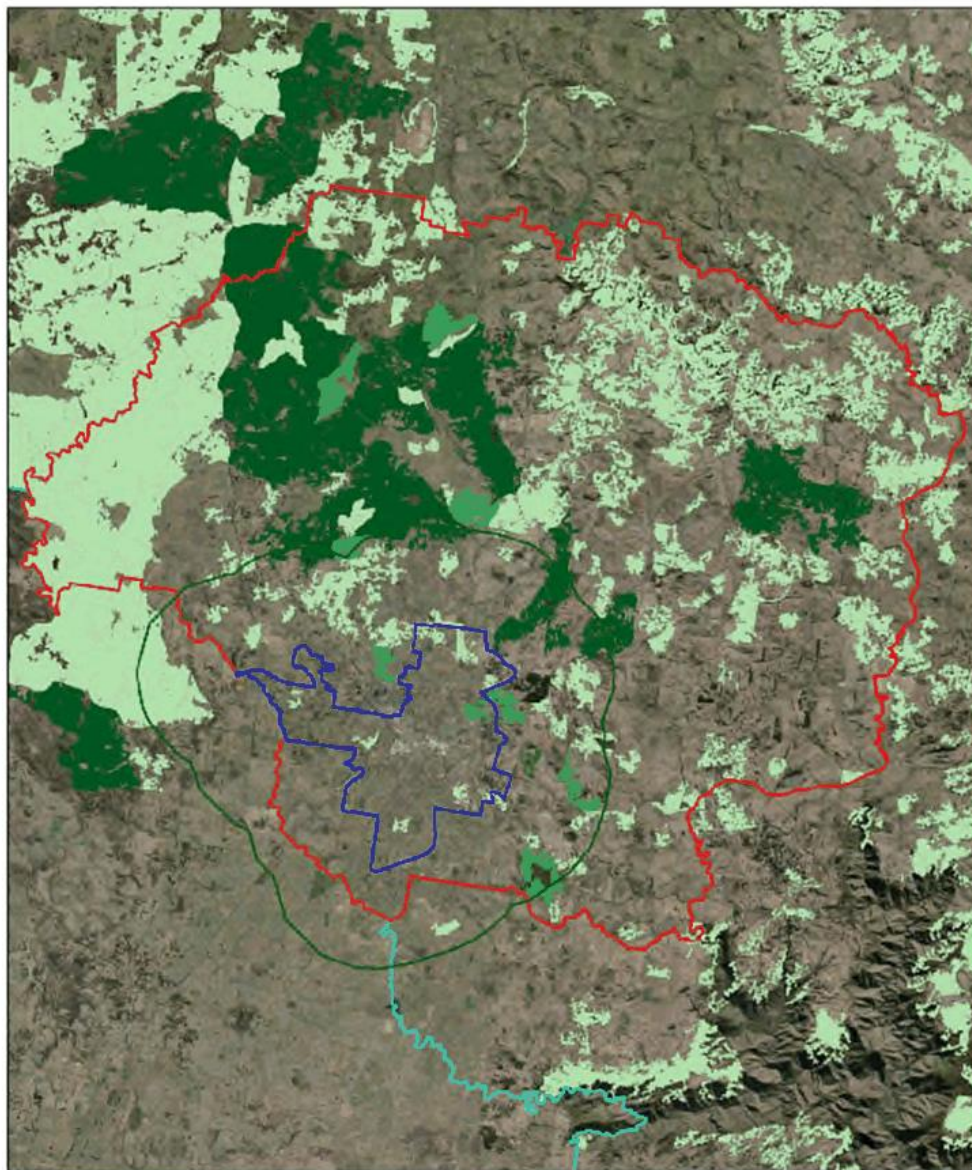


Job number: PR5858
 Date: 06/03/2021



GDA 1994 MGA Zone 56
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: GDA 1994
 Units: Meter

Data sources: © State of New South Wales (Department of Planning, Industry and Environment), 2021; © ecosure 2021
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2.5 Relationship to the other koala plans of management

There are no other approved Koala Plans of Management currently in force in the LGA. Should any other Koala Plan of Management be required in the Armidale LGA outside the areas subject to this Strategy, they should utilise the standards and requirements of this Strategy as a minimum guide.

2.6 Duration of the Strategy

This Strategy will take effect [insert date] which is the date of approval by the DPIE. This Strategy is to remain in effect for ten years and must be reviewed every two years, however, may be reviewed at any time at discretion of Council.

3 Management and monitoring activities

Management and monitoring activities (Table 3) will apply to Precincts 1, 1a and 2 (Figure 2).

The key principles underlying these management and monitoring activities are:

1. Avoid development within core koala habitat and koala corridors:
 - Maintenance and protection of core koala habitat is essential for the koala populations feeding and sheltering requirements.
 - Maintenance and protection of koala corridors is essential for linking patches of koala habitat and maintaining dispersal and breeding requirements.
2. Separate koala populations from new development to minimise threats from dogs and vehicles and maintain healthy immunity:
 - Prevention and reduction of koala mortalities due to development stress such as dog attacks and vehicle collisions is essential for koala population survival.
 - Prevention and reduction of stress on koalas as a result of development is essential to maintain healthy koala immunity and reduce risk of chlamydia.
3. Identify critical revegetation zones that will augment and strengthen core koala habitat and koala corridors:
 - Restoration and revegetation of koala habitat adjacent to existing core koala habitat and koala corridors will ensure expansion of koala habitat and an increase in koala abundance.
 - Restoration and revegetation of koala habitat will replace unavoidable loss of koala habitat.
4. Identify koala roadkill hotspots requiring roadkill mitigation measures such as fencing and/or underpasses or other appropriate measures to exclude koalas from the roadway and to allow safe passage of koalas:
 - Roadkill mitigation fencing will prevent koala road mortalities.
 - Koala underpasses will prevent koala road mortalities and allow dispersal of koalas through to connecting corridors.
5. Compliance:
 - Monitor compliance of development consent conditions and activities.
 - Investigate instances of unexplained land clearing in collaboration with other government agencies.
6. Education and community engagement:
 - Provide education and awareness programs for stakeholders (See Appendix 3 for Landholder education strategy) in understanding key threats and management measures.
 - Support continued monitoring and reporting of koala populations.

The application of these principles in the DA process are further illustrated in Figure 9.

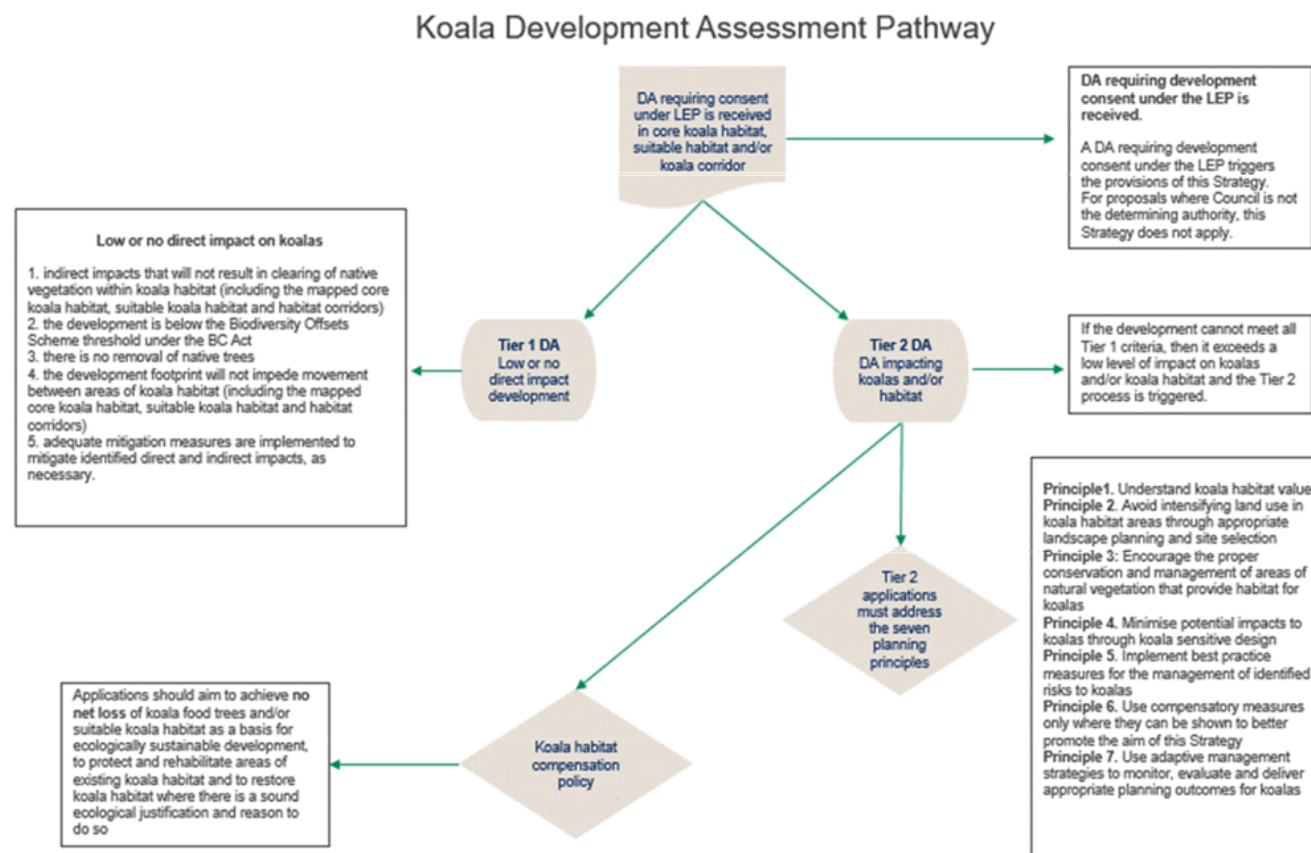


Figure 1 Koala development assessment pathway



Table 3 Management actions

Action ID	Description of Action	Priority	Target Start Date	Action Duration	Indicative Budget	Indicative Budget Funding Source
1. Implementation and Review						
1.1	Identify entity to deliver the Strategy – resources not yet allocated	High	< 6 months	Quarterly meetings	Internal	Council
1.2	Preparation of a koala habitat clause for inclusion in the LEP, and development of appropriate planning provisions to protect core koala habitat and koala corridors	High	When Strategy is adopted	3 months	Internal	Council
1.3	Council to update Section 149 Planning Certificates under the EP&A Act to include information on the presence of koala habitat	High	< 1 year	6 months	Internal	Council
1.4	Council to amend its Development Control Plan Chapter 2.2 Tree Preservation in regard to koala tree species that triggers the requirements of the Plan	Medium	< 6 months	3 months	Internal	Council
1.5	Review and modify Strategy when updated SEPP is finalised	Medium	< 6 months	3 months	Internal	Council
1.6	Review habitat spatial layers and incorporate most up to date PCTs when available from DPIE to model koala corridors from preliminary mapping	High	< 6 months	3 months	Internal	Council
2. Regulatory Processes						
2.1	Creation of an interactive koala habitat planning layer to support the koala habitat provisions	High	When Strategy is adopted	6 months	Internal	Council
3. General Development Assessment Controls (see Section 4 for detailed DA Framework)						
3.1	Development of an interactive DA register to enable access and review of past and current conditions of consent in areas of core koala habitat	Medium	< 2 years	3 months	Internal	Council
3.2	Development of a monitoring program to randomly audit the compliance of conditions of consent for DA's subject to the Strategy	High	< 6 months	3 months	Internal	Council
3.3	Strategic measures in Section 4 to be incorporated into DCP	High	< 1 month	3 months	Internal	Council



Action ID	Description of Action	Priority	Target Start Date	Action Duration	Indicative Budget	Indicative Budget Funding Source
4. Koala Habitat Protection, Restoration and Management						
4.1	Ensure no net loss of core koala habitat and koala corridors through the application of actions within the Strategy	High	When Strategy is adopted	Ongoing	Internal	Council
4.3	Engage local nursery groups and/or revegetation specialists and/or conservation partnerships for planting of koala tree species and koala shelter trees in priority restoration sites for core koala habitat revegetation adjacent to koala habitat corridors. Action will be subject to grant funding or financial allocation in future years.	Medium	< 1 year	Ongoing	\$100,000	External grants
4.4	Develop a Council-owned land register listing properties suitable for offsetting and compensatory koala tree species plantings	Low	< 2 years	3 months	Internal	Council
4.5	Work with NTLLS to conserve habitat in travelling stock routes. Consider those travelling stock route sites which are of high conservation value to be managed for conservation					Local Land Services
4.6	In partnership with SNLC and NT Koala Conservation project, maintain a register of landholders who are interested in rehabilitating koala habitat and developing the conservation value of their property (e.g. Guyra, Glad Blair, Baldersleigh, Boorolong)	Medium	< 2 years	Ongoing	\$5,000	External grants
4.7	In partnership with SNLC and NT Koala Conservation project, undertake letterbox drop property owners providing information on koala conservation agreements, targeting landowners in core koala habitat	Low	< 2 years	3 months	Internal	Council
4.8	Undertake koala community planting projects with Armidale Tree Group, Bushcare groups or projects such as the Trees on Farms Program in strategic linkage areas	Low	< 2 years	6 months	Internal	Council
5 Compensation for Loss of Koala Habitat						
5.1	Preparation of compensatory provisions for inclusion in the DCP for offsetting the loss of koala tree species	High	When Strategy is adopted	3 months	Internal	Council
5.2	Prepare a database of koala habitat polygons with areas to measure loss and gain of koala habitat	Medium	< 6 months	Ongoing	Internal	Council
5.3	Embed a policy into the LEP of financial penalty for koala habitat clearing of which funds will be used for koala habitat revegetation projects	High	< 3 months	Ongoing	Internal	Council



Action ID	Description of Action	Priority	Target Start Date	Action Duration	Indicative Budget	Indicative Budget Funding Source
6 Communication and Education						
6.1	Maintain the Koala Sightings Register and provide regular updated sighting data to DPIE. Continue promotion of I Spy Koala app.	High	When Strategy is adopted	Ongoing	Internal	External grants
6.2	In conjunction with SNLC, Armidale Tree Group and NT Koala Conservation project, develop a koala field ID guide/ booklet for the community to encourage education and promote koala conservation	Low	<2 years	1 month	Internal	Council
6.3	In partnership with SNLC and NT Koala Conservation project, provide community seminars and workshops to actively engage residents and stakeholder groups on koala related issues	Low	<2 years	Ongoing	Internal	Council
6.4	In partnership with SNLC and NT Koala Conservation project, develop koala education programs for primary schools, particularly for those areas in close proximity to core koala habitat	Medium	<2 years	Ongoing	\$10,000	External grants
6.5	In partnership with SNLC and NT Koala Conservation project, install educational koala signage and plaques in local schools to encourage younger generations to actively engage on koala related issues	Medium	<2 years	3 months	\$15,000	External grants
6.6	Promote koalas through Citizen Science projects through social media engagement methods	Low	<2 years	Ongoing	Internal	Council
7 Road mortality						
7.1	Lobby Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to incorporate koala-friendly crossings (such as fauna underpasses and culverts) into state road designs in koala core habitat	High	<6 months	3 months	Internal	Council
7.2	Contact TfNSW to upgrade road signage to reflect reduced speeds (60km/ hour) within koala habitat, and enforce speed limits on roads in koala habitat	High	<1 year	6 months	Internal	Council
7.3	Include koala urban design principles such as speed humps in planning designs of proposed new roads in core koala habitat and koala corridors (refer to NSW Koala Country website for best practice guidelines)	Medium	<1 year	6 months	Internal	Council
8 Dog Management						
8.1	Install signage in high-risk dog attack areas in koala habitat outlining leashed area restrictions to notify and educate dog owners	High	<1 year	3 months	Internal	Council



Action ID	Description of Action	Priority	Target Start Date	Action Duration	Indicative Budget	Indicative Budget Funding Source
8.2	Letterbox drop property owners in high-risk dog attack areas to educate residents and promote responsible dog ownership	Medium	<1 year	1 month	Internal	Council
8.3	Implement appropriate regulatory tools and compliance measures in Council Reserves subject to leashed area restrictions	High	<1 year	1 month	Internal	Council
8.4	Collaborate with Local Land Services to undertake wild dog monitoring and determine level of control required in core koala habitat (refer to NSW Koala Country website for best practice guidelines)	Medium	<1 year	1 month	Internal	Council
9 Koala Health and Welfare						
9.1	Support rescuers / carer effort and investment in rehabilitating koalas and other wildlife	Medium	<2 years	3 months	Internal	Council
9.2	In partnership with SNLC and NT Koala Conservation project, meet with key stakeholders and landholders to identify and explore options, to collaborate, consider options for soft release sites and tracking of released animals.	Medium	<2 years	3 months	Internal	Council
9.3	Provide community information with regards to Wildlife Friendly Backyards to prevent koalas drowning in pools	Low	<2 years	Every 3 years	Internal	Council
10 Bushfire Management						
10.1	Develop an interactive internal mapping system to query history and extent of bushfires and hazard reduction burns across the Armidale LGA to inform future burns in koala habitat	High	<6 months	3 months	Internal	Council
10.2	Coordinate meetings with NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) to establish planning instruments for hazard reduction burns and firebreaks adjacent to core koala habitat and koala corridors	High	<6months	Ongoing	Internal	Council
10.3	Establish an emergency wildlife rescue facility specifically for bushfire events. Register voluntary veterinarians for assistance during bushfire events	Medium	<1 year	1 year	\$50,000	External grants
10.4	Provide RFS with core koala habitat mapping and identify key refugia within core habitat that provides climate resilience	Medium	<6 months	1 month	Internal	Council
11 Funding						
11.1	Develop a Koala Finance Team to design cash-flow into a koala cash-fund, and to apply for new conservation and research funding grants	High	<1 year	1 month	Internal	Council



Action ID	Description of Action	Priority	Target Start Date	Action Duration	Indicative Budget	Indicative Budget Funding Source
11.2	In partnership with SNLC and Armidale Tree Group, use Charitable Trusts and Funds to encourage donations from the public and philanthropic organisations to support koala projects	Medium	<2 years	Ongoing	Internal	Council
12 Research and Monitoring						
12.1	Continue to gather and assess trends in Armidale koala population. Population estimates should follow the methods in DPIE (2019c)	High	<2 years	Ongoing	\$20,000 +	External grants
12.2	In partnership with SNLC and NT Koala Conservation project, coordinate annual community citizen science transect-based koala searches of designated monitoring sites	Low	<2 years	Annually	Internal	Council
12.3	In partnership with UNE and the NT Koala Conservation Project develop research project and seek funding to address research gaps identified in the strategy	Medium	<2 years	Ongoing	Internal	External grants

4 Development Assessment Framework

This section refers to the process for assessing all development applications on land mapped as core koala habitat and koala corridors.

4.1 When is the development assessment framework triggered

The development assessment framework for this Strategy is triggered when a development application in either mapped core koala habitat, suitable habitat or koala corridors is received by Council.

This will be decided through assessment pathways to ascertain what level of impact the Development Application (DA) may have on koalas.

4.2 Assessment pathways

Development applications will be assessed under two pathways:

Tier 1 DA – Low or no direct impact development.

Tier 2 DA – Development applications impacting koalas and/or koala habitat.

The Tier 1 process is for development which can be demonstrated to have low or no direct impact on koalas or koala habitat as follows:

1. indirect impacts that will not result in clearing of native vegetation within koala habitat (including the mapped core koala habitat, suitable koala habitat and habitat corridors)
2. the development is below the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme threshold under the BC Act
3. there is no removal of native trees
4. the development footprint will not impede movement between areas of koala habitat (including the mapped core koala habitat, suitable koala habitat and habitat corridors)
5. adequate mitigation measures are implemented to mitigate identified direct and indirect impacts, as necessary (Table 4 below).

If the development cannot meet all criteria above, then it exceeds a low level of impact on koalas and/or koala habitat and the Tier 2 process is triggered (see Section 4.3).



Table 4 General mitigation measures

Impact	Management measures
Impacts to core koala habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention of core koala habitat with the principle of minimising adverse impacts and retaining existing core koala habitat. The border of the development footprint will be demarcated with orange fence netting. No materials or works will occur outside the footprint in core koala habitat. An erosion and sediment control plan will include measures to prevent erosion into core koala habitat. Infrastructure or development to be designed in a way that facilitates koala habitat regeneration by incorporating retention and planting of koala trees, where it is safe to do so. For example, retaining and planting paddock trees, trees along fencelines and remnant patches of bushland on properties.
Impediments to movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention of koala habitat corridors with the principle of minimising adverse impacts and retaining existing corridors. Infrastructure or development to be designed in a way that is reliably known to not impede safe koala movement. For instance, underpasses as part of road design. Infrastructure or development to be designed in a way that facilitates koala movement by incorporating retention and planting of koala trees, where it is safe to do so. For example, retaining and planting paddock trees, trees along fencelines and remnant patches of bushland on properties. In some instances, there may be a need to reduce koala movement into development areas where they are more at risk (e.g. through the use of exclusion fencing along habitat corridors). However, this fencing will not block dispersal.
Dog attack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrictions on the movement of dogs, including use of dog and koala proof fencing that effectively contains dogs and excludes koalas, with the provision of koala furniture that allows koalas to escape yards should they gain entry. Signage and education. Dogs excluded from koala habitat areas and only allowed off leash in areas established as not being habitat.
Vehicle strike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic speed limited as far as possible. Traffic calming measures and roadside lighting. Use of koala proof exclusion fencing, with the provision of escape mechanisms should koalas gain access to the road. Inclusion of koala land bridges and/or underpasses where appropriate and in combination with koala proof exclusion fencing.
Drowning in pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporation of features and koala furniture that allow koalas to escape from pools and the fenced area, such as a shallow ramp or thick, taut rope. Use of pool fencing that effectively excludes koalas. No structures near pool fences that allow koala to gain access over fencing.
Bushfire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and implementation of a bushfire management plan with measures that specifically address risks to koala habitat and koalas. Core koala habitat should not form part of the Asset Protection Zone (APZ). The APZ should occur beyond any koala habitat. Develop an emergency response plan that identifies key contacts in RFS, local wildlife carers and vets, and list of appropriate Government resources.
Introduction or spread of disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of biosecurity and hygiene procedures in instances where vegetation pathogens known to affect koala trees might be spread or introduced. For example, strict enforcement of vehicle wash-down points.
Disturbance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of tree protection zones around any retained koala trees within the site area and preclusion of any development activities within the tree protection zones. Habitat restoration and strategic plantings to improve connectivity of retained habitat and trees. Where there may be indirect impacts on koala habitat, use of a suitably qualified koala spotter or koala sniffer dog to inspect habitat prior to any development taking place.

Impact	Management measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where koalas are identified, temporary suspension of works that might disturb the koala and/or prevent it from moving to adjacent undisturbed habitat of its own volition. Koalas should be protected from disturbance and indirect impacts via appropriate exclusion fencing from urban areas and roads. Fencing of urban areas should still allow for koalas to disperse through the koala habitat in the landscape and to connect with other koalas and koala colonies.

4.3 Koala habitat development applications

Tier 2 DA – Development applications impacting koalas and/or koala habitat.

Development applications which are likely to impact koalas and/or koala habitat (including the mapped core koala habitat, suitable habitat and habitat corridors) and do not meet the criteria for Tier 1 must address the criteria against each of the seven planning principles and the criteria (as per the Guideline [DPIE 2019a]).

Principle 1. Understand koala habitat values.

Criteria 1. *The site is established as core koala habitat, suitable habitat, or koala corridor habitat if it mapped on the Core Koala Habitat Map and the Koala Corridor Map of the Strategy.*

Criteria 2. *Further analysis is undertaken to understand the broader values of the core koala habitat, including information about the koala population using the habitat and any specific ecological functions the habitat might serve.*

Key questions which need to be addressed in meeting this criterion include:

- What is known about the size, health and viability of the koala population?
- What is known about the generational persistence of the local koala populations through an analysis of records to determine population trends and persistence over time?
- What is the broader landscape context of the habitat within the site area? For instance, is it contiguous with broader areas of habitat or relatively isolated, and what are the likely regional movement patterns of koalas using the site area?
- Does the site area contain particular values that are likely to serve an important ecological function for koalas? For instance, providing linkage between other habitats, or serving as a habitat buffer to broader areas?
- Could the habitat area and/or koala population using the site area be important to the recovery of the koala? For instance, does the habitat contain features that might provide refuge during droughts, extreme heat, or fire? Or is the population considered to be healthy, robust or showing relatively low incidence of disease?
- Drawing on evidence presented, what significance are the values of the site to preserving the existing koala population and supporting recovering and expanding populations?



Principle 2. Avoid intensifying land use in koala habitat areas through appropriate landscape planning and site selection.

Criteria 3. *Site selection considers koala habitat values.*

In addressing this criterion, the development application needs to show:

- How has the development footprint avoided habitat?
- What feasible alternatives were assessed as part of the process?

Principle 3. Encourage the proper conservation and management of areas of natural vegetation that provide habitat for koalas.

Criteria 4. *Development avoids the direct loss of koala habitat within the site area and avoids fragmentation.*

Criteria 5. *Koala habitat is excluded from the development footprint.*

Principle 4. Minimise potential direct impacts to koalas through koala sensitive design.

Criteria 6. *Development avoids direct impacts to koala habitat within the site area.*

In addressing this criterion, the development application needs to show:

- How will impacts to koala habitat be minimised so as to not fragment existing koala habitat, impact the ability of koalas to move across the landscape or impact the recovery and expansion of populations?

Criteria 7. *Where some loss of habitat cannot be avoided (and providing it is consistent with all other criteria set out here), development is designed in a way that retains higher value areas across the site and avoids fragmentation of habitat within the site area and more broadly within the region.*

For instance, this might mean prioritising the retention of koala trees that are greater than 250 mm DBH, or areas of koala habitat that are in better condition, show signs of koala tree recruitment, are better connected with habitat more broadly, or contain features that might be important for refuge.

Criteria 8. *Development is undertaken in a way that maintains the potential function of the koala habitat.*

For instance, if the koala habitat within the site area has been identified as an important linkage corridor, development should be undertaken in a way that enables the continued movement of koalas.

Principle 5. Implement best practice measures for the management of identified risks to koalas.

Criteria 9. *All relevant indirect impacts to koalas and koala habitat associated with the*



development are identified.

Potential indirect impacts which may be relevant include (but are not limited to): dog attacks, vehicle strikes, drowning in pools, increased risk of fire, introduction or spread of disease, disturbance, and impediments to movement.

It is important when considering potential indirect impacts to look beyond the site area to any additional areas which are likely to be affected by the proposal to take all potential impacts into account.

Criteria 10. *Development uses best practice management measures to address the potential impacts considered likely to pose an increased risk to koalas or their habitat.*

The types of measures or controls used to address impacts will vary depending on the nature of the development, the relative importance of the site area to koalas, and the extent and magnitude of impacts.

The specific requirements may be guided by development control plans relevant to each council area.

Principle 6. Use compensatory measures only where they can be shown to better promote the aim of the SEPP.

Criteria 11. *Compensatory measures are only used once it has been demonstrated that options to avoid, minimise and manage impacts to koala habitat have been exhausted.*

Criteria 12. *Where there is any direct loss of habitat or compromise in the potential function of a koala habitat area (and providing it is consistent with all other criteria outlined here), suitable compensatory measures are provided.*

Determining the suitability of any proposed compensatory measures should be guided by the overall aim of the SEPP.

Principle 7. Use adaptive management strategies to monitor, evaluate and deliver appropriate planning outcomes for koalas.

Criteria 13. *Development application includes a monitoring, adaptive management and reporting component against the key outcomes.*

A Koala Assessment Report addressing the criteria must accompany any development application to which Tier 2 applies. A template for a Koala Assessment Report is provided in Appendix 4 of this Strategy. The Koala Assessment Report must be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced person.



4.4 Koala habitat compensation policy

4.4.1 Background

This policy is designed to provide a system for determining appropriate compensation for any activity associated with the removal of koala food trees and/or koala habitat (core, suitable habitat, habitat linkage) that has the potential to adversely impact koalas and/or impede safe koala movement.

The policy aims to achieve no net loss of koala food trees and/or preferred koala habitat as a basis for ecologically sustainable development, to protect and rehabilitate areas of existing koala habitat and to restore koala habitat where there is a sound ecological justification and reason to do so.

4.4.2 Guiding principles

The principles that underpin this policy are:

(a) The primary objective of habitat compensation must be to:

- protect
- rehabilitate or
- restore

Ecologically viable koala food trees and/or koala habitat in this order of preference.

(b) Compensation must only be considered once all options to:

- avoid
- minimise and
- mitigate

any adverse impacts have been applied in this order of preference and, exhausted.

(c) Clearing must not be approved where the impact of clearing cannot be satisfactorily compensated. If a proposal is unable to meet the strict requirements of the compensation policy, Council may however consider alternative outcomes that are able to demonstrate satisfactory koala outcomes.

(d) Habitat restoration compensation works should lead to a net gain in the area of koala habitat, and an improvement in the condition of koala habitat.

(e) The receiving land on which compensation works are proposed must:

- i. have koala habitat of the same or higher class to that being removed,
- ii. be within, adjoining or as close as possible to the development area,
- iii. be within the related Koala Precinct Area and;



- iv. be ecologically suitable and appropriate for protection, rehabilitation or restoration of koala habitat.
- (f) An activity that leads to the loss of koala habitat (especially clearing) should only proceed once the management arrangements on the receiving land are legally secure.
- (g) Compensation works must not lead to permanent adverse environmental impacts and must not be used as a justification for granting approval to a Development Application where the adverse environmental impacts of a development are greater than the benefit to be obtained from the compensation works.
- (h) Management and monitoring of habitat compensation activities should be undertaken over an ecologically meaningful timeframe (i.e. a minimum of five years).
- (i) Council should consider a register of receiving lands.

4.4.3 Components of the habitat compensation policy

Where Council gives approval to clear an area of koala habitat, this policy requires the proponent to undertake compensation works to compensate for the loss of koala habitat. The compensation works must benefit another area of core koala habitat or a koala habitat linkage area to that being impacted by development. The policy is based on two main components:

- (a) the nature of and level of legal protection afforded an area of receiving land;
- (b) a loss / gain multiplier that takes into account:
 - i. the relative conservation value of the area of koala habitat (core, suitable habitat or habitat corridor) adversely impacted by the proposed development;
 - ii. a time / risk factor that takes into account the time lag before ecological benefits are realised and the risk of the compensation works failing.

Koala habitat compensation strategies

Based on the type of compensation works to be undertaken and the level of legal protection afforded an area of receiving land, this compensation policy recognises three category priorities of compensation works that can be applied to koala habitat, namely:

- protection
- rehabilitation and
- restoration.

Habitat compensation works may be undertaken concurrently with other activities that protect, rehabilitate or restore habitat. For example, this may include the restoration of biological buffers, linkage areas or rehabilitation of riparian corridors.

4.5 Koala habitat compensatory measures

The Armidale Regional Council Koala Habitat Compensation Policy is detailed in Section 4.4 of this Strategy. The Policy is designed to provide a system for determining appropriate compensation for the removal of koala food trees or koala habitat in association with development activities.

Compensation for adverse impacts of a proposed development activity through the application of the Policy should only be approved if Council is satisfied that all feasible strategies to avoid, minimise and mitigate clearing of koala food trees and/or koala habitat have been fully exhausted.

4.5.1 Applies to land

Compensatory measures apply to land shown on Figure 2 and applies to Tier 1 and Tier 2 areas including mapped core koala habitat, suitable habitat and habitat corridors.

4.5.2 Objectives

Offsetting should be considered a last resort of the development application process where proponents should first seek to avoid and then minimise any impacts from a development.

The control applies areas to offset the impacts associated with the removal (or other specified action) of core koala habitat, suitable habitat and habitat corridors.

4.5.3 Requirements

- (a) Compensatory planting is to be provided for the removal of koala habitat in accordance with the following (Table 5):

Table 5 Compensatory replacement rates for the removal of koala food trees

Mapped koala habitat type		*Replacement rate (loss:gain)
Tier 1	core koala habitat	1:10
Tier 1	Suitable habitat	1:5
Tier 1	Habitat corridors	1:10
Tier 2	core koala habitat	1:20
Tier 2	Suitable habitat	1:10
Tier 2	Habitat corridors	1:20

*Note: these ratios only apply to koala food tree species listed in Appendix 4 and have a diameter at breast height of >20cm.

- (b) Where development requires the provision of bushfire APZ, the location and type of



compensatory planting is to have regard to *Planning for Bushfire Protection 2019* and the NSW Rural Fire Services document Standards for APZs.

- (c) Where practicable, compensatory planting is to be located on the subject site to enhance habitat links with regard to the Armidale Koala Management Strategy 2021.
- (d) Compensatory planting is to reflect the PCT being removed and/or modified in accordance with the NSW BioNet Vegetation Classification database.

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Appendix 1 Legislative context

Commonwealth legislation

Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)

The koala is listed as vulnerable under the EPBC Act and hence a matter of national environmental significance. The EPBC Act requires that individuals and/or Council assess whether proposed actions will have a significant impact on koala populations and koala habitat based on an Assessment of Significance. The Significant Impact Guidelines (DoE 2013) and referral guidelines for the koala (DoE 2014) should be used to assist this process.

State legislation

Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act)

The koala is listed as vulnerable in NSW under the BC Act. This legislation requires that individuals and/or Council assess whether proposed actions will have a significant impact on koala populations and koala habitat based on a Test of Significance. The BC Act links to other legislation including the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) (see below). If a proposed development under Part 4 of the EP&A Act is likely to significantly affect the koala or koala habitat, a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR) must be prepared by an accredited assessor. The Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) will apply (see below). If a proposed activity under Part 5 of the EP&A Act is likely to significantly affect koalas and koala habitat, and the proponent does not opt into the BOS, a Species Impact Statement (SIS) must be prepared.

The Biodiversity Offset Scheme

The BOS is a framework to avoid, minimise and offset impacts on biodiversity (including the koala and koala habitat) from development and clearing, and to ensure land that is used to offset impacts is secured in perpetuity. There are two elements to this scheme. Developers and landholders wanting to undertake development on or clearing of koala habitat generate a credit obligation which must be retired to offset their activity. Or, landholders who establish a biodiversity stewardship site on their land with koala habitat through a Biodiversity Stewardship Site Assessment generate credits to sell to developers or landholders who require those credits to securely offset activities at other sites.

Relevant to koalas, the BOS applies to:

- local development (assessed under Part 4 of the EP&A Act) that triggers the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme Threshold or is likely to significantly affect koalas based on the test of significance in section 7.3 of the BC Act
- state significant development and state significant infrastructure projects, unless the Secretary of the DPIE and the environment agency head determine that the project is not likely to have a significant impact



- biodiversity certification proposals (for areas of land that are proposed for development, including proposed strategic land use planning)
- clearing of native vegetation (including koala habitat in urban areas and areas zoned for environmental conservation that exceeds the BOS threshold)
- clearing of native vegetation that requires approval by the Native Vegetation Panel under the *Local Land Services Act 2013* (see below)
- activities assessed and determined under Part 5 of the EP&A Act (generally, proposals by government entities) if proponents choose to 'opt in' to the Scheme.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The EP&A Act is the legislation for planning in NSW. Part 4 (Development Assessment) and Part 5 (Environmental Assessment) are the most relevant for koalas.

State environmental planning instruments that provide protection of koala habitat are also created through EP&A Act. These include State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), Local Environment Plans (LEPs) and Development Control Plans (DCPs).

State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2020

The SEPP 2020 commenced on 30 November 2020 to replace and repeal the SEPP 2019. The SEPP 2020 replicates the objectives and provisions of the former SEPP 44 – koala habitat protection and applies to Armidale local government area.

As the SEPP 44 listed only one koala food tree (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) that occurs in the Northern Tablelands, this Strategy will utilise the Koala Tree Species and the mapping methods provided in the SEPP 2019.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2019

The SEPP 2019 replaced the previous SEPP No 44 – Koala Habitat Protection.

The Guideline developed for the SEPP 2019 was drafted by DPIE (DPIE 2019a). Relative to Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPoM), the Guideline provided support under the SEPP 2019 for:

- preparation of CKPoMs
- koala habitat mapping
- definitions of koala habitat including survey methods for core koala habitat and listed koala tree species
- development assessment and application process.

Koala habitat definitions under the SEPP 2019

The SEPP 2019 defined core koala habitat as:



- (a) an area of land where koalas are present, or
- (b) an area of land—
 - i. which has been assessed by a suitably qualified and experienced person in accordance with the Guideline as being highly suitable koala habitat, and
 - ii. (ii) where koalas have been recorded as being present in the previous 18 years.

Methods used to determine core koala habitat can be found in the Guideline (DPIE 2019a). These methods were used to determine core koala habitat for this Strategy and development application proponents wishing to undertake surveys to demonstrate their land does not contain core koala habitat. Furthermore, an updated list of koala trees species has been included in the SEPP 2019 (DPIE 2019a). This list is an expansion from the previous SEPP 44 Koala Habitat Protection and now includes 123 species. The Northern Tablelands koala management area (KMA), of which Armidale is a part, includes 40 species of koala tree species (Appendix 6).

Local Land Services Act 2013

The *Local Land Services Act 2013* (LLS Act) provides a regulatory framework for the management of native vegetation in NSW. It applies in the Armidale LGA. An amendment to the LLS introduced a Land Management Code which allows code-based clearing of vegetation on regulated land. Land classified as 'Sensitive Regulated Land' cannot be cleared under this code. This includes core koala habitat in a CKPoM made under the SEPP 2019. Approvals for clearing this land cannot be granted by the Native Vegetation Panel. Furthermore, Private Native Forestry cannot be conducted on this land.

Rural Fires Act 1997

The *Rural Fires Act 1997* among other things provides protection of the environment by requiring its key management focus (i.e. fire prevention, mitigation and suppression) to be carried out having regard to the principles of ecologically sustainable development as defined by Section 6 (2) of the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991*.

Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code for NSW

The purpose of this Code is to provide a streamlined environmental assessment process for use by issuing authorities and certifying authorities in determining bushfire hazard reduction certificates. The Code has been prepared pursuant to sections 100J to 100N of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. Section 4.5 of the Code sets out standards for the protection of biodiversity, including determining the presence of threatened species and management conditions set out in the Threatened Species Hazard Reduction List. Under this list, the species-specific conditions outlined for koalas relate to the:

- Use of fire: Low intensity fire only in areas formally identified as koala core habitat or koala high use habitat
- Mechanical forms of hazard reduction: No tree removal.
- 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice 2014.



The Rural Fires Amendment (Bush Fire Prevention) Bill 2015

This Bill amends the *Rural Fires Act 1997* to make provision with respect to bushfire hazard reduction work and vegetation clearing work associated with the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice. Under the Code, land parcels (lots) which are wholly or partly mapped within core koala habitat as identified in CKPoMs, are now excluded from the operation of the 10/50 scheme meaning tree clearing measures associated with the Code of Practice cannot be applied.

Companion Animals Act 1993

The *Companion Animals Act 1998* and the Companion Animals Regulation 2008 provide for the identification and registration of cats and dogs, how they are managed and the duties and responsibilities of their owners in NSW. In particular, pet owners must ensure that their dog (or cat) does not threaten or harm a person or animal (such as a koala) and is prevented from straying or causing other nuisance. The *Companion Animals Act 1998* also provides for Council to prohibit dogs and cats on public land for the purpose of protecting wildlife.

Local Government Act 1993

Responsibility for nature conservation is firmly embedded in the NSW *Local Government Act 1993* by way of the Council Charter, which includes the following requirement:

- *to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development.*

Armidale Regional Council

This document aims to align with Council's Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 under section Environment and Infrastructure:

- *E1 Environment – The unique climate, landscape and environment of the region is protected, preserved and made accessible.*
- *E1.4 Protect and enhance the natural environment to promote and support biodiversity.*

Council has also developed and adopted EcoARC, a "Green-print" strategy for environmental sustainability. EcoARC encompasses nine key areas, one of which is Biodiversity. The scope and intent of the Biodiversity key area is "to protect and enhance biodiversity in the region", with the following strategic initiatives relating to koalas:

- *List and protect threatened species and communities, and protect and enhance wildlife corridors.*
- *Develop a "Flagship" Biodiversity program for the region (e.g. around the koala).*

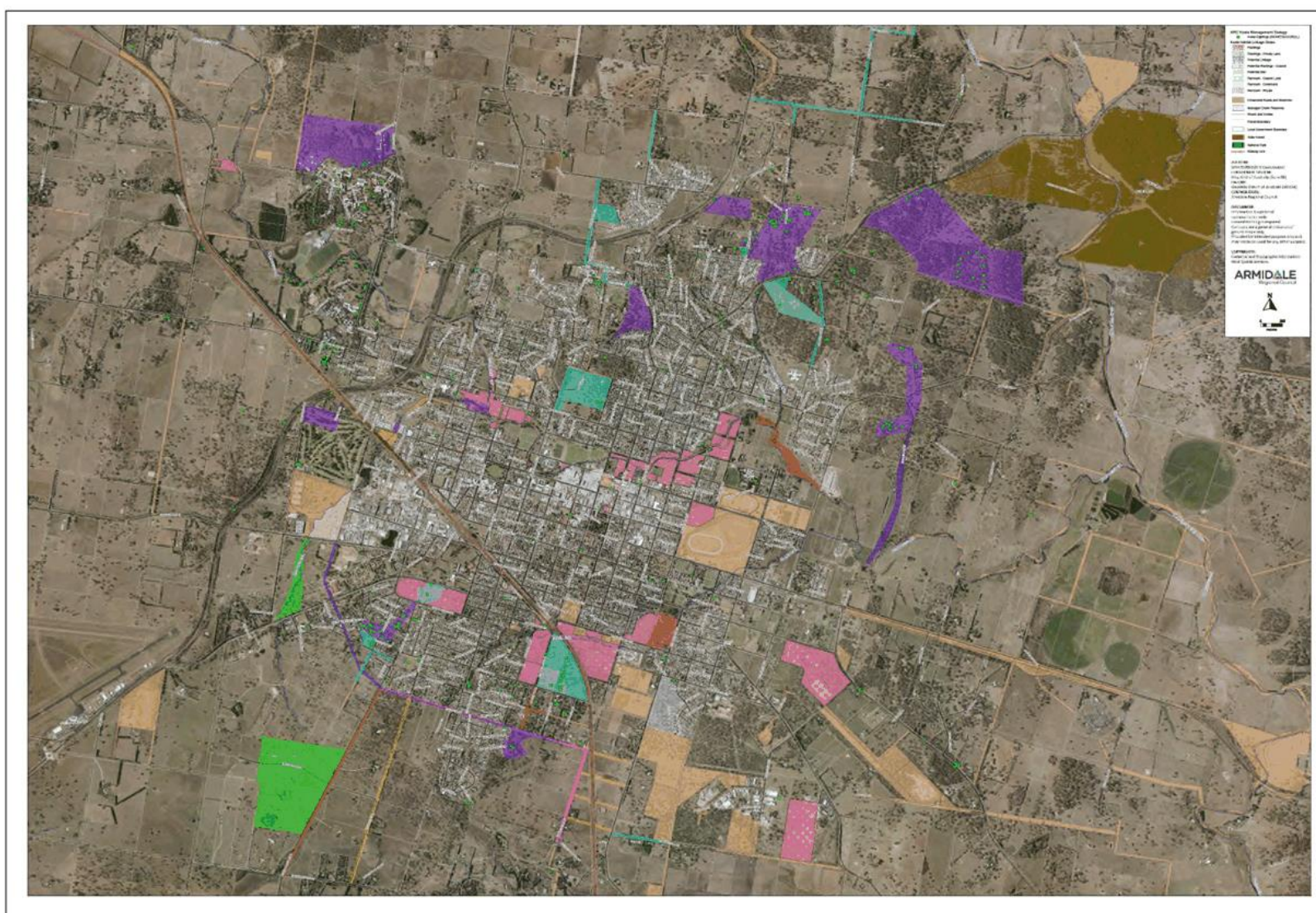
In addition, the 2018 – 2021 Delivery Program E1.4 requires under Biodiversity:

- *Protect and enhance the natural environment to promote and support biodiversity.*



Appendix 2 Koala habitat, linkages and Sightings

(Source: Armidale Regional Council 2021)



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Appendix 3 Landholder education strategy outline

Landholders in the Armidale LGA are a valuable resource; their participation is critical to enable implementation of many of the Strategy's management actions. Building successful partnerships should be based on mutually beneficial outcomes for both Council and landholders. Below is a preliminary outline of management actions, stakeholders (including landholders) and suggested educational methods, messages and available resources upon which to develop an education program for the whole community.

The process for engaging landholders directly may include:

- marketing and advertising of workshops / information days
- provision of background information (brochures/website)
- registration of interest in specific programs (i.e. koala sightings, habitat restoration advice, plantings, access for research or surveys)
- ongoing communication during and after program (feedback mechanisms)
- recognition of contribution through media or other incentives.

Management action	Targeted stakeholders	Delivery methods	Purpose and messaging	Resources available
Koala Conservation Project Officer (or similar)	Schools Clubs Landholders Community	In person workshops Guided tours of plantings Plant ID - Citizen Science Radio interviews	To disseminate information Raise awareness Act as a liaison between stakeholders for Armidale koala information and resources To monitor implementation and effectiveness of education programs	NSW Koala Country Project Officer https://koala.nsw.gov.au/portfolio/georgina-jones/ Community guidelines – running a koala habitat restoration program with volunteers https://koala.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/community-guidelines-koala-habitat-restoration-program-190029.pdf



Management action	Targeted stakeholders	Delivery methods	Purpose and messaging	Resources available
Koala monitoring and conservation	Community Schools Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers WIRES NTLLS Universities, researchers Landowners Gayinyaga Community Consultative Committee Ecological consultants Thalgarrah Field Studies Centre	Promote Koala Sightings Register Council website Social media Brochure Signage Spy Koala Phone application In person workshops Spotlighting tours	To disseminate information and raise awareness. To provide for community education and engagement How you can help protect koalas and their habitat How to report sightings / injured koalas How to ID and find koala scats Creating a koala friendly backyard	Koala Country fact sheet (DPIE 2019) https://koala.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/0802-BD-OEH_Koala-Community-Infographic.pdf Example brochure https://koala.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Koala-Reveg-Pamphlet-Small.pdf Spy Koala Phone appr https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/threatened-species/saving-our-species-program/threatened-species-conservation/iconic-species/saving-our-species-iconic-koala-project Koala friendly backyards https://www.savethekoala.com/about-koalas/living-koalas-how-can-you-help-protect-them Koala Smart https://www.koalasmart.org.au/ How to ID Koalas by their nose https://www.koalacancyfoundation.org.au/learn-about-koalas/koala-id-presentation/ Koala Health Hub https://koalahealthhub.org.au/
Koala habitat restoration and enhancement	Armidale Tree Group SNE Landcare Landholders Land managers Trees on Farms Program Plant nurseries Gayinyaga Community Consultative Committee	Training – peer to peer Council website Brochure – plant ID, scat ID Social media Community tree planting days	To build skills Facilitate partnerships and networks Importance of corridors and genetic movement Importance of Armidale ARK Refugia and resilience to climate change, drought, bushfire	Revegetating Koala Habitat (DPIE 2020) https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/threatened-species/programs-legislation-and-framework/nsw-koala-strategy/local-government-resources-for-koala-conservation/northern-tablelands-koala-management-area Koala habitat revegetation guidelines (DPIE 2020) https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-



Management action	Targeted stakeholders	Delivery methods	Purpose and messaging	Resources available
	NPWS		Promotion of planting sites Improved habitat quality and linkages	Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Threatened-species/koala-habitat-revegetation-guidelines-200263.pdf Koala Connections Forum (Tweed Shire Council 2016) https://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/Koalas Koala Habitat Information Base (DPIE 2019) https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/threatened-species/programs-legislation-and-framework/nsw-koala-strategy/building-knowledge-on-koala-habitat
Wild dog and Domestic Dog (Owner) Management	Community Landholders	Brochure – responsible dog ownership Social media Signage in high-risk areas	To build understanding To change behaviour Minimise risk and incidence of koala injury and mortality from dog attack Improve community understanding of wild dog management	AKF – https://www.savethekoala.com/about-koalas/koalas-and-dogs-how-be-responsible-pet-owner K9 Koala Program https://www.steveaustindogtrainer.com/k9-koala-dog-training-a-barking-succes/
Roads and driver behaviour	Community DPIE	Social media Council website Signs	To improve awareness and change behaviour To reduce incidents of road strike	DPIE Koala vehicle strike facts sheets Fact sheet 1 Fact sheet 2 Fact sheet 3 Fact sheet 4

Appendix 4 Example template for koala assessment report

1. Introduction

Describe the nature of the proposed development.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

2. Define how the SEPP applies to the proposed development.

Koala habitat values – addressing criteria 1 and 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

Describe the site area, including the general environment and condition, location and extent of the development area and any other areas that may be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed development.	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------

Provide details of koala survey as undertaken in accordance with the Guideline. This should include details of the results of the koala surveys, including how the site area meets the definition of core koala habitat and mapping that shows habitat areas and koala records within the site area and adjoining areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

Describe the site context (including mapping showing habitat that might be associated with vegetation in the adjoining landscape and records within the vicinity of the site area) and provide an analysis of the koala habitat values (including how koalas might use the site area and the relative importance of the site area to a local koala population).	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------

3. Measures taken to avoid impacts to koalas – addressing criteria 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8

Describe the site selection process, including how koala habitat was taken into account and any avoidance outcomes achieved through this process.	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------

Describe how the proposed development avoids or minimises direct impacts to koala habitat and habitat function within the site area.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

4. Analysis of potential impacts – addressing criteria 9

Identify the residual direct impacts to koalas and koala habitat within the site area, including the nature and extent of impacts and the likely implications for the viability of a local koala population.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

Identify the relevant potential indirect impacts to koalas and koala habitat within the site area and adjacent habitat areas, including the nature and extent of potential indirect impacts and the likely implications for the viability of a local koala population.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

5. Plan to manage and protect koalas and their habitat – addressing criteria 10, 11, 12 and 13

Describe the management measures that will be implemented as part of proposed construction and operations to manage the direct and indirect impacts identified. These measures should be outcomes focused and include performance targets.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

Describe any compensatory measures that will be delivered, including an analysis of the suitability of these measures against criteria 9 and 10.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

Outline a plan for monitoring, adaptive management and reporting against the key outcomes and performance targets.	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

6. References

Include a list of all references cited in the report.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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7. Appendices

Include any additional information or supplementary material pertinent to the DA proposal.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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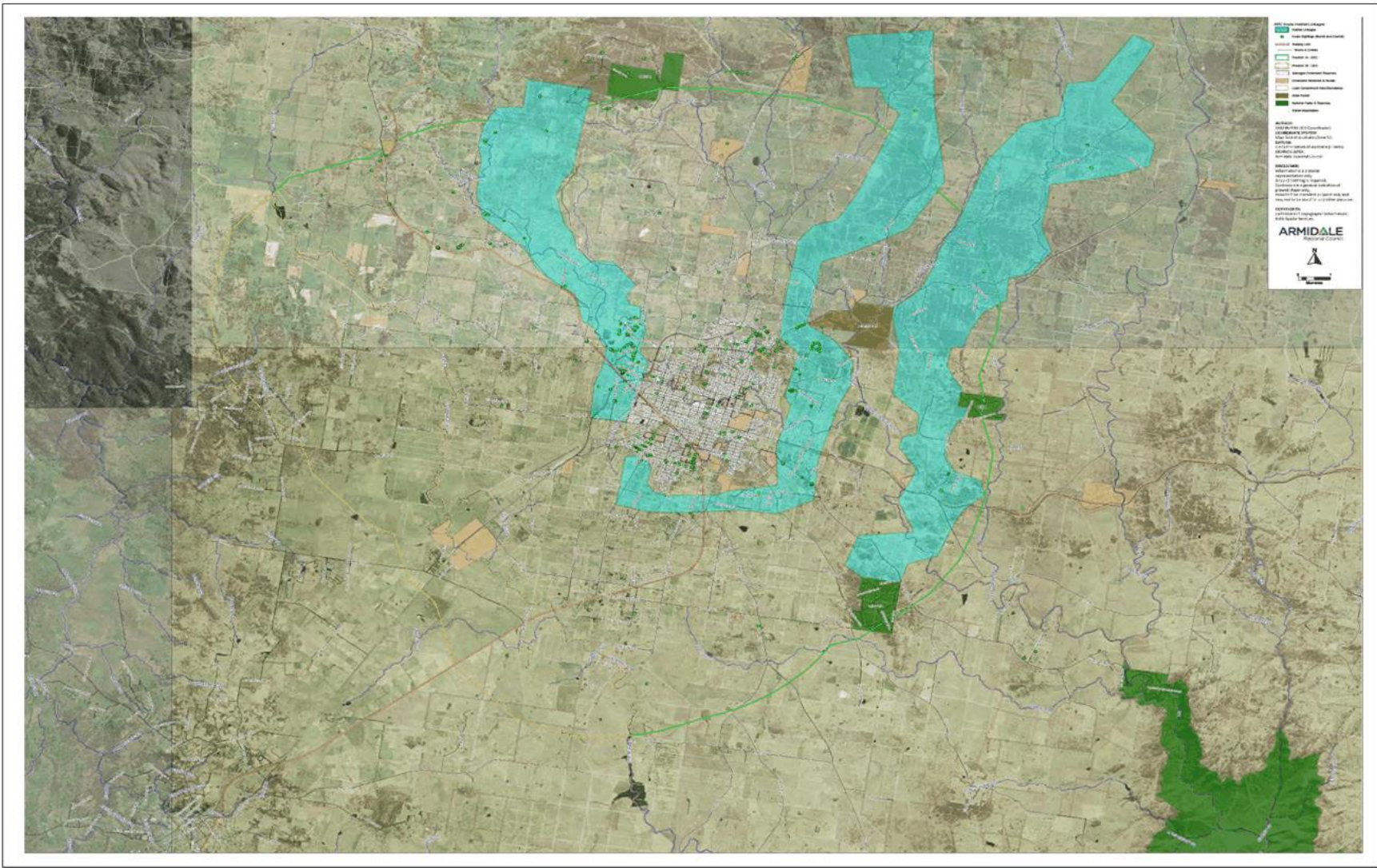
Appendix 5 SEPP 2019 Koala Tree Species for the Northern Tablelands KMA

<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i>	Black She-oak
<i>Angophora floribunda</i>	Rough-barked Apple
<i>Callitris glaucophylla</i>	White Cypress Pine
<i>Eucalyptus acaciiformis</i>	Wattle-leaved Peppermint
<i>Eucalyptus albens</i>	White Box
<i>Eucalyptus amplifolia</i>	Cabbage Gum
<i>Eucalyptus biturbinata</i>	Grey Gum
<i>Eucalyptus blakelyi</i>	Blakely's Red Gum
<i>Eucalyptus bridgesiana</i>	Apple Box
<i>Eucalyptus brunnea</i>	Mountain Blue Gum
<i>Eucalyptus caleyi</i>	Drooping Ironbark
<i>Eucalyptus caliginosa</i>	Broad-leaved Stringybark
<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	River Red Gum
<i>Eucalyptus campanulata</i>	New England Blackbutt
<i>Eucalyptus crebra</i>	Narrow-leaved Ironbark
<i>Eucalyptus dalrympleana</i>	Mountain Gum
<i>Eucalyptus dealbata</i>	Tumbledown Red Gum
<i>Eucalyptus eugenioides</i>	Narrow-leaved Stringybark
<i>Eucalyptus laevopinea</i>	Silver-top Stringybark
<i>Eucalyptus macrorhyncha</i>	Red Stringybark
<i>Eucalyptus melanophloia</i>	Silver-leaved Ironbark
<i>Eucalyptus melliodora</i>	Yellow Box
<i>Eucalyptus michaeliana</i>	Brittle Gum
<i>Eucalyptus microcorys</i>	Tallowwood
<i>Eucalyptus moluccana</i>	Grey Box
<i>Eucalyptus nicholii</i>	Narrow-leaved Black Peppermint
<i>Eucalyptus nobilis</i>	Forest Ribbon Gum
<i>Eucalyptus nova-anglica</i>	New England Peppermint
<i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i>	Messmate
<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i>	White Sally, Snow Gum
<i>Eucalyptus prava</i>	Orange Gum
<i>Eucalyptus radiata</i>	Narrow leaved Peppermint
<i>Eucalyptus saligna</i>	Sydney Blue Gum
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	Mugga Ironbark
<i>Eucalyptus stellulata</i>	Black Sally
<i>Eucalyptus subvelutina</i>	Broad-leaved Apple
<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i>	Forest Red Gum
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>	Ribbon Gum
<i>Eucalyptus williamsiana</i>	Eucalyptus williamsiana
<i>Eucalyptus youmanii</i>	Youman's Stringybark



Appendix 6 Potential Koala Linkages – Northern Tablelands Koala Conservation Partnership Project

(Source: Armidale Regional Council 2021)



PR5858 Armidale Koala Management Strategy



Revision History

Revision No.	Revision date	Details	Prepared by	Reviewed by	Approved by
00	09/03/2021	Armidale Koala Management Strategy-DR	Emily Hatfield Senior Wildlife Biologist	Julie Whelan, Senior Environmental Scientist	Dr Natalie Toon, Environmental Services Manager
01	12/04/2021	Armidale Koala Management Strategy-final draft	Emily Hatfield Senior Wildlife Biologist	Nigel Cotsell, Senior Ecologist	Dr Natalie Toon, Environmental Services Manager
02	8/6/2021	Armidale Koala Management Strategy-final draft (note certain dates will need to be included if approved by Council at June meeting)	Updated from public submissions	John Turbill DPIE, Mandy McLeod ARC	John Turbill DPIE

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1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the management of streetscape vegetation in the Armidale Regional local government area. It provides standards for the placement and planting of street trees, pruning, risk and asset management, tree valuation and managing public tree issues.

2. APPLICATION

The policy applies to all Council owned and managed urban streetscapes, roundabouts and traffic islands and container plantings, car park landscaping, street and road reserve landscaping.

3. POLICY INTENT

To sustainably manage, enhance and increase trees and vegetation in Council's streetscapes, with species that maintain and enhance neighbourhood character, support biodiversity and are adaptable to a changing climate.

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. To develop and maintain traditional and historical avenue style streetscapes that integrate with a diverse range of aesthetically pleasing parkland landscapes
2. To provide standards for the management and planting of street trees to reduce public risk and damage to infrastructure
3. To provide a policy framework that recognises trees as community assets with considerations relating to tree valuation and asset renewal
4. To increase the diversity of species suitable for urban landscapes with reference to changing climatic conditions and horticultural interest

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

This policy links to the Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027:

E1: "Ensuring that the unique climate, landscape and environment of the region is protected, preserved and made accessible"

5. POLICY

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- 6.10. Sponsorship and donations of street trees
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- 1. Annual tree planting and maintenance program 5 year rotation
- 2. Vegetation restriction zones at intersections

1 Introduction

The Cities of Armidale and Guyra, situated on the cool climate Northern Tablelands of New South Wales are renowned for the beauty of their urban streetscapes. Armidale has approximately 10,000 street trees, with several thousand more in Guyra and the villages. These trees provide shade in summer, vibrant and varied autumn colour, spring flowers and contrasting forms in winter. The New England climate supports the establishment of an extensive range of introduced ornamental trees and this species diversity is part of the unique character of the region.

Our streetscapes and parks provide a unique contrasting pallet to the indigenous flora of our urban bushland areas and the urban watercourses and lagoons have been revegetated with a wide variety of Australian native plants.

Well landscaped urban spaces improve the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Our plantings provide shade and shelter, improve urban air quality, absorb carbon emissions and provide habitat for wildlife. Our streetscapes deliver dynamic seasonal beauty with texture and contrast to the built environment. This policy seeks to provide the framework to perpetuate these values into the future.

2 Historical context

The scenic quality of Armidale's streetscapes evident today demonstrates a continuation of an earlier commitment by the cities founders to the formalised the development and maintenance of our streetscapes and parks.

Thematic planting schemes of largely deciduous trees have been used throughout the urban area in an effort to provide integrated avenues of shade and colour in combination with open space. The essential design features of consistency and uniformity and the use of trees of distinctive form and appearance to compliment significant buildings or locations, has created a unique legacy that continues to be a major tourist drawcard to the city.

This vision for autumn colour and the simplicity of regularly spaced avenue plantings was initiated by the Armidale Improvement and Beautification Committee from the 1940's to the 1960's and later by the Street Tree Planting Committee, a dedicated group of citizens who continued this work until the 1990's.

The planting of trees in Armidale and Guyra public spaces continues to reflect this vision and is now undertaken by appropriately qualified Council staff in collaboration with the community. Council conducts annual planting and tree management programs for the maintenance and development of the city's parks and streetscapes.

Our streetscapes and parks compliment a number of historically significant public and private parks and gardens. Many of these gardens and public plantings are heritage listed within the Local Environmental Plan. The sensitive maintenance of these landscapes contributes to the perpetuation of the heritage values of the region.

3 Trees in the urban environment

In a natural setting, trees are adapted to specific site conditions and there are few inhibitors to growth and photosynthetic function. By contrast, constructed urban settings provide enormous challenges for trees that can affect growth, performance and longevity.

These challenges include restricted solar access due to overshadowing by buildings, reduced oxygen and water availability in compacted soils and paved surfaces and reduced nutrient cycling

due to lack of litter and often unsuitable conditions for decomposition. In addition, competition from turf grasses, structural damage from vehicles, and damage from infrastructure works, vandalism and airborne pollutants play a significant role in urban tree health and growth. The simplification of the urban ecosystem means trees may also be subjected to increased insect predation, parasitism and disease without the natural checks and balances of a fully functioning ecosystem.

3.1 Planting for habitat creation and retention

Council is committed to establishing and nurturing Australian plants in areas identified for habitat protection such as Environmental Protection Zones identified in the Local Environmental Plan, remnant urban bushland areas, the urban reaches of Dumaresq Creek and its minor streams, and where remnant conservation and/or revegetation is identified for peri-urban road reserves.

The presence of particular native animals may be the driver to improve habitat and revegetate identified linkages through the landscape. For example, Koalas inhabit peri-urban and rural areas and are often seen roaming the urban landscape between habitat patches. Strategically located plantings may assist koala movements through the urban landscape.

Due to the dominance of introduced species in the urban streetscapes, the potential for wildlife corridors within the CBD and immediate surrounds may be limited. When designing open space landscaping projects within the city, wildlife habitat and connectivity will be one criterion within a number of considerations for species selection. Habitat creation could encompass areas of parkland set aside as wildflower meadows, well designed stepping stone plantings or habitat islands within a larger open landscape, or the introduction of shrubs and ground covers to revitalise small patches of woodland or derived native grassland.

References

- Revegetation Guidelines for the Urban Reaches of Dumaresq Creek - Armidale Regional Council
- The survival of the Koala is in our hands – How you can play your part in saving Armidale’s koala population
- Guidelines for the Conservation Management of Bushland on Armidale’s peri-urban zones – Richard Morsley

3.2 Planning for climate change

With the emergence of human induced climate change, it is likely that changes in temperature and weather patterns will play a significant role in natural plant distribution and diversity, including that of local landscapes. The effects of climate change are being modelled worldwide and the results can be observed on a local level in many parts of the world. It is predicted that Australia’s climate is likely to become warmer and drier and this may affect not only natural plant distributions but species selection on an urban landscape level.

The 2018-19 year revealed the worst drought on record in Australia. The accompanying devastating bushfires may help define a new approach to landscaping in urban areas. It is important that that species selection takes into account changes in local climatic conditions. Changes in prevailing conditions such as increased temperatures may see the emergence of “new” environmental weeds. Equally, that we consider species selection from the perspective of fire susceptibility and water use.

3.3 Significant and heritage trees

The Local Environmental Plan lists a number of street trees of historical significance within the urban area. Some of these trees occur within our streetscapes. A significant street tree Register should be developed to capture trees of horticultural or cultural significance to the community.

Significant or Heritage listing trees of trees does not preclude maintenance, or removal and replacement of trees when required, for example where on inspection a tree presents an increased risk to life and property and a delay in action may exacerbate or prolong risk. The removal of healthy low risk significant or heritage listed trees may require a level of consultation and planning and may require approval from Council.

4 Tree planting placement and selection standards

Informed species selection and placement of trees within the streetscape is vital to ensure safety to pedestrians and road users and to minimise infrastructure damage. This section provides details about tree selection and placement, and safety considerations including road and infrastructure safety.

4.1 Street tree placement standard

The location of street trees is carefully considered with respect to essential infrastructure, traffic advisory signs, pedestrian crossings, street lights, driveways and buildings.

The footpath area within the road reserve provides the main conduit for underground infrastructure such as water and sewer, electricity and telecommunications cables. The footpath area also supports power poles for aerial electricity and communications cables and street lights and often a concrete or paved footpath for pedestrians and driveways in residential areas. The location, type and number of trees is critical to avoid or at least minimise conflict with infrastructure, pedestrians and road users.

For roads and footways in NSW, a guide has been produced to standardise the allocation of space within the footpath for street tree plantings (see below).

The standard for Street tree placement in the road reserve is:

- ❖ Within the street tree allocation space and a minimum of 600mm behind the kerb. Distance behind the kerb varies according to road width.
- ❖ The *Roads Act 1993* requires an adequate line of sight and unobstructed vision for motorists. To ensure sight distances and vision of road signage is maintained, street trees are not to be planted with 20 metres of a street intersection or boundary alignment of a corner block, see vegetation restrictions zones Appendix 3.
- ❖ The planting of shrub forms is considered inconsistent with the requirements of the NSW Roads Act 1993 with respect to adequate lines of sight and unobstructed vision.

References

- *Public Utilities Allocation Space on verge*, Armidale Regional Council Engineering Code drawing 030-063.
- *Vegetation intersection restriction zones Appendix 2*
- *NSW Roads Act 1993*

4.2 Street container planting

Planter boxes or containers are located on many streets in the CBD. The placing of planter boxes on public land requires Council approval under the Roads Act, see references.

Approval for the placement of containers will require a written agreement between Council and the Applicant that outlines the responsibilities and costs associated with the planting; maintenance; vandalism; and future of the structure.

Containers must be placed a minimum of 600mm behind the kerb and vegetation must not protrude past the vertical alignment of the kerb, interfere with the vision of pedestrians and motorists, or impede the view of signage, especially street signage, see references, below.

References

- Armidale Regional Council Engineering Code Planter Box Paved Footpath drawing 030-083.
- NSW Roads Act 1993 Section 138 'Works and structures'
- NSW Roads Act 1993, Section 107 'Obstructions and Encroachments'

4.3 Roundabout and median island plantings

Most roundabouts have been planted and are maintained by Council; however service clubs such as Rotary have maintained roundabouts in the past.

Median island plantings are planted and maintained by Council.

The maintenance of median islands and roundabout plantings has the potential to compromise the safety of workers and/or road users, and cause traffic disturbances. Prior to any maintenance works on these sites, appropriate traffic control planning should be undertaken to ensure minimal disruption and the safety of both workers and road users.

Where the safety of workers or road users is compromised such as high traffic volume areas, consideration may be given to the provision of vegetation that requires a minimum of maintenance, or hard landscaping surfaces requiring no maintenance

Management of roundabout sites by volunteer organisations will require a written agreement between Council and the organisation that outlines the terms of the agreement to manage the site.

4.4 Car park landscaping

While it can be a challenge to establish and maintain trees and landscaping in car parks, the presence of landscaping can improve both the appearance and amenity of such areas. Dedicated kerbed planting areas, the use of root control barriers, tree grates or porous materials that ensure moisture access to roots and appropriate species selection can allow healthy plant growth and minimise structural damage to car parks.

Designs for future outdoor car parks are to allow for appropriate landscaping, pedestrian access and provision of adequate shade. The placement and orientation of landscaping must be considered carefully to avoid pedestrian and vehicular damage.

Landscaping in car parks must comply with Council's Engineering Code. This includes the construction of concrete kerbing, ripping of sub-base and installation of root control barrier or root director units. See references below. All planting beds to be provided with minimum 400mm

quality top soil and 15mm minimum mulch (not specified). In some cases it may be appropriate to use wet pour (rubber under-surfacing) within a solitary tree kerbing instead of mulch.

References

- Armidale Regional Council Engineering Code drawing 030-081 Typical Street Tree Planting with Root guard
- 030-082 Typical Street Tree Planting Without Root Guard.
- 030-066A Kerb Transition standard Barrier Kerb

4.5 Overhead power lines

The provision of safe clearance for overhead power lines emphasises the importance of appropriate species selection, especially in relation to mature tree height. Tree selection and location decisions may require consultation with electricity and telecommunications service providers.

The Electricity Supply Act has provisions for maintaining vegetation and outlines the powers of a distributor to ensure that vegetation does not cause interference with electricity assets, see reference below.

References

- The Electricity Supply Act 1995 Section 48 – ‘Interference with electricity works by trees’

4.6 Street Tree Species selection

The challenge is to select species and/or cultivars that can adequately cope with the constraints of urban conditions and if possible improve or modify conditions to enable trees to thrive.

In addition to these challenges, Armidale has very varied soil types and its topography provides a wide range of microclimates, therefore a comprehensive examination of the local conditions is required for species selection. Although a preferred species list has been established, the makeup of the list alters as information on the adequacy and performance of each tree emerges in a range of situations over time.

When selecting new street trees or where trees are identified for replacement assessment of the site will be undertaken to ensure suitability. Species selection is also considered at this time. It may not be possible, nor desirable, to replace a tree in the same location, or use the same species when replanting.

Tree species for urban streetscape plantings are selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- ❖ Relationship to existing streetscape theme or park landscape plan i.e. historic, horticultural, thematic or aesthetic suitability to the site
- ❖ Site suitability (including microclimate; frost hardiness; and drought or flood tolerance)
- ❖ Growth habit and root architecture i.e. compatibility with adjacent underground infrastructure
- ❖ Life expectancy and frequency of replacement
- ❖ Cost of maintenance during the establishment phase

- ❖ Mature height and spread (relevant to the presence of buildings, private property, vehicle and pedestrian clearances, electricity infrastructure; and signage and safety considerations)
- ❖ Potential to compromise solar access to surrounding habitable areas
- ❖ Contribution to species diversity and the need to establish a wide range of species to buffer against possible effects of climate change
- ❖ Low water use potential
- ❖ undesirable characteristics that may compromise health and safety, such as dropping of flowers; branches; fruit; seed or sap; the presences of thorns; a suckering habit; continual shedding and slow breakdown of material; environmental weed potential or health effects (likely to affect an unacceptable proportion of the population)

A list of suitable trees has been developed and used as a guide for species selection. The list is modified as our knowledge of the suitability of trees grows.

Related reference material:

- The Right Tree in the Right Place - Armidale Regional Council
- Low water use plants for Armidale and Guyra - Armidale Regional Council
- Armidale Regional Council Preferred Street Tree List

4.7 Planting and establishment

To ensure the best chance of survival, street trees should be planted using the best planting practices available.

Armidale's harsh weather conditions, including unpredictable monthly rainfall and evaporation rates imposes limitations on growth, and restricts optimum planting times. Deciduous species are usually established when the trees are dormant in winter to early spring. Australian plants and evergreen ornamentals can be established at most times of year provided there is adequate soil moisture; however, the period from November to January is usually avoided.

The impetus to reduce water usage, and the BASIX sustainability requirements, has increased the use of Australian plants and low water use introduced plants into landscape design in public areas and in new developments.

4.7.1 Site preparation

Site preparation is critical to ensure vigorous and healthy growth of trees. A regular maintenance watering program is essential for survival, root development and acceptable growth rates during the establishment phase.

The following standard applies in the preparation of a site for planting:

- Ground preparation to be prepared with a suitable tree auger such as CSIRO tree auger that loosens soil but retains soil in situ.
- Apply good quality topsoil where the soil is heavy clay, or of poor quality;

- Consider the installation of deep watering systems where practicable to encourage deep root growth away from surface structures
- Install appropriate tree guards in high risk areas (e.g. CBD) to reduce or discourage vandalism
- Install linear or modular root control barrier to prevent damage to footpaths, kerbing or any other structure depending upon location.
- Consider mulching of the root zone to condition the soil and reduce soil moisture loss;
- Consider the use of water holding crystals or anti transpirants (e.g. Envy or Wiltnot) to assist with tree establishment, especially of open rooted stock where soil moisture, frost and transpiration losses need to be minimised.
- Deliver resident notification requesting assistance with watering of new street trees
- Following up planting with a regular watering regime

4.8 Street Tree Planting in New Developments

Approvals for subdivisions must include a consent condition for the provision of street trees. In some circumstances developers may wish to provide street trees themselves as part of the development plans. Either way, the provision of street trees should adhere to the Street Tree Planting Standard and the Approved Species list. Ideally, street tree establishment should occur following the construction of dwellings.

4.9 Reconstruction of Existing Streets

Where it becomes necessary to reconstruct an existing street or replace kerb and gutter on a whole block basis, consideration should be given to widening the footpath and reducing carriageway width. The maintenance requirements for a carriageway with an 8m width are considerable less than for a 12m wide carriageway (Council's Standard Urban Road Design and Development Control Plans). A wide verge area will also provide more root space for existing trees and in some cases, allow trees to be planted away from power lines.

References

- Armidale Regional Council Engineering Code Standard Urban Road Design Details 030-062

5 Tree Management Standards

Council undertakes an annual Tree Management Programme. The 5 year rotational programme is applied to 20% of the streetscapes each year, see map below.

The programme is usually undertaken between July and September and includes:

- ❖ Identification of locations and species selection for new and replacement street and park trees
- ❖ Pruning for vehicle and pedestrian clearances and pruning for street light and traffic signage. (note that electricity providers currently undertake power line clearance work under the provisions of the Electricity Supply Act. 1995)
- ❖ Identification and removal of trees that pose a significant risk to the public, are dead or dying, or have caused considerable or on-going damage to public infrastructure or private property
- ❖ General street tree maintenance such as mulching, watering and fertilising.

References

- State Wide Insurance provisions for Armidale Regional Council
- Appendix 1 Annual tree program map

5.1 Tree Risk Management

As part of Council's annual Tree Management Programme, street trees are given a cursory assessment of their health and condition including the identification of defects that may increase the risk of limb or whole tree failure. It is not financially viable or practical to comprehensively assess every street tree annually for risk, so 20% of the urban forest is monitored annually.

Where a tree perceived as a risk to life and property is reported to Council, the tree will be assessed as soon as practicable by suitably qualified Council staff. The area will be made safe and/or action will be taken to reduce the risk posed by the tree. Where a significant immediate risk exists, the tree will be removed without delay.

Safety is often perceived as the complete absence of risk. Making something completely safe or removing risk entirely is in reality neither achievable nor desirable. If risk is not explained well risk minimisation can become an open-ended exercise where there is always a lower level of risk to aim for regardless of cost.

To manage tree risk to a "safe" or lower level without giving consideration to the loss of benefits from trees, the cost of tree works and the additional risks of undertaking tree works is to take an unbalanced and unrealistic approach.

When someone asks whether a tree is safe, what they are really asking is "Is it safe enough?" When presented with a probability of risk, most people can make a call on what they feel they can tolerate. According to many international publications on risk, an annual risk is safe enough to require no further consideration when the probability of occurrence of a failure is as low as 1/1,000,000. When imposed on others a risk as high as 1/10,000 may be safe enough and will usually be tolerated if to further reduce the risk would involve disproportionate costs.

In terms of liability, Council as a tree manager needs only to manage risk to as 'Low as Reasonably Practicable'. Council can achieve this by having a programme of monitoring and aim to manage risk within the 'Region of Tolerability' 1/10,000 – 1/1,000,000.

Two Council staff are currently licenced to assess tree risk using the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) procedure developed by Mike Ellison 2005.

References

- Tree Assessment Form (based on State Wide Insurance Best Practice Manual 'Trees and tree roots') AINT/2021/08059
- Ellison, M J 2005 **Quantified Tree Risk Assessment used in the Management of Amenity Trees**, Journal of Arboriculture, International Society of Arboriculture, Savoy, Illinois. 31:2 57-65

5.2 Considerations for removal

As with any natural system the urban forest cycles through growth, physical deterioration, death and renewal. As managers of the urban forest, we are obliged to determine when trees have reached their 'safe useful life' and when to replace them with new trees.

The physical layout of Armidale's streets, specific growth forms, tree root architecture and other characteristics can present a variety of problems with varying levels of public tolerability. Removal is frequently requested as the first option to alleviate such problems (refer also to 5.4 Valuation of Street Trees).

Each complaint is investigated by appropriately qualified Council Officers. It may be appropriate to notify the elected members of proposed tree removals.

Removal of trees on public land may be considered in situations where:

- ❖ It is not practical or manageable to implement tree root encroachment prevention.
- ❖ There has been proven serious damage to private property or where council infrastructure is seriously damaged
- ❖ injury has occurred resulting from the lifting of roadways, paths or gutters and root removal is not practical
- ❖ Pruning will not provide a satisfactory solution to acceptable traffic sight distance
- ❖ A street tree has been determined as undesirable due to its growth or other habits e.g. limb drop, invasive root systems etc.
- ❖ A tree is in poor health or dying and is unlikely to recover with arboricultural care
- ❖ A Conservation Management Plan recommends the removal/replacement of a tree.

The removal of trees of community significance (Heritage listed public trees or trees on the Significant Tree Register within the LEP require a decision from the Council based upon a comprehensive arboricultural report prepared by appropriately qualified Council Officers and/or a consulting Arborist of minimum AQF level 5.

5.3 Cost recovery for tree removal

Council reserves the right to recover costs for removal of a tree where it can be established that the tree was planted without Council consent and/or

- ❖ Not planted according to the correct space allocation in the footway and/or
- ❖ Not planted in the prescribed manner and/or
- ❖ not an approved species and/or
- ❖ Planted in a position that restricts sight distances for traffic and/or
- ❖ May pose a threat to Council infrastructure.

Where the person/s responsible for the above can be identified, Council will seek to recover costs of any actions necessary to rectify the problem/s.

5.4 Valuation of street tree assets

Armidale's streetscapes and trees are recognised as community owned assets.

The National Strategy for Ecological Sustainable Development Principles requires that environmental factors are included in the valuation of assets and services. Councils are required to value assets in accordance with Australian Accounting Board Standard 27 (AAS27). Living assets such as trees have environmental and aesthetic values and should therefore be included in asset valuations.

The implementation of a valuation methodology for tree assets in public spaces:

- ❖ Ensures the community is adequately compensated for the loss of street trees
- ❖ Increases an awareness of the intrinsic value of trees in the landscape and for the value placed upon trees for cultural benefit and tourism
- ❖ Can foster a sense of ownership of the urban forest by the local community
- ❖ Provides additional financial resources for the improvement of the urban forest asset
- ❖ Council has adopted Draft Australian and New Zealand Standard DR99307 (1999), 'Amenity Trees – Guide to Valuation' as a basis for developing a value and replacement cost for the removal of a tree

5.5 Procedure for requesting removal of street trees

All tree removal on public land is subject to Council approval. Where a developer/applicant requests the removal of a street tree(s) to facilitate development:

- ❖ A proposal must be submitted as part of a Development Application
- ❖ The Development Application must include a comprehensive report, outlining all investigated alternatives to the proposed removal of the tree and provide a valid argument to support why these alternatives are not appropriate to implement

Planning and Engineering staff are required to consider all alternatives to the removal of trees. Where appropriate staff are not satisfied that alternative solutions have been applied to ensure a more favourable outcome (i.e. one that will support the removal of the least amount of vegetation), the developer will be required to make design changes to facilitate the preservation of tree(s).

5.6 Compensation for approved tree removal

Where no alternative solutions are possible, and consent to remove a tree(s) is authorised, a valuation of the tree(s) will be undertaken. A compensatory payment will be required at a compensation amount equal to the value of the tree(s) at the time of the assessment. Compensatory plantings may also be stipulated. The applicant must make payment to Council prior to the consent being activated (i.e. prior to the removal of any tree).

Where compensatory plantings have been approved, the location of the plantings, the requirement for landscape plans and a timeframe for planting will be provided to the applicant in writing as a Development Consent condition.

To meet the consent conditions, the Applicant will be required to submit a landscape plan, with full costings of the works required. The plan must be submitted with the payment of a bond or bank guarantee for the total cost of the compensatory plantings. The bond will be released twelve months from the completion date of the planting, provided that the plantings have been successful. Any plants that are found to be dead or dying in this twelve month period must be replaced at the expense of the applicant. All maintenance during this period is the responsibility of the Applicant.

5.7 Tree asset valuation methodology

Many Tree valuation methodologies exist and are commonly used around the world. The most commonly used methods in Australia are the Draft Australian and New Zealand Standard DR99307 (1999) 'Amenity Trees – Guide to Valuation', the Burnley method and the Thyer Tree Valuation method. Most valuation methods apply a numerical rating to tree characteristics and location factors and multiply the sum of the figures by a monetary factor that is subject to annual CPI increases.

The amount of the compensation payment or the value of the compensatory plantings will be based on the Draft Australian and New Zealand Standard DR99307 (1999) 'Amenity Trees – Guide to Valuation'. A report is prepared for Council that outlines the proposed reasons for removal, a comprehensive analysis of available options and a current valuation of the tree asset.

There may be trees that Council will not approve for removal regardless of the compensation offered.

References

- Procedure for approval to remove a public tree AINT/2021/08102

5.8 Tree pruning standards and best practice

Pruning of trees is undertaken to remove dead, dying, diseased, unproductive wood or dangerous limbs. Formative pruning may be required for the first few years to ensure good structural form carries through into maturity.

Council staff, and contractors engaged by electricity providers to undertake power line clearance work must comply with the current Australian Standard AS4373-2007 *'Pruning of Amenity Trees'* and current best practice horticultural methodology.

Council staff undertaking tree removal or pruning should have relevant qualifications and/or experience in correct pruning practice, the use of relevant tools and the safe removal of trees.

Council may contract an appropriately qualified and practicing arborist to undertake tree work when appropriate.

5.8.1 Formative pruning

Formative pruning of tree stock prior to planting, and for the first few years after establishment is necessary to ensure that trees grow with good structural form. The objective is to ensure that we achieve well-structured trees with a good straight trunk and a well-balanced canopy. Well-structured trees enable adequate pedestrian and vehicle clearances to be maintained over the life of the tree. A well-structured canopy is less likely to fail reducing Council's risk liability and reducing the risk of disease entry that can arise from failed or removed branches. A well-formed tree will often live longer than one that is not so well formed.

The following pruning standard applies to all street trees:

References

- Australian Standard AS4373-2007 *'Pruning of Amenity Trees'*

6 Managing Tree issues and impacts

6.1 Tree Root Encroachment

The root architecture of some trees may cause root encroachment problems that can damage kerb and guttering, distort footpaths, road pavements and built infrastructure. Such damage may present an unacceptable risk to vehicles and pedestrians and property.

In narrow road reserves street tree roots can encroach upon private property damaging fences, lifting paving and driveways or occasionally affecting dwellings and other structures. Where complaints are received with regard to tree roots, an investigation is undertaken with a view to taking appropriate remedial action. The following procedure is undertaken:

- ❖ Site inspection and discussion with property owner
- ❖ If it is not clearly discernible that street tree roots are the cause of the problem, the owner is required to expose the roots to demonstrate a causal relationship
- ❖ If a causal relationship is verified by Council officers remedial action may be undertaken with agreement of the parties involved
- ❖ If structural damage is alleged and a claim is to be made Council's Insurance Officer is notified. The property owner may be required to provide a report from a structural engineer including photographs to support the claim. The report will be assessed by Council's engineers and advice provided to Council's insurance Officer.

6.2 Trees affecting adjoining land

Private trees overhanging the footpath and private gardens planted on the footpath may also cause a significant risk to the safety of pedestrians and road users. Overshadowing by private trees also prevents natural growth patterns of street trees causing them to lean out over the roadway:

- ❖ Council inspectors provide notifications to residents to prune vegetation that is affecting the road reserve. Pruning or removals are subject to the Tree Preservation Clause of the Local Environmental Plan and relevant Development Control Plans
- ❖ Where trees on public land are the subject of complaint the issues are investigated on a case by case basis. Perceived nuisance value such as leaf and twig fall, surface roots and minor loss of groundcover are not considered grounds for removal
- ❖ Council does not become involved in neighbour's tree issues (refer to Council pamphlet 'Handling Problem Tree Issues with Your Neighbours')

References:

- Relevant standards for pedestrian and vehicle clearances (RMS, State Wide insurer etc.)
- Trees (Disputes Between Neighbours) Act 2006, NSW
- Council pamphlet 'Handling Problem Tree Issues with Your Neighbours'

6.3 Trees under power lines

In the past Council has provided support to local electricity suppliers to facilitate line clearing operations. This has included financial support and/or the provision of staff and plant resources.

Contractors engaged by electricity service providers attempt to comply with the Australian Standard Pruning of Amenity Trees AS4373-2007, however the requirement for certain clearances often result in a poor aesthetic appeal of the streetscape. Extensive pruning of primary branch structures while sometimes unavoidable to achieve line clearances, can ultimately affect the health and structural integrity of trees.

Should the responsibility for tree pruning beneath power lines fall to local government in the future, Council may seek to reduce its liability for street tree pruning through the planned removal of selected street trees beneath power lines.

A removal and replacement programme for trees from beneath power lines would target trees that require annual trimming or their mature height is such that it is not practical to undertake correct reduction pruning in accordance with the Australian Standard 'Pruning of Amenity Trees' AS4373 - 2007.

It may be practical to remove and replace such trees on a whole of block basis and this will require an effective communications plan involving residents and the community. Forward planning can ensure that residents are in agreement with the proposal and that there will be no delay in establishing replacement trees when existing trees are removed.

6.3.1 Resident requests to retain trees under power lines

Where a resident wishes to retain a street tree identified for removal beneath powerlines, an agreement in writing will be drafted requiring that the resident contribute to the ongoing maintenance of the tree.

The resident will be advised of the options for cost sharing should they not want the tree removed:

- ❖ 75% of the cost of tree trimming shall be paid by the resident concerned. A quote for trimming will be supplied by Council who will carry out the work. This amount must be paid by the resident(s) at least 14 days prior to the commencement of trimming works. Where the contribution is not paid, the tree will be removed.
- ❖ The resident(s) shall be advised of the impact to tree health from continual trimming including any increase in public risk.
- ❖ The agreement shall remain in place until the resident notifies Council that they no longer wish to continue. In the case of a change of ownership of the property, the new resident shall be offered the same agreement as the former resident. If an agreement cannot be established, the tree will be removed.
- ❖ Aerial bundling of the cables will reduce the amount of clearance required and therefore reduce trimming costs. An estimate for the costs for Aerial Bundling should be obtained by the electricity provider

References

- The Electricity Supply Act 1995 Section 48 – ‘Interference with electricity works by trees’

6.4 Solar panels/collectors

Property owners may request that Council trim or remove public trees because they have installed or are planning to install a solar collector.

At present, there is no legislation that requires Council to mitigate for solar access. Council will not remove trees on public land (or approve removal of trees on private land) to facilitate solar access to solar collectors.

When planning the installation of a solar collector, residents must consider all issues and constraints relevant to the current and future efficiency of the unit.

6.5 Security/surveillance cameras

The use of security/surveillance cameras may give rise to requests for tree removal or trimming. As with solar collectors, proposals to install new security cameras in public places should consider all possible current and potential future constraints to the effective operation of the system. To maximise their efficiency, private security/surveillance cameras may require repositioning as the streetscape changes over time.

Council will not remove or prune trees on public land or approve removal of trees on private land to facilitate the use of private security/surveillance cameras.

6.6 Views

Council will not grant consent to remove a tree located on public land to facilitate private views.

Council may consider a request by a resident to prune a tree to improve views at the residents cost. Pruning will not be considered where the pruning would jeopardise the tree’s structural form or health. Council will consider all requests on merit, taking into account cumulative impact of the approval.

Any work undertaken by Council at an applicant’s request will be at the applicant’s expense including removal and disposal of debris from the site. All works will be undertaken under by Council’s Parks staff or approved contractor and in accordance with AS4373-2007 ‘Pruning of Amenity Trees’.

6.7 Termite affected trees

Council has no statutory obligation or requirement to treat or remove a tree with termite infestation. Where a tree on public land is affected by termites, Council may grant permission for adjoining landowners to enter upon public land to treat termites where treatment does not include the destroying, pruning or removal of the tree.

6.8 Tree planting/removal/pruning by residents

No tree planting, tree removal or tree pruning is to be undertaken on public land without prior approval of the Consent Authority pursuant to Section 138. 'Works and structures' NSW Roads Act. 1993.

Residents reporting that maintenance to street trees is required must lodge a service request with Council or contact the parks staff to assess the extent and nature of works required.

Residents are permitted to undertake minor maintenance work such as weeding, mulching, and fertilising or the removal of small branches that may present a pedestrian or vehicle hazard.

Residents are not permitted to use herbicides or pesticides on street trees.

6.9 Landscaping of Urban Road Reserves

Armidale Regional Council's streetscapes conform to a traditional vision of avenue plantings and provide the city with a continuity of style that has become one of its unique attractions. A key objective of the Urban Streetscape Policy is:

- ❖ To provide aesthetically pleasing streetscapes that conform to an historically maintained avenue style of street planting

The landscaping of 'nature strips' or footpath areas by residents is often seen as a way to beautify the streetscape, eliminate or reduce mowing or to increase levels of privacy. However, ad hoc landscaping and plantings within the road reserve do not generally add aesthetically to the simplicity and unity of the streetscape.

Landscaping of the road reserve (verge) may be permitted with Council consent outside the original town precinct and heritage exclusion zone under the provisions of the NSW Roads Act. Applications can be made using the Application for Landscaping a Public Road Reserve.

The following standards apply to urban roadside landscaping:

- Proposals must be submitted to Council and will be assessed by parks staff for compliance with the standards.
- An application will only be assessed if it is made by the owner(s) of the property
- To maintain adequate visibility for motorists, no structure, fence, tree or shrub or other obstruction shall restrict 'line of sight' at intersections
- Planted areas must be mulched and adequately retained with an approved organic mulch presenting no pedestrian hazards
- Understorey plants must be maintained under 90cm in height at all times
- Plantings must be a minimum 60cm from the kerb to enable clear pedestrian access
- At least 1 planting gap 120cm wide must be provided to allow pedestrian access to the footpath in each 20m frontage. Footpaths must not be obstructed.
- Accessibility to essential services and infrastructure must be maintained at all times and any restoration work and costs must be met by the permit holder

Once approval is given applicants will be required to sign an agreement and hold Public Liability Insurance with renewals to be lodged annually along with an administration annual fee. Council may revoke the agreement at any time in accordance with the provisions of the NSW Roads act.

References

- NSW Roads Act 1993, Sections 139 and 140
- Application to Landscape a Public Road Reserve (Procedure)
- Agreement for Landscaping on Council Road Reserve (Procedure)

- POL133 Footpath Vegetation Landscaping Obstructions

6.10 Sponsorship and donations of street vegetation

Council encourages sponsorship agreements for plantings on public land; however the provision of an asset by a donor presents Council with an ongoing maintenance obligation and a commitment to maintenance will be required. Sponsorship and in some cases donations of trees or landscaping will require a written agreement between Council that outlines the terms of the agreement to manage the site.

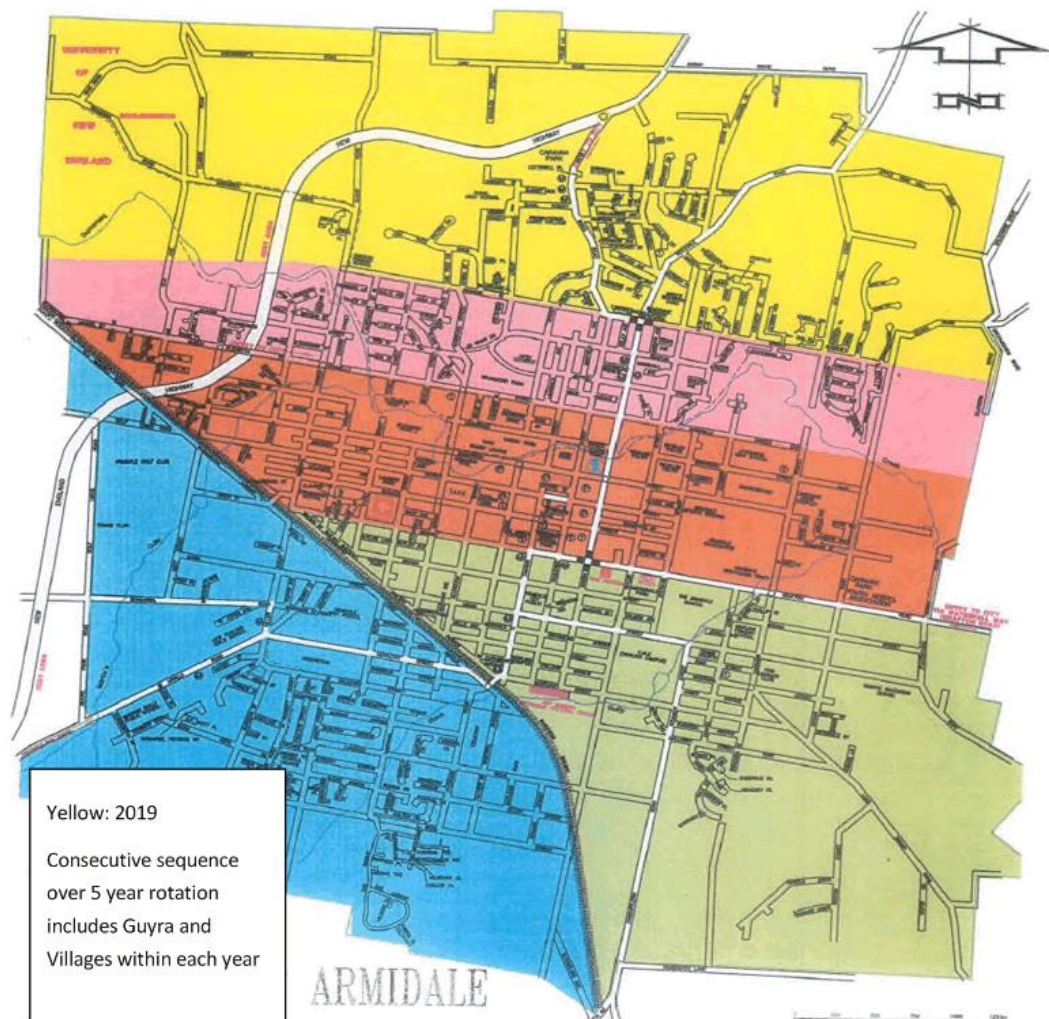
6.11 Trees with problematic characteristics

Some tree species have undesirable characteristics or have the potential to cause injury or health issues such as thorns, poisonous sap or pollen. Some species may have invasive root systems depending on soil conditions, or have shallow root architecture and may impact upon infrastructure. Some species produce seeds that may spread into bushland by wind or birds with the potential to become environmental weeds.

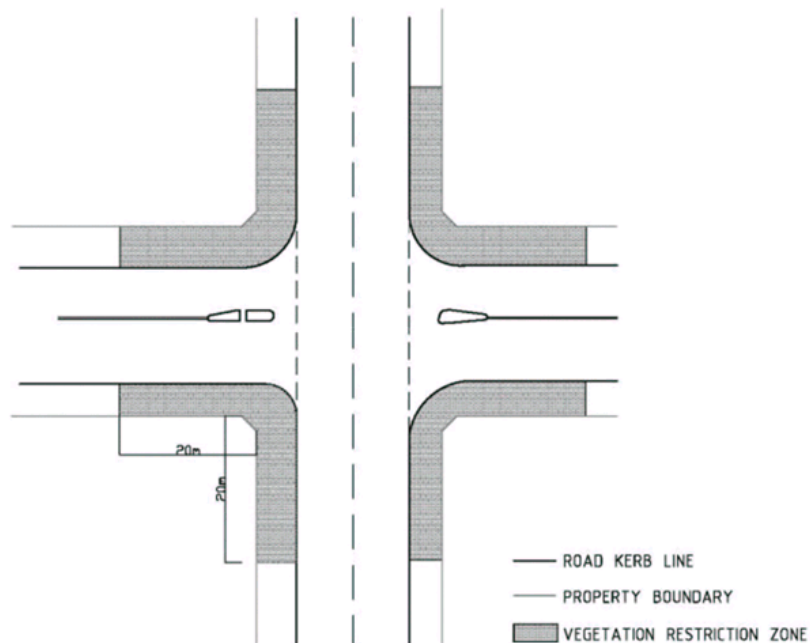
Trees with undesirable characteristics that have been planted on public land by residents will be removed after notification. Council's approved street tree list evolves to eliminate the inclusion of species that demonstrate potentially undesirable characteristics.

APENDICES

Appendix 1: Annual tree planting and maintenance program 5 year rotation



Appendix 2 - Vegetation restriction zones at intersections



5. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Instruments of Legislation (Acts, Regulations etc.) that need to be followed as part of the policy:

- *NSW Roads Act 1993*
- The Electricity Supply Act 1995 Section 48 – ‘Interference with electricity works by trees’
- State Wide Insurance Best Practice Manual ‘Trees and tree roots’
- Australian Standard AS4373-2007 ‘Pruning of Amenity Trees’
- Trees (Disputes Between Neighbours) Act 2006, NSW

6. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

7. REPORTING

Nil

8. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

- Co-ordinator Public and Town Spaces (Parks and Recreation)

- Maintaining records
- Reporting
- Keeping the policy current
- Investigating breaches and enforcing compliance
- Implementing communications, education and monitoring strategies.

9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Co-ordinator Public and Town Spaces: As above

Project Officer Public and Town Spaces: Assessments and determinations, reports to Council, Annual tree planting and tree maintenance programing

Works Supervisor Public and Town Spaces: Supervising planting and maintenance programs

The responsibilities for the implementation, application and review of the policy across the organisation fall to:

- Staff
- Relevant Managers

10. RELATED PROCEDURES

1. Public Tree Assessment Form AINT/2021/08089
2. Application for Landscaping a Public Road Reserve AINT/2021/08060
3. Agreement for Landscaping on a Public Road Reserve AINT/2021/08063
4. Procedure for Approval to Remove a Public Tree AINT/2021/08317

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	Roads and Parks	
Responsible Officer	Coordinator Public and Town Spaces	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> May 2021	<i>Council</i> [DD Mmmm YYYY]
Date/s of previous adoptions	[Dates of previous adoptions]	
Date of next review	September 2023	
TRIM Reference		



Cemeteries Operations Management Policy

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [DATE TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to detail Council's operational policy and procedures relating to

- Interment rights
- Burial arrangements and administration
- Interment operational procedures
- Monumental works/standards and park furniture
- Cemetery maintenance
- Cemetery conditions of use

2. APPLICATION

This policy provides Council staff and the public with guidelines relating to cemetery legislation, operations and conditions of use of Armidale Regional Council's cemeteries.

3. POLICY INTENT

To provide a guide to the operational management of all Council cemeteries.

Policy Objectives:

- To provide guidelines for the operational management of all cemeteries within the Armidale Regional Council area
- To provide safe, consistent and socially acceptable standards and practices for the benefit the public, Council staff and funeral directors
- To ensure cost effective maintenance and consistency of appearance within our cemeteries

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

The policy links to E3 of the Community Strategic Plan where 'The community is provided with the essential and resilient infrastructure it requires for daily life.'

E3.3 - Regular review of open spaces to ensure parks, sportsgrounds, water recreation facilities and other open space meet community needs and are provided to an acceptable level of service and accessibility

5. POLICY

1 Interment right limitations

All cemeteries are open to the public from sunrise to sunset.
Council staff will be available 8.30 to 4pm Monday to Friday. All enquiries to Council's Customer Service centre 135 Rusden Street Armidale, phone 1300 136 833 24hrs.

2 Interment Fees and charges

Fees and charges are determined and adopted by Council annually as per Council's Operational Plan and can be accessed via the Council website.

3 Interment rights and administration

A person can purchase an interment right (often referred to as a right of burial, burial licence or interment licence) for themselves or for other people within Council's cemeteries. Purchasing a right entitles the nominated person or person's exclusive right to a designated interment site (plot, columbarium or wall niche).

An Interment Right is a contract between the Cemetery Operator and Right Holder (consumer) permitting the Right Holder (often referred to as the grantee) to authorise burials in a particular grave or other allotment in a cemetery. The Right Holder can determine who can be buried in the grave or allotment. Only the Interment Right Holder of a specified grave or other allotment can authorise maintenance or changes to that grave or allotment.

Interment Rights are purchased prior to use (Pre-need), or by relatives/legal representatives of the recently deceased (At-need). Interment rights must be held by a living person and can be passed to individuals nominated by the right holder. When the current interment right holder becomes deceased, the living relatives are required to determine who the new interment right holder(s) are to be and provide this information to the Cemetery owner. The cemetery owner (Council) will issue a new Interment Right Certificate in the name of the new Right Holder.

All interment right transfer details and Interment Right Certificates are to be held by the cemetery owner (Council) within the Cemetery records.

To address the diminishing land capacity for interments particularly in cities, part 4 of the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013 was amended in 2017 to provide operators with the option of offering renewable interment rights (RIR). This provision allows consumers to purchase a right for an initial 25 years with the option of renewing the right for additional subsequent periods up to 99 years.

Cemetery operators have the option to offer RIRs or continue to only offer perpetual interment rights. As Armidale Regional Council does not have a shortage of land at this time, nor the capacity to administer Renewable Interment Rights, only Perpetual Interment Rights are offered by Armidale Regional Council.

3.1 Interment right limitations

- The interment right is an interest in the land only. It is a right to inter remains in a designated location within the cemetery and does not confer any additional rights
- May be granted to one or two persons as joint holders. Will not be granted in the name of a corporation or business
- Council may revoke the right if it has not been exercised within fifty years after it has been granted. The process of revocation will be done in accordance with the *Cemeteries and Crematorium Act 2013* (NSW).
- Council may refuse to grant or transfer an interment right, if in its opinion, would create a monopoly or encourage dealing in such rights as a business
- Applications for interment rights will only be accepted for active areas of the cemetery. Applications for future or closed sections will not be accepted
- In Crown land cemeteries a person may not hold more than two Interment Rights
- Only the interment right holder can determine who may be buried within a site

3.2 Issuing an interment right

The issue of an interment right is subject to the following terms:

- An interment right (pre-need or at-need) will only be issued on application and payment of the current applicable fees
- Pre-need applications must be made on the **'Perpetual Interment Right Application Form – Burial Plot'**. A **Certificate of perpetual Interment Right** will be issued to the applicant once approved
- For At-need occurrences, Council must contact living relatives of the deceased in order to issue an **'Application to Transfer Perpetual Interment Right'** form. The new owner does not take possession of the **A Certificate of Perpetual Interment Right** until all the requirements are met and Cemetery records are updated
- A certificate will be issued identifying the person(s) (Grantee or Grantees) to whom the right is granted and the particular interment site to which the right relates
- The Interment Right Certificate must make it clear that the right is perpetual and clearly identify the particular site to which the right relates
- A refund can be granted if the person or legal representative ends the agreement with signed documentation. The total refund will only be for the sum originally paid
- All records of Interment Rights are to be held by the Cemetery operator

3.3 Transfer of interment rights

Interment rights may be transferred to another person(s) or transferred back to Council

- The holder (grantee) or joint holders (grantees) of a **Certificate of perpetual Interment Right** may wish to transfer the right of a particular grave or other allotment to one or more persons.

The holder(s) must complete '**Application to Transfer Perpetual Interment Right**' form. All relevant details must be provided and a new certificate will be issued to the new holder(s)

- An application for the transfer of an interment right may only be made by the holder (grantee) of the Interment Right concerned or if held by joint holders then by all of the joint holders (grantees)
- If the original holder is deceased, the application can only be made by the executor of the estate or their legal representative. Refer also to 1.2 "At-need occurrences". On the death of joint holder, the remaining holder is entitled to the interment right
- An interment right may be transferred back to Council only for the original fee. The application must include a copy of any legal documents supporting the application and must have the signature of a witness

3.4 Cemetery Register

Council is required to keep a cemetery register which is available for public inspection upon request. Details about the holder of a right issued on a pre-need basis (reservation) shall not be made public.

The register will record the following information:

- Rights granted in respect of interment sites.
- Memorials erected for each interment site.
- Each interment carried out within the cemetery.
- The identity of each holder of a right.
- The contact details of a nominated secondary contact or next of kin.
- The name, age and last address of persons whose remains have been interred or cremated, the date of death and date of interment or cremation.

4 Burial Arrangements and Administration

4.1 Notification of interment

Bereaved families and relatives will make funeral arrangements exclusively with the funeral director. The funeral director will then liaise with Council regarding the burial arrangements. The following administrative procedures will apply with regard to burials.

- The funeral director will provide Council with 48 Hours' notice for all burials
- The funeral director will complete Council's 'Application for Burial' form and email to include both the following two email addresses: council@armidale.nsw.gov.au and fcounter@armidale.nsw.gov.au

- Records staff scan and create a record of the application form and email to designated staff: Customer Service, Parks Works Supervisor and Parks Team leader (Cemetery).
- Administration staff arrange for an invoice to be raised to relevant funeral director using ARC 'Debtor Request' Form within 1 day of receipt of application. A copy of the completed Application for Burial form in the name of deceased to be attached to the debtors form and forwarded with the applicable current fees and charges to Finance.
- Administration staff identify and confirm burial plot and notify the Cemetery caretaker (works staff) of all details
- Cemetery staff will advise the funeral director and administration staff of any impediments to the preparation for a grave site e.g. inability to provide double depth and any additional charges that may apply.
- All burial information and details must be recorded in the cemetery register

5 Interment operational procedures

5.1 Preparation of the burial site

All parties must adhere to a sense of respect and dignity at all times

- Council staff will excavate the grave, cover and make safe. All burial depths and covers shall be in accordance with the Public Health Regulation 2012. There shall be a minimum of 900mm soil cover, and where this is not possible, no additional burials can take place. Second interments are not permitted in single depth interment site.
- Council staff will remove the cover when requested by the funeral director or nominated staff so that the funeral director or nominated staff can set up the grave site. Once the cover has been removed the funeral director is responsible for safety around the grave site until Council have been notified of completion of the ceremony.
- The funeral director or their nominated staff is responsible for replacing any headstones and for the reparation of any surface damage e.g. wheel tracks associated with gaining access to the grave site, notwithstanding access to the grounds being granted by Council
- The re-opening of monuments will be limited to those with existing interment rights. Council will not undertake the dismantling of monuments if required for a re-opening

5.2 Access to the cemetery grounds for burials

- Council staff will open both chains at the lawn cemetery prior to the service.
- Vehicles are not permitted on the grassed sections of the lawn cemetery. The following vehicles are permitted: the hearse, vehicles carrying disabled mourners, set up vehicle and the immediate family. In extreme weather conditions Council staff will assess the grounds to ensure safety and trafficability. Council staff reserves the right to refuse entry of any vehicle to the lawn cemetery.

5.3 On completion of the ceremony

- The funeral director is responsible for the removal of all associated equipment as soon as practicable after the service
- The funeral director will notify Council staff that the grave can be infilled
- Council is responsible for backfilling the grave and placing an approved plaque supplied by funeral director on the grave

5.4 Interment of ashes

- Council will only accept ashes from the funeral director following signed confirmation of acceptance of the ashes by Council cemetery staff
- The funeral director or their nominated staff must notify Council cemetery caretaker in staff in advance for the interment of ashes into an existing grave. Council administration staff must be advised of the location of the interment of ashes to enable records to be updated. The funeral director or their nominated staff is responsible for leaving the site safe
- Proof of Interment right must accompany a request to Council by a family to inter ashes in an existing grave
- Council will permit ash interment in both single and double interment sites
- No minimum cover is required for ash interments under a plinth. Where ashes are placed within a grave a minimum cover of 100mm below the surface is required over the ash placement which must be located wholly within the interment site
- All niche wall internments will only be carried out by Council cemetery staff following the supply of an approved plaque.
- The movement of ashes at the request of family must only be carried out by Council staff

5.5 Exhumations

Exhumations will only take place in accordance with the requirements under the Public Health Act 2010, and with the approval of the NSW Department of Health, or by court order. Exhumations will not take place without prior payment of the current fee.

6 Monumental works (Plinths, headstones and plaques) and cemetery park furniture

All monumental and maintenance work must be approved by Council.

- Only the interment right holder, their Executor or next of kin (where there is no will) can authorise any additional work or changes to an interment site
- An Application to conduct work on council land 'Cemetery Monumental and Maintenance Work' must be submitted with payment of the applicable fee
- The application must be signed by the interment right owner/grantee

- Applications for monuments must include comprehensive design details including footings and elevations
- Work must not commence until the applicant receives written approval.
- The applicant must provide 48 hours' notice to the cemetery caretaker
- Council reserves the right to remove, demolish or alter, or require the removal, demolition or alteration of any structure or thing that is not approved

6.1 Monumental standards

Monumental and memorial work in Armidale Regional cemeteries must conform to specific standards and be erected in a manner that:

- Does not present a risk to members of the public and staff
- Does not hinder effective and regular maintenance of the grounds
- Maintains appropriate aesthetic standards
- The standard for construction of headstones and monuments shall be that as specified in the Australian Standard AS4204 – 2019 (Headstones and Monuments).
- The standard for construction of a mausoleum shall be that as specified in the *Australian Standard AS4425-1996 Above Ground Burial Structures*

6.1.1 Lawn cemeteries

Lawn cemeteries are constructed to a uniform standard in an uncluttered parkland landscape. This style minimises maintenance costs and use of space. Concrete beams are provided to support plaques and turfed spaces between the beams provide access through the lawn cemetery. The following monumental and plaque standards apply to all lawn cemetery areas.

- Headstones in the Armidale Lawn Cemetery areas will be both the standard plinth and headstone (plinth max. 670mm x 595mm, headstone 520mm x 340mm) refer to approved Council drawing in the Appendix below. Alternative plinth and headstone combinations will be permitted with a plinth size not exceeding 1100mm x 595mm
- Headstones usually support a plaque (380mm x 215mm). Additional name plaques are permitted provided they do not exceed the dimensions of the headstone
- Plaques are placed directly on the concrete beams in Guyra lawn cemetery. Additional name plaques are permitted provided they do not exceed the dimensions of the allocated plot

6.1.2 Armidale Columbarium

- Plaques must be cast bronze and of a uniform shape and size (150mm x 120mm)

6.1.3 Ground niches

- Plaques must be cast bronze and of a uniform size and shape (300mm x 375mm including the base)
- Roundabout niche plots: base to be 380mm x 310mm and plaques generally 230mm x 230mm. Additional name plaques are permitted provided they do not exceed the dimensions of the headstone

6.1.4 Family niche plots

- Plaques must be bronze cast and a maximum 400mm x 400mm. The size of the base will be determined by the number of niches required within the allocated area.

6.1.5 Niche gardens and bush settings

- Areas within the existing cemetery grounds may be allocated for niche gardens should the demand arise.
- There are no areas within the existing cemetery grounds designated for bush gardens. Future expansion of the Armidale cemetery grounds may accommodate bush setting and landscaped niche plots

6.1.6 Mausoleums (above ground burial chambers)

- The construction of a mausoleum requires development consent from Council

6.2 Pre-purchase of plots that include plaques and headstones

In the past Council has offered pre-purchase packages that include a headstone and/or plaque together with a specified plot or niche. These packages are no longer offered, however Council will honour previous arrangements.

- Only the current Council standard plinth and headstones will be supplied. Council will not pay for alternative headstones
- Council no longer orders, purchases or supplies plaques. If the historic cost of a plaque or headstone has been recorded and specified, Council will refund that cost to the client or funeral director as applicable. If the historic cost cannot be specifically verified, Council will refund the current cost of the standard plaque or headstone to the client or funeral director
- Council will not accept additional payments for any alternative plaques or headstones

6.3 Cemetery furniture

- Council will determine appropriate furniture within all cemetery areas. Only Council approved park furniture will be provided. No other furniture will be accepted
- Relatives/applicants may wish to purchase an approved item of park furniture. Prior payment will be required for the total costs of the item including installation. Council will then arrange for supply and installation of the approved item
- Furniture will be selected for consistency of design where possible. The style, location and frequency of furniture will take into consideration the layout of the park, site constraints, vehicle and pedestrian movements, safety and maintenance
- Council will be responsible for the maintenance of all approved park furniture regardless of who was the purchaser. The purchaser has no implied ownership or additional rights over the furniture that once installed become Council property.

7 Cemetery maintenance

The ownership right of monuments and approved associated structures is deemed to rest with the person or persons granted the interment right and who authorise the monument or structure to be constructed until. For this reason Council limits the extent and nature of maintenance within cemeteries under its control.

The maintenance of all cemeteries under Council's control is defined and described within the Armidale Regional Council's adopted Parks, Open Space and Cemeteries Maintenance Service Levels document. Council's service levels are consistent with the Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW 'Voluntary Code of Practice for Cemetery maintenance', 2020

- Council will maintain the facilities, grassed areas, trees, authorised landscaping and park furniture within cemetery grounds in accordance with Council's adopted service levels
- Brush cutting will only be undertaken in category A cemeteries
- Council may limit maintenance within old cemetery plots
- Council will not be responsible for the upkeep, maintenance, repair etc. of any monument, structure or associated landscaping on an interment site
- Council will not be held liable for damage to headstones or monuments that may be caused by normal wear and tear and aging or damage incurred by other parties or that may have occurred as a result of routine cemetery maintenance.

8 Cemetery conditions of use

The following actions are not permitted in any Council cemetery

- Driving or parking vehicles off formed roads and carparks
- The painting or alteration in any way of any structures, turf, trees, shrubs or other objects. Council will recover costs for the removal of unauthorised work

- The placement of any type of receptacle not approved by Council that may include but is not limited to: any ornament, item of park furniture, monument, plant life, illumination or sound emitting devices or other objects, perimeters or frames on or around interment sites or any other areas within the cemetery
- The planting or landscaping of any area of the cemetery
- The picking, gathering or relocating of flowers or plants
- The burial of animals
- The dumping or placement of rubbish, rock, soil or any other substance
- To camp or reside on any cemetery land

Council will remove any prohibited items immediately and store them for a period of 4 weeks for collection. Council will not make contact with relatives regarding the removal of prohibited items.

Lawn cemetery

- A minimum of one receptacle will be provided for the placement of flowers. Additional receptacles up to a maximum of 4 per plot may be provided free of charge
- Monuments, crosses or any type of memorial must not be erected within lawn cemetery areas, refer to 'Conditions of use' above
- Spent flowers will be removed by Council staff during routine maintenance operations

Columbarium, ground niches

- Flower receptacles must be of uniform shape, size and material as approved by Council
- No other ornaments, tributes or receptacles are permitted on the columbarium walls or paths, or within the grounds/gardens, refer to 'Conditions of use' above

Mausoleums (above ground burial chambers)

- The provision for flower receptacles, ornaments, statues etc. is to be considered within the development approval process for these structures
- No ornaments, tributes or receptacles are permitted outside the approved footprint, refer to 'Conditions of use' above

8.1 Miscellaneous conditions of use

A person must not do any of the following within cemeteries under the control and management of Armidale Regional Council

- Damage, deface, interfere with or alter any burial places, monuments or buildings
- Bury, inter or exhume any remains, cremated or otherwise
- Bring animals into the cemetery

- Play loud music
- Camp or reside on any cemetery land
- Consume alcohol
- Use the cemetery for recreational activities e.g. ball games, riding bicycles, skate boards, roller blades, Frisbees, fly model aircraft or drones, picnics or BBQs

Persons found to be acting contrary to the above will be asked to leave the cemetery

9 Definitions

Applicant: The person who applies for an interment right or requests permission to undertake work within Council cemeteries.

Burial: means the act of burying, interring or immuring the remains of a deceased person.

Burial Site/Plot: means a grave or plot, or other place for the disposition of human remains, whether cremated or not.

Cemetery operator: means Armidale Regional Council.

Cemetery register: The register required to be kept by a cemetery operator in accordance with the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013 (NSW).

Child: To be classified as a child the deceased shall be aged 10 years or less at the time of interment.

Columbarium: Walled structure with niches for cremated remains.

Council: means Armidale Regional Council.

Exhumation: The removal of a deceased person's remains (not being cremated remains) from an interment site or mausoleum means the removal of a deceased person's remains (not being cremated remains) from an interment site or vault, but does not include their removal from one vault for immediate transfer to another vault in the same cemetery or their temporary removal for the purposes of reburial in the same interment site or vault or the re-interment of those remains in accordance with section 55 (4) of the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013 (NSW)*.

Funeral Director: An individual or business carrying out funeral services.

Grave: Means interment site or plot within the ground.

Holder: in relation to a burial or niche reservation, means the person recorded, in the register kept by Council, as the holder of the burial or niche reservation.

Interment: the placement of human remains in the earth, a columbarium or some other structure. Interment applies equally to cremated and un-cremated remains.

Interment Right: A certificate issued to a person nominated on the application form for a portion of land (Interment site) or a columbarium or ground niche within the cemetery. The holder of the Interment Right has a right with respect to the nominated interment site.

Interment site: the nominated place set aside for the placement of human remains (including ashes) within the cemetery.

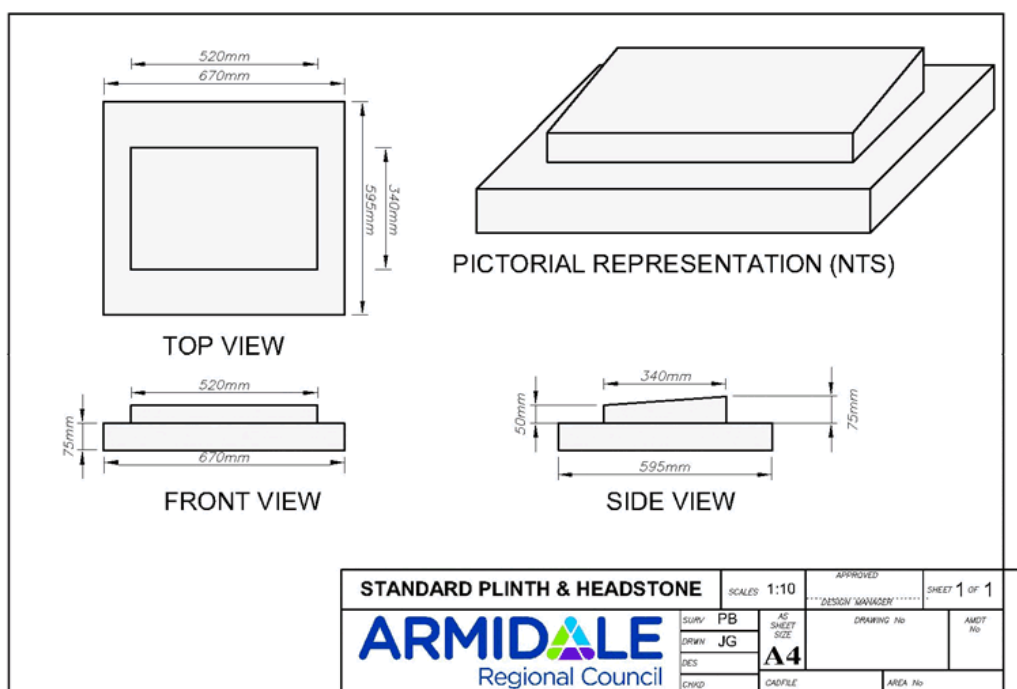
Monument: Any structure, plaque, headstone, masonry, metal work, casting or item placed over, in or around a burial site.

Niche: Interment site within a columbarium, wall or other site for cremated remains.

Renewable interment right: allows the right holder to bury human remains in a particular grave or other allotment in a cemetery and for those remains to be left undisturbed for an initial set period of 25 years. The renewable interment right can be renewed for additional periods up to a maximum of 99 years. RIRs are not offered by Armidale Regional Council.

10 Appendix

Standard Plinth and Headstone (Armidale Regional Council Engineering Code)



6 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- The Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013
- Public Health Act 2010 and its Regulations of 2012
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Heritage Act 1977
- Crown Lands Act 1989
- Local Government Act 1993
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

7 REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

8 REPORTING

All cemetery interments are to be reported to the NSW Cemeteries and Crematoria Association in an annual activity statement.

9 RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Co-ordinator Public and Town Spaces

- Reporting
- Keeping the policy current
- Investigating breaches and enforcing compliance
- Implementing communications, education and monitoring strategies.

10 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Designated Customer Service staff:

- Maintaining records/ register

Public and Town Spaces Cemetery caretaker and team Leader:

- Assisting with location and identification of plots
- Assisting and coordinating burials with funeral Directors

Public and Town Spaces General hand staff:

- Maintenance of designated cemetery grounds

11 RELATED PROCEDURES

- Public and Town Spaces adopted 'Maintenance Service Levels'
- Customer Service administration procedures

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	Roads and Parks	
Responsible Officer	Coordinator Public and Town Spaces	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> May 2021	<i>Council</i> [DD Mmmm YYYY]
Date/s of previous adoptions	[Dates of previous adoptions]	
Date of next review	May 2023	
TRIM Reference		

TRIM: AINT/2021/18531

Memorials Policy

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [DATE TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, transparent and consistent process for the approval of a memorial on public land.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to memorials, plaques and the naming of features or structures either existing or proposed for public open space or buildings, public road reserves, parks, trees and other public structures within the Armidale Regional Council Local Government Area, where the intention is to commemorate a person, organisation or event.

3. POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to:

- To facilitate the appropriate placement, assessment and development of memorials in the Armidale Regional Council Local Government Area
- To manage the prevalence of plaques and memorials in public open space
- To ensure plaques and memorials are restricted to events or persons of outstanding significance
- To clarify the responsibilities for maintenance and expectations of the longevity of memorials

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027: **E3.4** - Provide and maintain functional, appropriate, safe and desirable community facilities through appropriate resourcing.

5. POLICY

Armidale Regional Council recognises that members of the community may wish to commemorate people or events through the establishment of memorials and/or plaques in public open spaces.

This policy provides a basis for the management of existing memorials and for decision making in relation to the proposed establishment of new memorials.

Memorials vary in scale and significance from simple plaques in memory of individuals or groups to heritage memorials commemorating significant community or historical events such as theatres of war. Significant

community memorials perpetuate memories and knowledge of the community's heritage and provide opportunities for citizens and visitors to appreciate the city's historical context.

Requests are often received to create new memorials or install plaques to commemorate individuals or events. Consideration of proposals must be undertaken in the context of the expectation of the community, the significance of the event or individual and the proposed location for the memorial.

This policy applies to any proposal for a memorial of any kind and may include a donation, such as a tree or park furniture in memory of an individual or group. This policy may also apply to permanent memorials that incorporate public art elements.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will apply wherever the words are used:

Plaque	A flat section of metal, stone or other material with text and/or images commemorating a person(s) or event and/or historical information relevant to its location that is affixed to an object, building, pavement or placed on public land.
Memorial	Any object living or non-living established in memory of a person(s) or event. A memorial includes the naming of existing or proposed features and may or may not include a plaque.
Open space	Land owned and/or managed by Council.

1 APPLICATION AND APPROVAL

Objective: To provide a clear, transparent and consistent process for the approval of a memorial

- All requests for memorials must be made in writing to the General Manager.
- All applications and approvals will be considered in accordance with this policy.
- Approvals must be sought and granted prior to the installation, relocation or alteration of any memorial or plaque.

1.1 Applications for a new memorial must include:

- Comprehensive details that address the selection criteria.
- Preferred site and other nominated alternative sites with reference to the significance of sites and the connection of the nominee(s) to the nominated site(s).
- The type and design of the memorial or plaque and proposed text and/or images.
- Commitment or proposal to fund the memorial.
- Identification of responsibility for the on-going maintenance of the memorial or plaque.

1.2 Selection criteria

Selection Criteria has been developed for assessment of an application and is divided into four levels. All requests for a new memorial and/or commemorative naming of a place or object must meet one of the following criteria based upon the level of community contribution:

- Level 1: The person(s), group or organisation being nominated (nominee) should have made a highly significant contribution to the shared community history of the Armidale LGA that is significant at a local, state and/or national level.
- Level 2: The nominee(s) should have achieved at a high level and made a contribution over and above what would normally be expected through paid employment or their voluntary contribution to the community and must stand out from others who have also made a valuable community contribution.
- Level 3: The family, relatives of the nominee(s) or group seeks remembrance of the nominee(s) or group with a demonstrated high level of achievement.
- Level 4: The family or relatives of the nominee(s) wish to erect a roadside memorial on a public council road at a site of a fatal accident.

Table 1 Memorial scope and limitations relating to community contribution levels

Community Contribution Level	Allocated site(s)	Memorial design parameters	Memorial lifespan	Maintenance responsibility
1	Significant public building/structure or open space	Open	Permanent	Council
Level 1 war memorial	Central Park allocated to war memorials only	Subject to Heritage approval. Consider unification of existing and future memorials	Permanent	Council unless specified
2	Non-heritage listed park/open space/structure specifically appropriate for that contribution	Park furniture or planting incorporating small plaque or artwork. Consider potential honour board inclusion	Semi-Permanent	Nominee unless specified
3	Non-heritage listed park/open space	Donated tree no plaque/ park furniture small plaque option/Artwork. Naming of structures not applicable. Consider potential honour board inclusion	Council discretion or 10 years	subject to Council asset management
4	Rural public road reserves only	Small floral tribute and/or cross only	Council discretion/ 24 months	Nominee

1.3 Approval process

- Applications for a Level 1 or Level 2 memorial proposal require a decision of an ordinary meeting of Council.
- Applications for a Level 3 memorial will be approved by the Parks Manager or his/her nominee.
- Applications for a Level 4 memorial will be approved by the Roads and Transport Infrastructure Manager.

All applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.

If an applicant lodges an application that does not meet the selection criteria, the applicant will be required to demonstrate the extenuating circumstances of the specific application. The application may be referred to the General Manager or Council for approval.

Any existing plaque or memorial will not constitute a precedent in the consideration of an application.

1.4 Additional considerations

The nominee

A clear relationship must be demonstrated between the person/group being nominated, and the place (e.g. park, building, structure or natural feature) where the memorial is to be located. The nominee's contribution or relationship should stand out over and above any other individual or group that also may have contributed or had a connection to the site or structure. An application to locate a memorial on a heritage listed item (excluding zoned Heritage Conservation Areas) must meet the criteria for Level 1.

For the purposes of this policy religion, race or gender does not confer any additional or special consideration in relation to memorialisation. The policy seeks to be egalitarian in its scope and instead focuses upon achievement and community contribution as the yardstick for memorialisation.

Site relevance

Memorials must bear a relationship to the site proposed. They must be harmonious and in keeping with the character of the site. The proposal must be consistent with any Plans of Management, and/or permissible uses associated with the site (see Table 1).

Impact on landscape and heritage values

Memorials in parks must not detract from the aesthetic value of the site or the surrounding landscape, and must comply with requirements for heritage listings and any other relevant development controls, Plans of Management or heritage or conservation plans.

The proposal must not impede activities associated with the day to day operation and management of the space or pose a safety hazard to users of the space. The selection and location of street/park furniture or tree species are subject to Council approval. In some cases, development consent may be required for the site.

Memorial costs

Unless otherwise agreed to as part of the approval process, the applicant must meet all the costs associated with the design, manufacture, supply and installation of the memorial or plaque, including any relevant application fees.

Maintenance of a memorial

The maintenance of the memorial is an important consideration and must be addressed in the application. Table 1 identifies the party responsible for any maintenance of all or part of the memorial. Any variation to a maintenance agreement must be submitted and approved by Council.

Should a piece of park furniture and/or the memorial be weathered or damaged beyond reasonable repair, it will be deemed to be at the end of its useful life. Council will make every effort to notify the applicant or living relatives. If the applicant wishes to renew the memorial, a new application will be required. The applicant will be responsible for the cost of any approved replacement memorial.

Lifespan of a memorial

Council will not guarantee that a memorial will be preserved or remain on a particular site indefinitely. For park furniture, paving etc. the lifespan of the memorial will be assumed to be 10 years. Council will make every effort to notify the applicant or living relatives. If the applicant wishes to renew the memorial, a new application will be required. The applicant will be responsible for the cost of any approved replacement memorial.

The lifespan of a rural roadside memorial will be assumed to be 24 months. Council reserves the right to remove any roadside memorial at its discretion and without notification.

Existing memorials

All memorials existing within the Armidale Regional Council LGA prior to the adoption of this policy will be subject to the provisions of this policy. All memorials and plaques placed on Council owned or managed land are Council assets and are managed according to Council's Maintenance Service Levels and any relevant park Plans of Management, Conservation Plans, Policies or Development Controls applicable to that location.

Related documents

- Roadside Tribute Policy POL083 2000 (Rescinded)
- Roads and Maritime Services, 2016 Roadside Tributes Fact Sheet
- Armidale Regional Council Local Environmental Plan, 2012 (Heritage listings)
- Armidale Regional Council Adopted Maintenance Service Levels (Asset maintenance)

6. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- NSW Roads Act 1993
- Local Government Act 1993
- Plans of Management for public lands
- RMS

7. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

8. REPORTING

Nil.

9. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Coordinator Public and Town Spaces (Parks)

- Maintaining records/ register
- Reporting
- Keeping the policy current
- Investigating breaches and enforcing compliance
- Implementing communications, education and monitoring strategies.
- Providing a point of contact about the meaning and application of the policy.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of:

- Staff: Receive and administer the provisions of the policy and refer to Council or management as required
- Councillors: endorse or reject applications referred to an ordinary meeting of Council

11. RELATED PROCEDURES

A procedure is outlined within the policy.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	Roads and Parks	
Responsible Officer	Coordinator Public and Town Spaces	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> [updated by policy owner]	<i>Council</i> [DD Mmmm YYYY]
Date/s of previous adoptions	[Dates of previous adoptions]	
Date of next review	[Two years from last adoption]	
TRIM Reference		

TRIM:



Council Policy

Acceptance of Waste from Outside of Armidale Regional Council's Local Government Area

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [DATE TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

1. PURPOSE

To define Armidale Regional Council's (ARC) position on the acceptance of waste from outside its Local Government Area (LGA) from both regulated and non-regulated areas.

2. APPLICATION

Applies to the acceptance of waste originating from outside of Armidale Regional Council's Local Government Area.

3. POLICY INTENT

Regulates the circumstances under which waste from outside the LGA will be accepted at any of Council's Waste Transfer Facility.

The main objectives of this policy are to:

- To ensure that commercial sized loads of waste from outside ARC's local government area are not accepted for landfilling without a prior written agreement with the dispatching agency.
- To preserve the capacity of ARC's landfill for waste generated locally.

4. POLICY

In accordance with the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997, licensed waste facilities in NSW within a designated 'regulated area' are required to pay a contribution for each tonne of waste received at those facilities, referred to as the 'waste levy'. If a Council in a non-regulated area receives waste from a regulated area it is required to have the necessary administrative and reporting systems to collect and record the applicable waste levy. The liability for the levy rests with the licensee of the facility where the waste is disposed, even if that facility is outside the regulated areas of NSW.

Alternatively Councils can refuse waste from the regulated areas so as to avoid the administrative burden of collecting and recording the applicable waste levy. The Office of Environment and Heritage recommends that if a Council is not willing to accept waste from regulated areas, then it is prudent that a policy to that effect is developed. This should focus on the refusal of waste and the recording of vehicles attempting to deposit that waste in order to minimise the risk of the unlawful disposal of waste.

In addition, the landfilling of waste from outside of the region will shorten the lifetime of the Armidale Regional Landfill and bring forward the time when new cells, and eventually a totally new landfill, will have to be

constructed. It is therefore important that any agreement to accept this waste is carefully examined and rigorously applied so as to minimise the volume of external waste deposited in the Armidale Regional Landfill.

Based on the above Council has adopted the following policy regarding waste transported to any one of its waste management facilities from outside Council's LGA.

From Non-regulated Areas

Waste from outside the LGA will not be accepted unless there is an agreement in writing with the Council transporting the waste from a non-regulated area. No waste will be accepted from waste transporters bringing waste from a non-regulated area without an agreement being in place. It should however be noted that small trailer or utility sized loads of waste from areas close to the Armidale Regional Council boundary, for instance Uralla or Invergowrie, will still be accepted, as will commercial sized loads from Armidale businesses doing work outside the boundary who have an account with Council.

From Regulated Areas

Waste from regulated areas of NSW will not be accepted, either directly from the Council of the regulated area, or by waste transporters bringing waste from the regulated area in question. Council employees will record the name of the owner and the licence number of any vehicle turned away from a waste transfer station under this ruling.

The above policy objectives could be overridden when an incident or emergency, as set out the NSW State Emergency Waste Sub Plan, requires Council to take waste not normally considered acceptable.

5. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.
- Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014.
- Waste Levy Guidelines.
- NSW State Emergency Waste Sub Plan.

6. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

7. REPORTING

Council is required to document the volume and origin of any waste accepted under this policy, including details of the delivery transportation arrangements. In addition the details of vehicles attempting to deliver waste not covered by an agreement are to be recorded.

8. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The responsible officer will be the Manager Utilities.

9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Waste Services Coordinator will be responsible for the application of this policy.

10. RELATED PROCEDURES

Armidale Regional Council Community Strategic Plan 2017 - 2027

No related procedures; operators at Council's waste transfer stations have been made aware of the above policy implications and will check for and reject non-compliant loads.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	Business & Local Services	
Responsible Officer	Chief Officer Assets and Services	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> [updated by policy owner]	<i>Council</i> [DD Mmmm YYYY]
Date/s of previous adoptions	Not known.	
Date of next review	[Two years from last adoption]	
TRIM Reference	ARC16/1455 –	

TRIM: AINT/2020/36401

Public Art Policy

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [DATE TO BE COMPLETED BY GOVERNANCE]

1. PURPOSE

This Public Art Policy has been prepared to provide a framework for Council's planning and decision making in relation to the commissioning and acquisition of public art, as well as its ongoing care and maintenance.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all staff when making decisions in relation to the commissioning, acquisition, ongoing care and maintenance of public art.

3. POLICY INTENT

The main objectives of this policy are to:

1. Encourage and ensure the production of high quality, innovative public art that is meaningful, relevant, diverse in character and aesthetically pleasing.
2. Ensure that public art complements and enhances the natural and built environments of the Armidale Region and reflects its unique character, history, values and aspirations.
3. Provide a framework for community groups and individuals proposing public arts projects for consideration as a Council supported project.
4. Ensure that public art in the Armidale Region is adequately resourced and effectively managed so that it is appropriately preserved, conserved and where necessary, restored.
5. Guide and facilitate a coordinated and strategically planned approach to the development and management of public art in the Armidale Region.

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

In support of our community vision as expressed in the Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027 – Community Outcome 2 – Events and cultural activities provide the community with an opportunity to celebrate the unique culture and lifestyle of the region.

5. POLICY

5.1 THE DEFINITION OF PUBLIC ART

Public Art is defined as artistic works or activities in spaces open to the public. Public Art is mostly located in public places and spaces but may also be incorporated into private areas open to the public such as in a shopping centre, school, park, CBD, streetscape or building.

Public Art can include a sculpture, a painting, a wall mosaic or a mural. It can be incorporated into a functional object, including paving, water features, seating and lighting. It can also be a temporary work such as an art performance in an outdoor public space. For the purpose of this policy, road side memorials, the naming of parks, reserves, sports fields and memorial seats are not included.

Public Art artworks may be:

- a) **Site Specific:** designed specifically for, and responsive to, a particular site through scale, material, form and consent.
- b) **Iconic:** a stand-alone or significant work, where the artists' approach is largely independent of other considerations. Examples include sculpture, water features, lighting or multimedia.
- c) **Integrated/Functional:** works that are fully incorporated within the design of the built or natural environment. Integrated works may include floor and window design, paving, lighting, landscaping and associated elements. Artwork is inclusive of street furniture, seating, gateways, shelters and bollards. Commissioned as Public Art functional requirements will be unique and have the potential to celebrate local distinctiveness.
- d) **Temporary:** where the work is not intended to be permanent. A piece or event may be momentary or remain for a fixed time.

5.2 THE BENEFITS OF HIGH QUALITY PUBLIC ART

Public art is increasingly used as an aid for revitalising urban spaces and engaging with communities. It enhances the physical environment, thereby enriching the simple experience of being in a place. It can create an environment of quality that attracts more people, raises a town centre's profile and improves economic outcomes. Public art can make a significant contribution to social health and wellbeing of the local community, and be good for local business.

Community involvement and engagement with the development of a work of public art promotes social cohesion and gives local residents the opportunity to shape their local neighbourhood instilling a sense of pride. Public art is often created by the local communities themselves and is enhanced with the help of experienced community artists.

5.3 ROLE OF THE ARTS, CULTURAL AND HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Its role is to provide advice to Council on the creation of excellent works of art in the public.

In relation to the Council's Public Arts Policy, the Committee's role includes, although is not limited to:

- Providing input and feedback on conceptual briefs for Council's public art and place making projects;
- Assisting in identifying any gaps in public art provision and suitable sites throughout the region;
- Assisting and advising in the Council's decision making process relating to the acquisition and commission of any public art projects;

- Advising Council in the development of art policy and project development matters brought before the Committee, including subsequent reviews of existing policies and programs.

5.4 PUBLIC ART PRINCIPLES

In planning for and commissioning public artworks, the Council will:

- Support the development and commissioning of a diverse range of permanent, temporary and ephemeral artworks in public places
- Align public art projects with landscape design and infrastructure projects
- Recognise and celebrate the Armidale Regional Council's cultural identity through public art in public places
- Recognise and celebrate Aboriginal stories and heritage through art in public spaces
- Support public art opportunities for local artists
- Activate local places through temporary, ephemeral and community art projects
- Encourage high quality public art in private development
- Support community, private and government partners to facilitate public art opportunities
- Manage and maintain permanent artworks in the Armidale Regional Council LGA
- Ensure the creation of art that will contribute to the enhancement, enjoyment or understanding of its context and place
- Enhance the design and functionality of the public domain through public art
- Deliver robust, durable public art that will retain its quality and integrity over time
- Ensure that all future public art projects are procured and managed in accordance with the Public Arts Policy and Guidelines.

5.5 RESTORATION OF ARTWORKS

Public artworks including monuments, sculptures and water features in the public domain are subject to wear and tear and degradation over time. In addition, they are occasionally vandalised, graffitied or broken. As part of the acquisition of any new artwork, the artist must provide a maintenance schedule upon completion of the work. The schedule should outline requirements for regular cleaning, maintenance or servicing, specifically what is required, who should do it, and how often, e.g. cleaning agents for surface treatments and materials. Details of any spare parts that have been lodged must also be provided.

5.5 RELOCATION OF ARTWORKS

Circumstances sometimes arise where redevelopment of a site, or the use of the site changes and renders an artwork inappropriate and requires its relocation. The Council must consult with the artist before preparing a report, addressing the following matters: insurance, risk management, valuation, engineering and legal.

5.6 DISPOSAL OF PUBLIC ARTWORKS

Disposal of public art must be done with the knowledge and in consultation with the artist, where possible. If, after making reasonable enquiries the Council cannot identify or locate the artist, or the artist's representative, then the Council may dispose of the public artwork in accordance with Councils Public Art Guidelines. All decisions and actions should be fully documented. Artworks should first be offered for sale at a price based on

independent valuation, first to the artist, then to other institutions or the public or at an auction. Funds from any decommissioned public artwork should be reused for new or upgraded public art within the LGA. Objects which are destroyed should be disposed of in a responsible manner. All artworks will be disposed of in accordance with Council's current Asset Disposal Policy.

6. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Copyright Amendment (Moral Rights) Act 2000

7. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every two years from the date of each adoption of the policy, or more frequently as required.

8. REPORTING

- Contribution to the Annual Report in the event a new public artwork has been installed.
- Reporting on the progress of public arts programs against the corresponding Operational Plan.

9. RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Coordinator Libraries, Museums and Visitor Information Centre

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff are responsible for administering this policy in relation to the handling of any public art.

Arts, Cultural and Heritage Advisory Committee is responsible for providing advice in relation to public arts programs and projects, as requested by Council staff.

Councillors are responsible for approving the handling of public art.

11. RELATED PROCEDURES

Nil

APPROVAL AND REVIEW		
Responsible Business Unit	[Name of Business Unit]	
Responsible Officer	[Name of Responsible Officer]	
Date/s adopted	<i>Council Executive</i> [updated by policy owner]	<i>Council</i> [DD Mmmm YYYY]
Date/s of previous adoptions	[Dates of previous adoptions]	
Date of next review	[Two years from last adoption]	
TRIM Reference		



ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held on

Thursday, 13th May 2021, 10am

at

Hughes House Jacaranda Room

PRESENT: Cr Andrew Murat, Jeff Parker, Steve Austin, Manbir Rooprai, Dallas Ramage, Kyle Wellsmore, Poh Woodland, Jarryd Van Den Heuvel, Angele Van Den Heuvel.

IN ATTENDANCE: Darren Schaefer (ARC)

Meeting Minutes

Armidale Regional Council
Community Wellbeing Committee
Thursday, 29 April 2021

Page 2

1 Apologies

Helen Sutherland - Disability Advocacy NSW
Melissa Menzel – The IndividualiTree
Lee McMillan - Aruma

2 Election of Committee Chair and Deputy Chair.

Nominations were called for Chairperson of the Access Advisory Committee.
Jeff Parker was the sole nominee for Chair. Nominated by Steve Austin, seconded Kyle Wellmore.
The committee voted unanimously in favour of Jeff Parker as the elected Chairperson.

Nominations were called for Deputy Chair for the Access Advisory Committee.
Steve Austin was the sole nominee for Deputy Chair. Nominated by Jeff Parker, seconded Angele Van Den Heuvel.
The committee voted unanimously in favour of Steve Austin as the elected Deputy Chair.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil

4 Access Advisory Committee Role and Function

- A brief description of the role of the committee was outlined by Darren Schaefer, noting;
- i. It is an advisory committee to Councillors on matters pertaining to access and inclusion. It is not a committee that makes decisions on behalf of Council.
Committee recommendations will be made in minutes to Council at the Ordinary Council Meetings.
 - ii. An illustration of where the committee can contribute in terms of strategic planning process was covered, with Council plans as identified as follows:
 1. Community Strategic Plan (10 year)
 2. Delivery Plan (4 year)
 3. Operational Plan (1 year)

The Access Advisory Committee can contribute to, and provide recommendation to Council for the development of:

- Disability Inclusion Action Plan (4 years)
- Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan (4 years)
- Other pressing matters pertaining to access and inclusion

The Access Advisory Committee should seek to ensure that its recommendations from the Disability Inclusion Action Plan and Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan are included into the three overarching Council plans above. Inclusion of recommendations in these plans will depend on their level of complexity, budget and resource availability.

ACTION: The Disability Inclusion and Action Plan working group report back to the committee on progress of the plans development.

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Community Wellbeing Committee
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5 Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan, Mobility Map

The Committee discussed the status of the Mobility Map on the council website. It was noted that it had not been updated since the merger between Armidale and Guyra Councils in 2016. Previously iterations of the map had been updated every two years.

It was identified that there was a need to expand the geographic area of the map to include popular institutions such as the TAFE and Hospital. Moreover, a second map should be produced for the town of Guyra given it now resides in the new broader regional LGA.

It was noted that some things that were compliant may now not be due to changes in legislation or technology in the past five years since merger. For example, the lift at the bottom of Police Station (hold button), and new lighter more manoeuvrable wheelchairs have small wheels that can get stuck in storm water grates.

6 General Business

Focus Areas

6.1 Gap analysis of current Disability Action Plan

The suggestion was to review the old Disability Action Plan to identify if there are any gaps where things have not been delivered. In particular, it was noted that the "Adopt a Disability Day" in the plan for Council staff had been a success in the past and could be one thing that could be reinstated at minimal cost to council. Focus should be on ensuring that there is at least one completely accessible pathway to the CBD from the North, South, East and West. This approach should also be extended to Guyra.

ACTION: Circulate the current Disability and Inclusion Action Plan to the Committee members such that a gap analysis can be undertaken.

6.2 Notifications of works to roads and footpaths.

The group advised that prior to merger, there was a process whereby council staff members would circulate notification of works to roads and footpaths to disability organisations and individuals with a disability in the community. This would occur 14 days prior to the works commencing. Parks and Gardens teams would also need to be briefed for works they are undertaking that infringe on pedestrian access.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council update a list of disability contacts, and develop a process by which notification of future works to roads and footpaths are distributed to relevant disability groups and individuals 14 days prior to works commencing.

6.3 Activities for people with disability

It was discussed that having more activities that cater for people with disabilities would be beneficial and help demonstrate inclusiveness. The team at One Connection advised that they are developing a program where people with disabilities can assist the Rural Fire Service with catering, and clean up, uniforms, etc, when firefighters are on the front line. They noted that other LGAs do things such as supporting a Circus School in partnership with the PCYC. Other suggested activities were activities like the old Blue Light discos for people with disabilities.

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6.4 More Accessible Carparks

Ensure carparks remain close to venue (or point of interest) entries and exits, particularly from Council owned areas.

One Connection expressed interest in having a disabled carpark outside their office at 89 Beardy Street due to Centerlink claiming (pseudo) "ownership" of the allocated space outside their offices.

RECOMMENDATION: Investigate the need for an additional accessible carpark outside One Connection offices at 89 Beardy Street.

6.5 Provision of information pertaining to disability services

A collection of information for people who are new to the area or who have a condition that will eventually lead to impairment of some kind. Effectively more communication to the community of services offered will also benefit the aged, and even parents with prams. Suggestions are website, booklet or paper-based hand out, data-base of email list of people registered with a disability in the LGA.

6.6 Safer Pedestrian Crossings

On busy intersections such as outside Dominos on Marsh Street. Look at including speed bumps before the crossing to increase safety and prevent near misses.

6.7 Council owned land and developments.

The Riding For The Disabled group have identified that there is limited accessibility at the Equestrian Centre venue on Kirkwood Street (near the child care centre).

Accessibility extends to flooring choices for buildings, etc, as some carpets increase drag and restrict manoeuvrability for wheelchairs.

Council also needs to ensure Development Applications for private sector developments comply with current standards.

RECOMMENDATION: Investigate the need for accessibility works to be undertaken on Council owned land near Equestrian Centre on Kirkwood street.

Meeting Schedule

The Access Advisory Committee agreed that:

1. Meetings would normally be held at a frequency of every 2 months, with the meeting set for the second Thursday of every second month, from 10am-12pm. Where possible the meeting will be held in Kent House Activities Room. If there is a booking conflict, the Hughes House Jacaranda Room will be utilised.

Armidale Regional Council
Community Wellbeing Committee
Thursday, 29 April 2021

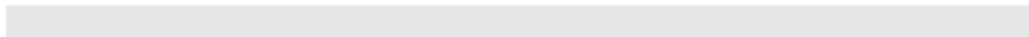
Page 5

2. With it being an election year and Council going into caretaker mode after July, the committee understood that all Council Advisory Committees will be disbanded as a matter of process in the election year. With this in mind, the members of the Access Advisory Committee agreed to hold two committee meetings prior to the caretaker period commencing, one in June and one in July, in order to progress planning for the DIAP.
3. The meetings of meetings should actively include the Guyra community and that some of the scheduled meetings should be held in Guyra. It was agreed that the meeting for July will be held in Guyra.

ACTION: That a monthly meeting frequency be set in the lead up to councils caretaker period.

Meeting closed 11.58am

Next meeting: 10am Thursday 10 June, 2021.





ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held on

Tuesday, 18th May 2021
5pm

at

GoTo Meeting and Council Chambers
Option

Present: Chairperson: Cr Dorothy Robinson (GoTo).

Cr Margaret O'Connor, Navjot Bhullar (GoTo), Mahalath Halperin, Maria Hitchcock (GoTo), Sara Schmude (GoTo), Helen Webb (GoTo), Bruce Whan, Charles Williams (GoTo).

Council Officers: Marissa Racamelara, Ambrose Hallman, Mandy McLeod.

MINUTES

Armidale Regional Council
Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 18 May 2021 Page 2

1 APOLOGIES: Robyn Bartel, David Carr (see below under Correspondence).

2 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 APRIL 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

That the minutes be taken as read and be accepted as a true record of the Meeting.

Moved: Cr Robinson

Seconded: Navjot Bhullar

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.
Navjot Bhullar - Project Zero30

4 CORRESPONDENCE
Resignation received by email at beginning of meeting from David Carr.

5 ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

6 BUSINESS ARISING

6.1 Climate Emergency Working Group Report: A Framework for Climate Action - Budgeted items 2021-2022. *Ref: AINT/2021/15191 (ARC16/0864)*

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

- a) That the Committee review items from the 2021-2022 Council draft budget from the Climate Emergency Working Group report, *A Framework for Climate Action*;
- b) That the Budget items that were successfully incorporated into the draft Budget be noted;
- c) That items that were initially costed for Councils draft Budget and that were removed due to Councils dire financial situation be noted.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

- a) That the Committee review items from the 2021-2022 Council draft budget from the Climate Emergency Working Group report, *A Framework for Climate Action*;
- b) That the Budget items that were successfully incorporated into the draft Budget be noted;
- c) That items that were initially costed for Councils draft Budget and that were removed due to Councils dire financial situation be noted.

Moved: Cr Robinson

Seconded: Mahalath Halperin

Armidale Regional Council
Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 18 May 2021 Page 3

6.1a. At the Ordinary Council Meeting 28/4/2021, the following recommendation (amongst others) were approved, Resolution 186/2:

That two representatives from Climate Emergency Working Group meet with Council staff regarding items from their report A Framework for Climate Action and recommendations from the report being funded into the 2021/2022 budget.

Request that a meeting be arranged to commence this project. Sustainability Officer to coordinate first meeting with Mahalath Halperin and Helen Webb, CEWG representatives. (Note that extensive discussion was undertaken in relation to this point).

That two representatives from the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee meet with Council staff to undertake a detailed analysis of EcoARC (Council's Green –print) to determine how some of the actions and recommendations could be undertaken in alignment with the Community Strategic Plan. This would include determining short, medium and long term initiatives to develop a ten (10) year implementation plan.

Request that a meeting be arranged to commence this project. Sustainability Officer to coordinate first meeting with Navjot Bhullar, Charles Williams and Councillor representatives.

6.2. From Item Meeting item 7.6 13/5/2021. Groundwater information Guyra Bore meeting. Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) Water representative has said: "Currently Council is working with DPIE Water to develop the Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy. Once the Strategy is in draft form and on public submission, they are happy to come and speak to committee and provide a presentation".

Information on the depth of groundwater monitoring bores (MB) was provided in the email attached to the Agenda, 13/5/2021, these bores below are only monitoring bores (MB).

Note that as per Cr Robinson's email dated 15th May, a confidential paper will be presented at the 26th May Ordinary Council Meeting.

6.3. Taken off

6.4. From Item 7.10.3 Meeting 13/5/2021. Update on ARC Renewable Energy Action Plan provided by Cr Robinson, Constructive Energy has been awarded contract to undertake this plan and policy in consultation with staff.

6.5. Take off

6.6. From Item 7.5 Meeting 13/5/2021. Cr Robinson email dated 15/5/2021. Note that a report is already in May Ordinary Council Meeting regarding this item.

M Racomelara spoke to prioritising items and limited Council resources, concerns about spreading resources too thin and no items actually getting done.

Recommendation: Incoming Council should become a member of the Cities Power Partnership.

Moved: Cr Robinson

Seconded: Charles Williams

6.6. From Item 7.10

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Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 18 May 2021 Page 4

7 GENERAL BUSINESS

7.1 Air Quality Working Group Formation

Ref: AINT/2021/15041 (ARC16/0864)

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee:

- a) review the items in relation to panel members and assessment of potential Air Quality Working Group members, within this report;
- b) review the items in relation to assessment of potential Air Quality Working Group members within this report;
- c) review intention of why working group formed.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee will undertake a review of items designed to be undertaken by Air Quality Working Group. There will be no Air Quality Working Group formed as there is such a short period of time during which this Council is still operating.

Moved: Cr Robinson

Seconded: Mahalath Halperin

7.3. Cr Robinson: Please clarify what we are going to be doing re Purple Air monitors and measurements?. Stated that the widget developed so that hourly air quality data from the DPIE Air Monitoring station in Armidale can be viewed by members of the public is 1.5. hours behind real time.

7.4.

Thank you to Marissa Racamelara for provision of governance information and her support for reinstating committee and meetings.

Thank you to David Carr, Environment Sustainability Advisory Committee member who has tendered his resignation from the committee. Members of the Committee wish to thank David for volunteering his time and the effort he has put in to the committee and projects over many years.

8 AGREEMENT ON ITEMS FOR AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

9 TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5pm Tuesday 15th June

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 6.50pm.



COMMUNITY WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Held on

Thursday, 27th May 2021, 3pm

at

Function Room

PRESENT: Cr Debora O'Brien (Chair), Cr Dorothy Robinson, Melanie WilliamdeAmaya, Maree McKenzie, Margaret Sims, Anne Rix, Robbie Passmore.

IN ATTENDANCE: Veronica Martel, Kelly Stidworthy (ARC), Rob McGuinness (ARC), Jane Davies (ARC), Darren Schaefer (ARC).

Meeting Minutes

Armidale Regional Council
Community Wellbeing Committee
Thursday, 29 April 2021

Page 2

1 Apologies

Sarah Hunt, Cr Ian Tiley, James Roncon

2 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Minutes from meeting held 29 April 2021 were noted by the Committee.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil

4 Public Exhibition of Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy – Referral to Committee

The group reflected broadly on the current environment for those experiencing financial hardship, citing recent water rate increases as a result of the drought and housing stock availability as two main issues.

1. Drought and Water Pricing:
Maree McKenzie from Homes North advised that the water pricing increases post drought has significantly impacted their business and the wider social housing community. The people who are disadvantaged and residing in social housing are typically larger families, often single parent and/or single income families and cannot afford the increase in bills. As a consequence, Homes North are experiencing an increase in outstanding debt in relation to water charges. This debt has doubled since the water rate increases this financial year compared to last financial year - and its progressively getting larger. It is set to go into the hundreds of thousands if not addressed in some form soon. Recovery of these funds by Homes North is required, otherwise they lose it. It is not claimable or able to be written off by government.
2. Rental Market:
Compounding this is that the rental market is quite buoyant and there is not a lot of available housing on the market from the public or private sectors. Rents are therefore increasing, as may be evictions and defaults/arrears payments.

It was suggested that the residents set up a Centrepay facility for businesses - a way for customers can pay a business, direct from their Centrelink payments. The fear from the group was that there was no more money to pay. Further to this, the Armidale Neighbourhood Centre confirmed that they are experiencing a marked increase in the Federal Emergency Relief and the distribution of food vouchers.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council work with Homes North to make representations to our State Member for assistance (via subsidy) to address the financial impact of drought and water pricing on the more vulnerable members of the community.

RECOMMENDATION: The Council conduct desktop research via Real Estate Institute of Australia or a local real estate agent in property management to understand if they have experienced an increase in rental arrears and evictions in the area.

Armidale Regional Council
Community Wellbeing Committee
Thursday, 29 April 2021

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Feedback specific to the Hardship and Debt Recovery Policies were discussed and initial suggestions from the group were as follows;

That council consider:

- i. Increasing the frequency of payment (from quarterly to fortnightly)
- ii. Reviewing the 12 month timeframe for which debt is payable
- iii. Making the approach to debt recovery a little softer and more flexible rather than stipulating a repayment amount and timeframe, e.g: "What could you afford to pay?"
- iv. Making the language a little less derogatory against their circumstances, as it could be seen as a value judgement and a block to repayment. Remove words like "if you are experiencing genuine hardship" and perhaps replacing this with "if you are experiencing a change of circumstances."
- v. Referring to where they may be able to get assistance or support
- vi. Providing a flowchart of the debt recovery process in the policy to make it easier to interpret at a glance.
- vii. Making those that pay within a predetermined timeframe eligible for a discount on the interest charged, rather than the interest continuing to compound and making it more difficult to pay.

ACTION: Committee members are encouraged to review the Hardship and Debt Recovery Policies on the 'Have Your Say' section of the Council website and make formal submissions whilst both policies are on public exhibition throughout June 2021.

5 Update from Homes North

Maree McKenzie, CEO of Homes North gave an update on the transfer of management of the State 'General Housing' asset portfolio to Homes North, as well as a range of temporary accommodation initiatives and assistance programs designed to keep people in the private market (caravan parks, hotels, etc).

The transfer of management of this portfolio means that Home North have grown from 1000 to 2700 properties, a transfer of 1700 by the State. Maintenance of these assets to date has been performed by the State, however this will transfer over to Homes North as at July 1st, 2021. Home North are budgeting to spend circa \$7,000p/a in maintenance for each of the acquired assets. This move from the State to Homes North will mean utilising a number of local contractors and trades in the region for future scheduled maintenance works.

5 Aged Care and Volunteers

The group discussed what role Council had (if any) in advocating for change in this sector. It was noted that volunteers could provide extra resources in this sector, and the Volunteer Referral Service could be of some assistance.

Jane Davies, Coordinator of the Armidale Volunteer Referral Service, provided an update. It was noted that despite the recommendations of the Royal Commission, there was not a lot that the Referral Service could offer at present. The Aged Care Sector has been heavily impacted by Covid-19 and for this reason, volunteers are not being allowed to assist in care institutions. However, the Care for Seniors Program that provides support for the elderly in their own homes is alive and well.

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Community Wellbeing Committee
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6 Feedback on Crime Prevention Working Group

Darren Schaefer provided an update on the status of the Crime Prevention Working Group. Unfortunately there was little progress on this initiative. Attempts had been made to arrange meetings for the working group (pre Covid-19) however they never met. Key to this plan is the engagement of the police not only for the actual data through BOCSAR but also for the incidents of crime that are under or not reported through the courts. SC Chris Jordan was sent copies of the attached and asked to make comment however Chris took some time off that impeded efforts to meet. Once the Community Wellbeing Committee ceased during the councillor suspension period, the crime prevention plan was also shelved.

Legislative responsibilities for delivery of a crime prevention plan were discussed with varying opinions as to if having a plan were a legislative requirement. However, it was agreed that if ARC wanted to apply for funding through the Attorney General's Office (AGO), a previously endorsed Crime Prevention Plan by the AGO would need to be in place and referenced as a requirement of the submission.

It was recommended that the Justice Advocacy Service be included on any future working group for Crime Prevention.

ACTION: That Council confirm legislative responsibilities (if any) for developing a Crime Prevention Plan to assist with the initiative's future prioritisation.

7 Update on Procurement Policy

Cr Debora O'Brien encouraged the committee members to review the Procurement Policy which gave preference to local suppliers, which would contribute to local jobs was more inclusive.

ACTION: Committee members are encouraged to review the Procurement Policy on the 'Have Your Say' section of the Council website and make formal submissions whilst the policy is on public exhibition throughout June 2021.

8 General Business

Darren Schaefer advised that Sally Schofield, Coordinator Community Services at ARC had tendered her resignation. Advice on Sally's replacement will be forthcoming.

Meeting closed 4.40pm
Next meeting: 3pm Thursday 27 May, 2021.



TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held on

Tuesday, 1 June 2021
10am

at

Function Room

In attendance

Committee Members:

Snr Sgt Paul Caldwell (NSW Police)
Mr Stefan Wielebinski (TfNSW)

Council Staff:

Mr Ambrose Hallman (Manager Development and Regulatory Services)
Mr Graham Earl (ARC Technical Officer)
Ms Belinda Ackling (Minute Taker)
Mr Ian Chetcuti (Ranger)

Others: James Clifford (Manager Armidale Mazda)

MINUTES

Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 1 June 2021

Page 2

1. Apologies / Leave Of Absence

Mr Hans Hietbrink (Rep. Member for Northern Tablelands)– has provided endorsement for the recommendations as provided in the business paper.

2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes -

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4TH MAY 2021

RESOLVED

That the minutes be taken as read and be accepted as a true record of the Meeting.

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED unanimously.

3. Declarations of Interest

Nil

4. Business Arising

No actions have been taken from the last meeting as

5. Special Event Reports - Late item

5.1 Special Event Transport Management Plan - Duval Dam Busters Run

Ref: ARC16/0168

The Duval Dam Buster Trail Run (DDB) is a trail running event (foot race) held at Dumaresq Dam on land owned by Armidale Regional Council and Mt Duval on land owned by UNE including its "Newholme" farm property. 2021 will be the event's 4th year and they are proposing the addition of a 50km distance to add to the already offered 3km, 8km, 15km and 30km distances. The event has attracted up to 400 participants in previous years, and we expect to cap the number to 40 people for the 50km distance as a test event for 2021.

In 2021 to enable the organisation to offer the 50km distance they would like to use low traffic volume public/council roads to create a large loop covering Dumaresq Dam (starting point), up to Mt Duval, into the UNE Newholme property and onto council public dirt roads before re-joining Newholme Rd and Mt Duval. The roads in the proposed course would be Kirby Rd, Weirs Rd, Clarkes Rd, TA Crowley Ave and Cluny Rd.

Participants will be advised in the pre-event race briefing notes and on-the-day verbal briefing that they MUST give-way to vehicles at intersections when entering Weirs Road, Kirby Road, Cluny Road.

Participants will have to carry a hi-visibility vest as part of their mandatory gear requirements and wear the vest from the UNE property boundary on Weirs Rd until they reach the private

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property at the end of Cluny Rd (approximately 10km in total).

Participants will be advised in the pre-event race briefing notes and on-the-day verbal briefing that while running on the public roads they **MUST** stay on the right-hand side of the road facing the oncoming traffic, and move off the road to the verge where possible when traffic is approaching.

Signage – organisers will place traffic signs with “Runners Ahead, Proceed with Caution” along the sections of the course that are on public roads.

Neighbour notification – letters informing local residents in the vicinity of the public roads used in the 50km course (namely Kirby, Weirs, TA Crowley, Cluny and extension roads) will be distributed to letterboxes 30 days prior to the event to inform them of the event and that runners will be using the right-hand side of the roads, for the estimated times (likely 8:30am – 2:00pm).

Community notifications – advertising on social media and the local radio station will be used to inform the community of the event and to avoid the roads where possible.

1/21

RESOLVED

Council endorse the Special Event Transport Management Plan - Duval Dam Busters 50km Trial Run on public road as per the risk assessment, and with the additional requirement to advise participants to run in single file.

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED unanimously.

6. Correspondence

6.1 Naughton Avenue - Request for parking time extension

Ref: AINT/2021/16283

(ARC16/0168-6)

The Mazda's Dealership Manager was invited to attend the meeting and addressed the Committee, he advised:

- He feels the business has been unfairly targeted, he has not seen any enforcement taken in the last two years and now they are there a few times a week;
- The company is being targeted just for revenue raising purposes;
- Revenue raising from local business should not be a priority, business should be supported by Council.

TfNSW member advised that the Traffic Advisory Committee was not a committee of Council but a TfNSW Committee that provided technical advice and recommendations to Council on requests for changes of a regulatory nature, the complaint around revenue raising and the allegations of targeting the business would need to be addressed by Council at a Council meeting.

Police requested clarification of what was being requested by the committee as the committee would only address the requested changes as advised to items of a regulatory nature.

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The Dealership Manager of Mazda continued to advised the following

- The business utilises the parking spots outside the business and thinks there should leniency provided.
- That the 5 parking spaces be extended to 4 hour parking or the times removed all together.

The Mazda's Dealership Manager asked if the signage advises the parking is from 8.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday and 8.30am to 12 Saturday, why aren't the rangers patrolling on Saturdays.

Manager Development and Regulatory Services advised the rangers do occasionally patrol on Saturday - Rangers are unable to get to all timed parking in a short space of time.

The Dealership Manager of Mazda went on to say

- that he has about 30 cars in and out of the workshop on a daily basis and doesn't want to used the Naughton Street Councils own all day car park.
- vehicles have been broken into in the past and just recently a car had the passenger window broken.

When asked if the incident was reported to Police it was advised that:

It was not reported to Police, they receive no action from police when reporting incidents, Mazda had a car stolen and received no enforcement from police. The burnt out vehicle was recovered and there was no further action.

ACTION: Police will investigate the situation and report the findings back to the Mazda's Dealership Manager.

Manager Development and Regulatory Services explain that with the past disasters experienced by the area, Council backed off parking as the community was struggling. Now we are coming out of the Covid isolation, enforcement will be occurring. A report went to council last month that provided an update on the implementation of the Council endorsed parking strategy and the installation of the remaining pods, including the consideration of parking requests.

Police asked Manager Development and Regulatory Services if land from the Naughton Street parking facility can be leased to Mazda.

Manager Development and Regulatory Services advised Council would need to follow look at the process of considering such a things, and would need to look at how we Council could monitor that.

The Committee thanked Mazda's Dealership Manager for coming along and explaining his concerns and provided further advice that the Committee would consider his comments and provide advise of the outcome, Mazda's Dealership Manager left the meeting at 10.20am.

After considering the comments made, the committee agreed that the report recommends to Council be to deny the request to remove or extend the timed parking limits in Naughton Avenue in keeping with the Parking Strategic Plan and Councils endorsement of the report 9.1 Update on Alterations to Parking Time Limits within the Armidale CBD – endorsed at the May Council meeting –resolution 204/21

Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 1 June 2021

Page 5

RESOLVED

That Council deny the request to remove or extend the timed parking limits in Naughton Avenue in keeping with the Parking Strategic Plan and Councils endorsement of 204/21.

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED unanimously.

6.2 Concerns for the intersection of Kirkwood street (east) and Canambe Street

Ref: AINT/2021/16284 (ARC16/0168-6)

Council has recently completed the installation of the new Cooks Road Bridge, this is expected to increase traffic flow and allow larger vehicles to access the area. To help prevent vehicles cutting the corner of Kirkwood and Canambe Street it is proposed that Double Barrier line is installed. While a small median strip can be installed Council will monitor the use and type of traffic that will utilise the road.

RESOLVED

The installation of painted BB lines (Double Barrier lines) on the Kirkwood Street leg of the intersection with Canambe Street to help with the visual aspect of highlighting the centre of the road be endorsed.

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED unanimously.

6.3 Faulkner Street - Request for a Work Zone

Ref: AINT/2021/16307 (ARC16/0168-6)

Fit out works will be conducted in the building formally known as the Armidale War Memorial Library. Access points to the building are located in the Cinders Lane Park and on Faulkner Street. It is the intention to utilise the rear access from Cinders Lane as the main entry to the building for trades and Faulkner Street as an intermittent entry for the delivery of bulky materials. Traffic Committee will only be considering the two affected parking spaces on Faulkner Street one of which is a disability parking space

RESOLVED

- a) That Council endorse the request to use two parking spaces adjacent to 122 Faulkner Street (the Old Library) as a work zone for the refurbishment of the Hub from June to the end of September 2021.
- b) The temporarily relocation of the disability parking space adjacent to 122 Faulkner Street (the Old Library) closer to the taxi rank in conjunction with the work zone.

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED unanimously.

7. General Business

Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 1 June 2021

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TfNSW - Remark with lines the roundabouts that have had segments removed

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 11am



BUSINESS PAPER

TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To be held on

Tuesday, 1 June 2021
10am

at

Function Room

Committee Members:

Mr Hans Hietbrink (Rep. Member for Northern Tablelands)
Snr Sgt Paul Caldwell (NSW Police)
Mr Stefan Wielebinski (TfNSW)

Council Staff:

Mr Ambrose Hallman (Manager Development and Regulatory Services)
Mr Graham Earl (ARC Technical Officer)
Ms Belinda Ackling (Minute Taker)
Mr Ian Chetcuti (Ranger)

Others:

Nil

AGENDA

The Armidale Traffic Advisory Committee, has no decision-making powers and is primarily a technical review committee. It only advises the Council on matters for which the Council has delegated authority.

The Committee operates under Roads and Maritime Services 'A guide to the delegation to councils for the regulation of traffic'.

In summary:

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has delegated certain aspects of the control of traffic on regional and local roads to Council. A condition of this delegation is that Council must refer all traffic related matters to the Traffic Advisory Committee prior to exercising its delegated functions.

The four voting members on the Traffic Advisory Committee are:

- Council's representative (chair)
- RMS representative
- NSW Police representative for the Local Area Command containing the item.
- State Member of Parliament representative for the electorate containing the item.

The meeting does not need a specific quorum, however any advice can only be returned to the Council if the views of NSW Police and RMS have been obtained.

The Traffic Advisory Committee meeting operates as a closed meeting and attendance to the meeting is via invitation only. At times interested stakeholders may address items referred to the Traffic Committee where their information adds value and does not greatly increase the time spent by the Committee on progressing the item. Interested stakeholders always have the opportunity to attend the Council meeting when the minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee are discussed / determined.

All formal items referred to the Traffic Advisory Committee typically have been fully investigated, consulted (if needed) and proposed actions identified.

Where the Council decides on an item contrary to the Traffic Advisory Committee recommendation, then Council must immediately advise RMS and NSW Police in writing of its decision. The RMS or NSW Police may then lodge an appeal within 14 days to the Regional Traffic Committee.

The Council must not action any item under appeal until the matter has been determined by the Regional Traffic Committee.

Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 1 June 2021

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1	Apologies / Leave of Absence	
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Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 1 June 2021

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Item:	6.1	Ref: AINT/2021/16283
Title:	Naughton Avenue - Request for parking time extension	Container: ARC16/0168-6
Author:	Belinda Ackling, Personal Assistant	
Attachments:	Nil	

1. Purpose

To consider extending the parking time in Naughton Avenue.

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That Council deny the request to remove or extend the timed parking limits in Naughton Avenue in keeping with the Parking Strategic Plan.

3. Background

Council received the below request:

Hi James,

Nice to have a chat and welcome to Armidale.

As discussed with regard to parking spots on Naughton Ave and Marsh Street outside my dealership. Most of the customer traffic coming and going from my business are customers getting their cars serviced.

- *We service and repair approximately 20-25 cars per day and customers generally drop off their cars at 8.30am and pick up in the afternoon*
- *We have very limited space on our site for customer parking, therefore we have to use the timed spots on Naughton Ave and Marsh Street.*
- *We don't want to use the free council car park further down Naughton Ave*
- *We would like the 2 hour sensors on the parking spots to be turned off, but keep the 2 hour signs erected.*
- *The attitude of the parking guy is terrible and seriously gets my staff very irritated and I don't want any conflict to arise.*
- *Happy to discuss this further*

4. Discussion

The above requests and complaints are not something requiring consideration by the Traffic Advisory Committee and is considered an operational matter.

In a report to be discussed at Council on Wednesday 26th May it will advise that the Traffic Advisory Committee is regularly requested to provide parking times designated for the frontage of individual businesses.

To bring business/community requests in line with the current Parking Strategy and the Parking Policy, the committee will no longer be required to consider business/community

Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 1 June 2021

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requests referring to timing changes within the Strategy core and will be deferred and considered in line with the annual review process within the Parking Policy.

Parking Policy

At its Ordinary Council meeting held 25 September 2019 Council resolved the following (Minute No. 198/19):

- "a) That the time limits for parking spaces within the CBD Heart be adjusted as follows:
 - i. reduce all 2 hour on-street spaces to 1 hour, and
 - ii. increase all 15 minutes spaces to 30 minutes.
- b) That the time limits for parking spaces within the CBD Core be adjusted as follows:
 - i. reduce all 2 hour on-street spaces to 1 hour,
 - ii. increase all 15 minutes spaces to 30 minutes, and
 - iii. reduce all Council 3 hour off-street spaces (Jessie, Rusden Streets and Cinders, Woodward Lane carparks) to 2 hours.
- c) That the time limits for parking spaces within the CBD Frame be adjusted as follows:
 - i. increase all 1 hour on-street parking spaces to 2 hours.
 - ii. The unrestricted off-street spaces remain unchanged including the all day parking in Tingcombe Land and Naughten Street public carparks.
- d) That the time limits of the ground floor of the Rusden Street decked carpark be changed to unrestricted parking.

5. Implications

5.1. Strategic and Policy Implications

Link to the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program

L.4 –Deliver an effective communications strategy to inform the community of Council activities.

G3.3 - Provide Central Business District (CBD) infrastructure in both Armidale and Guyra that supports a more vibrant and varied offering of shopping experiences for tourists.

P1.3 - Partner with local police and other community and government agencies to develop strategies to reduce crime, improve community safety and promote regulatory compliance.

E4.1 - Maintain safe and effective traffic facilities on the road network, through appropriate resourcing, including applying for a Special Rate Variation to maintain and renew roads and bridges to expected service levels.

5.2. Risk

- Goes against what the Parking Policy and Park Strategy is trying to achieve.
- Removing the sensors will set a precedence for others.
- Will not encourage customer turn over
- Car parking spaces can be used by anyone, not just the business.

Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 1 June 2021

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5.3. Sustainability

- The current parking times provide a turnover of customers for surrounding businesses.

5.4. Financial

Budget Area:	Regulatory						
Funding Source:	Regulatory						
Budget Ref: (PN)	Description	Approved Budget	Actual	Committed	Proposed	Total Forecast Expenditure	Remaining Budget
	Sensors	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

- Is there is existing budget to cover the resourcing required for the regulatory inspections
- There is no source of funding required for the actions required in the recommendation.
- The contracted annual cost for the sensors \$130k
- Removal of sensors will be at a cost to Council

Consideration against the recommendation include the below financial burden.

- The contracted annual cost for the sensors \$130k, so any unused sensors will need to be relocated including the additional cost of associated line marking and signage.
- Removal of sensors will be at a cost to Council in the amount of \$6,000 regardless if the amount of sensors.

6. Consultation and Communication

The parking policy and strategy have both been placed on public exhibition with no comments received by businesses concerning the need for company use.

7. Conclusion

The cost to council would be quite significant for any changes to parking sensors, while the free Council public car park located in Naughton Ave is only 100m away. The Council public car park is a realistic solution to the parking concerns of the business, the average person would take no more than 2 minutes to walk 100m which would also be beneficial for the health and wellbeing of the staff.

Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
Tuesday, 1 June 2021

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Item:	6.2	Ref: AINT/2021/16284
Title:	Concerns for the intersection of Kirkwood street (east) and Canambe Street	Container: ARC16/0168-6
Author:	Belinda Ackling, Personal Assistant	
Attachments:	1. Proposed BB Centreline Kirkwood Street	

1. Purpose

To consider installing a painted BB lines (Double Barrier lines) on the Kirkwood Street leg of the intersection as a potential solution to a safety issue.

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That Council to install painted BB lines (Double Barrier lines) on the Kirkwood Street leg of the intersection with Canambe Street to help with the visual aspect of highlighting the centre of the road.

3. Background

Council received the below concern regarding the intersection of Kirkwood street (east) and Canambe Street:

This email is in regards to the intersection of Kirkwood Street (east) and Canambe Street. My residential address is 27 Kirkwood Street. Since purchasing this property 6 months ago, I've had 5 occasions where I've almost been collected by vehicles coming into the street off canambe. My property is the third from the corner. People do not slow down for this intersection and cut the corner. I'd like for an island to be placed to slow people down and stop them cutting the corner, for not only the safety of my family and I. But also for the large amount of pedestrians that use the road for exercise as there is no foot path. This intersection is also in very close proximity of the local catholic high school. Placing islands on both sides of the intersection would greatly benefit the community in reducing the risk of possible future accidents and near misses.

4. Discussion

Council has recently completed the installation of the new Cooks Road Bridge, this is expected to increase traffic flow and allow larger vehicles to access the area. To help with vehicles cutting the corner it is proposed that Double Barrier line in installed. While a small median strip can be installed Council will monitor the use and type of traffic that will utilise the road.

5. Implications

5.1. Strategic and Policy Implications

Link to the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program

E4.1 - Maintain safe and effective traffic facilities on the road network, through appropriate resourcing, including applying for a Special Rate Variation to maintain and renew roads and bridges to expected service levels.

Armidale Regional Council
Traffic Advisory Committee
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5.2. Risk

- To reduce the risk of an accident
- To try and promote better driving habits
- In line with the Australian Standards : AS 1742.2:2009.

5.3. Sustainability

- Promoting more efficient and improved service delivery through collaboration and communication with the community

5.4. Financial

Budget Area:	Traffic Facilities Budget						
Funding Source:	Nil						
Budget Ref: (PN)	Description	Approved Budget	Actual	Committed	Proposed	Total Forecast Expenditure	Remaining Budget
	Line marking	Traffic Facilities Budget			\$60	\$60	

- This cost will include the holding line and the BB line (Double Barrier lines) and the cost will be reduced once it is part of the schedule.

6. Consultation and Communication

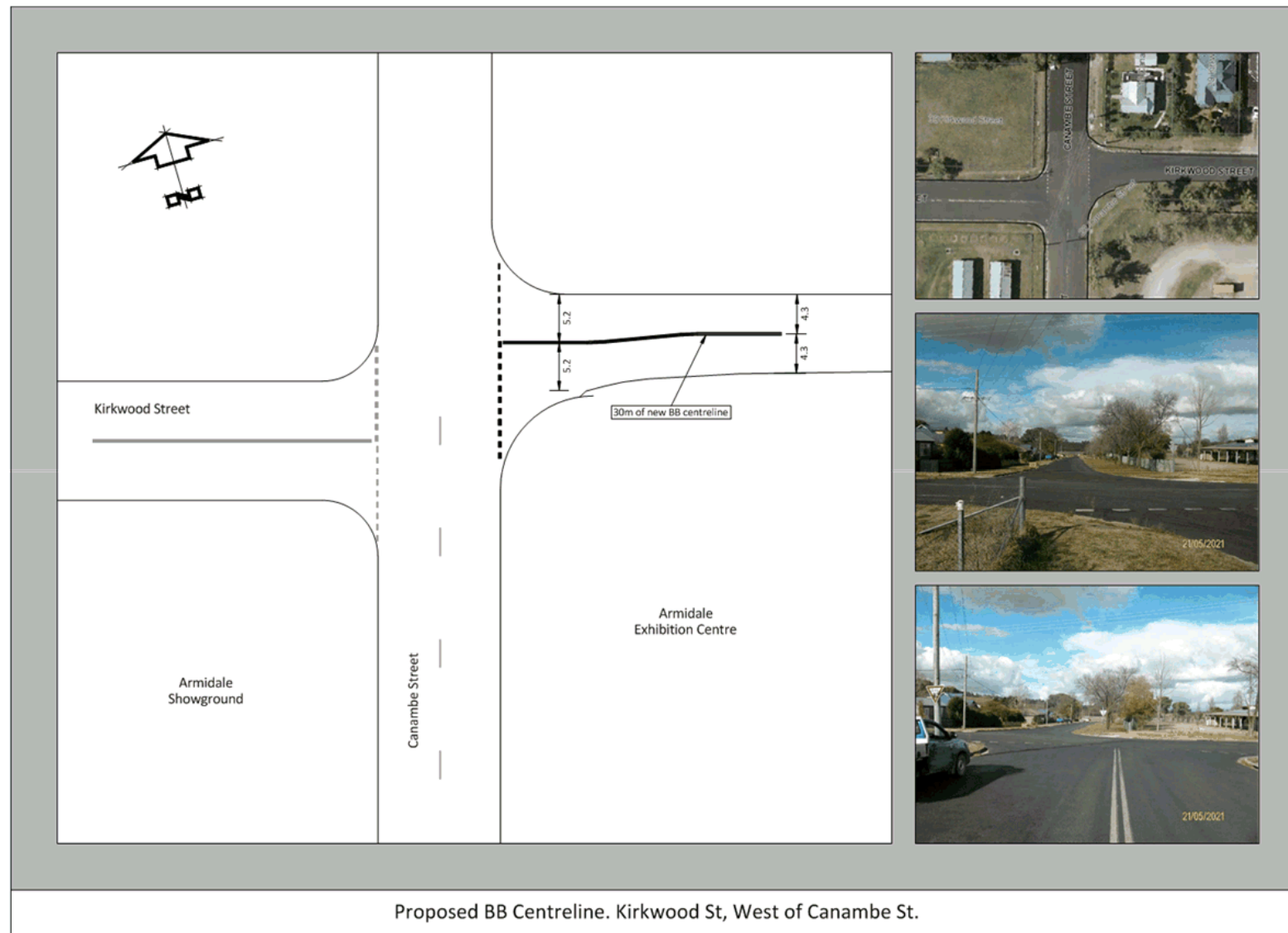
No major consultation is required this does not affect parking within the street.

7. Conclusion

The request to look at and investigate the situation came from a resident experiencing issues, with the installation of the new Cookes Road Bridge it highlighted the issue of vehicles cutting the corner could potentially worsen with increased use. Council will monitor the usage and type of vehicles using the road, a small medium island may be required in the future.

Attachment 1

Proposed BB Centreline Kirkwood Street



Armidale Regional Council
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Item:	6.3	Ref: AINT/2021/16307
Title:	Faulkner Street - Request for a Work Zone Container: ARC16/0168-6	
Author:	Belinda Ackling, Personal Assistant	
Attachments:	1. Faulkner Street Construction and Maintenance 2. Faulkner Street works request form 3. Proposed Work Zone	

1. Purpose

To consider the request for a work zone in Faulkner Street between Rusden and Cinders Lane.

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

- a) That Council endorse the request of the use two parking spaces adjacent to 122 Faulkner Street (the Old Library) as a work zone for the refurbishment of the Hub for the June to the end of September 2021.
- b) That the disability parking space be temporarily relocated closer to the taxi rank.

3. Background

Fit out works will be conducted in the building formally known as the Armidale War Memorial Library. Access points to the building are located in the Cinders Lane Park and on Faulkner Street. It is the intention to utilise the rear access from Cinders Lane as the main entry to the building for trades and Faulkner Street as an intermittent entry for the delivery of bulky materials. Traffic Committee will only be considering the two affected parking spaces on Faulkner Street one of which is a disability parking space.

4. Discussion

The attached includes the submission items to the Traffic Committee for the information of council.

The attachment details the following requests;

- Request to create site compound at the rear entrance in the Cinders Lane Carpark
- Request to create a safety barrier along the Faulkner street footpath for the purpose of restricting access to the main entrance and replacement of the fascia and entrance glazing.
- Request to remove bicycle racks location at the entrance to provide uninhibited access to the footpath

Not documented in the attached but discussed and agreed at site meeting;

- The removal of the council owned air monitoring device located on the 2nd floor
- The removal of the park bench located at the front entrance by council

As noted below, the accessible parking bay that will form part of the site compound does not need to be relocated for the duration of the works.

Please also take into consideration that UNE are requesting these works in advance of the principal contractor being engaged to avoid any delays with establishment. The Principal Contractor will assume the responsibilities associated with this application. It is noted that these provisions will be recommended to the Principal Contractor, however, there may be minor

Armidale Regional Council
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Tuesday, 1 June 2021

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alterations to the compound and safety hoarding resulted by site investigations of the Principal Contractor. Any approvals to amendments of the attached will be sought in writing.

5. Implications

5.1. Strategic and Policy Implications

Link to the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program

E4.1 - Roads and Bridges - Maintain safe and effective traffic facilities on the road network, through appropriate resourcing, including applying for a Special Rate Variation to maintain and renew roads and bridges to expected service levels.

5.2. Risk

- Installing the Work zone is to maintain a safe environment for deliveries
- Relocating the disability parking during this time by will allow those in need to maintain a safe parking environment.

5.3. Sustainability

- Nothing to consider

5.4. Financial

Budget Area:	Nil						
Funding Source:	Nil						
Budget Ref: (PN)	Description	Approved Budget	Actual	Committed	Proposed	Total Forecast Expenditure	Remaining Budget
		0	0	0	0	0	0

Installation will be at the cost of the construction company

6. Consultation and Communication

The construction company will be advised that must advise business in the affected block. Council will also advertise the work zone via it social media outlets.

7. Conclusion

The request for the two work zone spaces is quite reasonably and the disability can temporarily be relocated, all other requests will be considered under work on Council lands and is an operational decision.

Attachment 1

Faulkner Street Construction and Maintenance

ARC Construction and Maintenance Work Application

122 Faulkner Street Armidale, Old Library Building Refurbishment

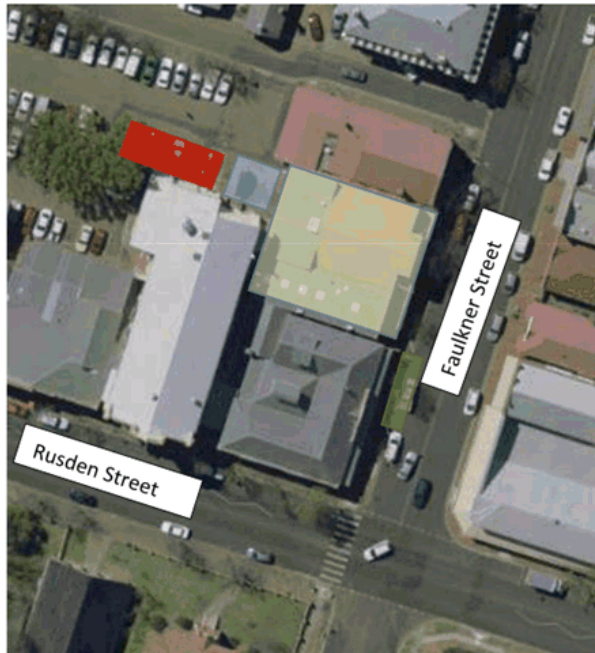
Site Location:

122 Faulkner Street, Armidale NSW 2350

Pt Lot 13 Sec 5 DP 758032, Lot 17 DP 837491, Pt Lot 12 Sec 5 DP 758032

Proposed Works Description:

Fit out works will be conducted in the building formally known as the Armidale War Memorial Library as highlighted **Yellow** in the above (**IMAGE ONE**). Access points to the building are located in the Cinders Lane Park and on Faulkner Street. It is the intention to utilise the rear access from Cinders Lane as the main entry to the building for trades and Faulkner Street as an intermittent entry for the delivery of bulky materials

IMAGE ONE – Site Location

Attachment 1

Faulkner Street Construction and Maintenance

ARC Construction and Maintenance Work Application

122 Faulkner Street Armidale, Old Library Building Refurbishment

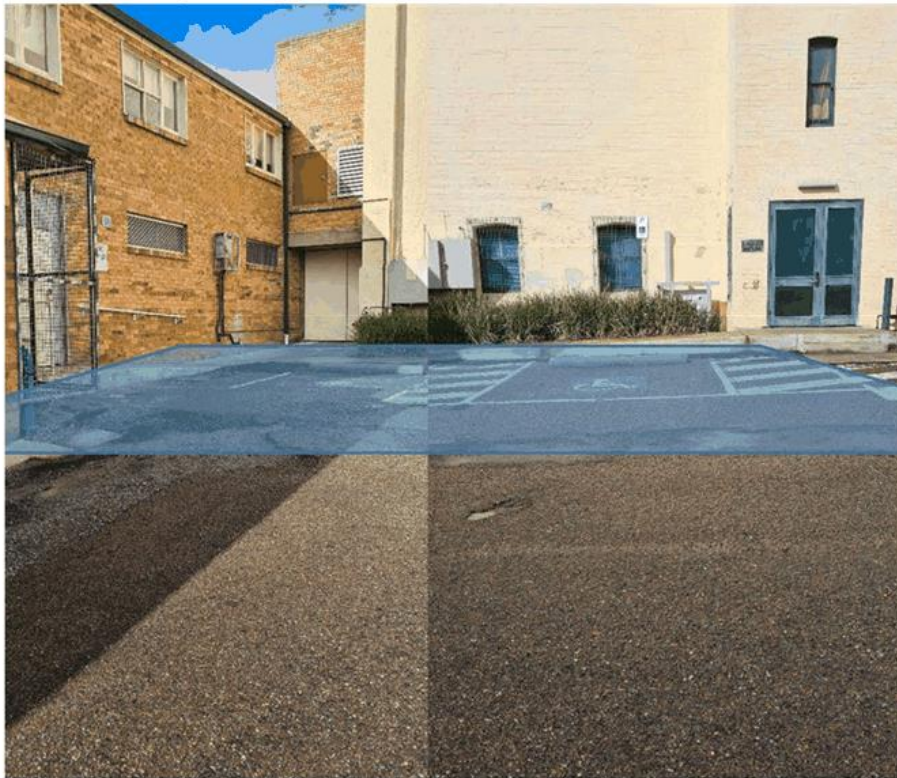
REQUEST – Temporary closure of parking bays to erect Site Compound

Request the temporarily closure of 2 car spaces including the disabled parking to create Site Compound for Contractor as indicated in **Blue** in **IMAGE ONE** and demonstrated in **IMAGE TWO**.

Fire Egress from Town hall and Access Ramp to Business Hub will be maintained.

The compound will be secured with temporary fencing for the duration of the works with an expected completion date early September 2021.

NB Requesting Permission to close car spaces. Contractor to construct Site Compound once established.

IMAGE TWO – Proposed Temporary Compound

Attachment 1

Faulkner Street Construction and Maintenance

ARC Construction and Maintenance Work Application

122 Faulkner Street Armidale, Old Library Building Refurbishment

REQUEST – Provision of Intermittent Delivery Zone on Faulkner Street

Request an intermittent delivery zone on Faulkner Street as indicated in **Green** in **IMAGE ONE** and demonstration in **IMAGE THREE**.

The delivery zone will only require restriction on days bulky deliveries that otherwise cannot be delivered through the rear access are being received.

The method intended to restrict the area will be to utilise Traffic Cones placed in the morning and removed once delivery has been received allowing the Parking Spaces to be freely used by the public when not required.

NB – Requesting Permission to access parking bay and no standing zone intermittently. Scheduling will be managed by contractor.

IMAGE THREE – Proposed Intermittent Delivery Zone

Attachment 1

Faulkner Street Construction and Maintenance

ARC Construction and Maintenance Work Application

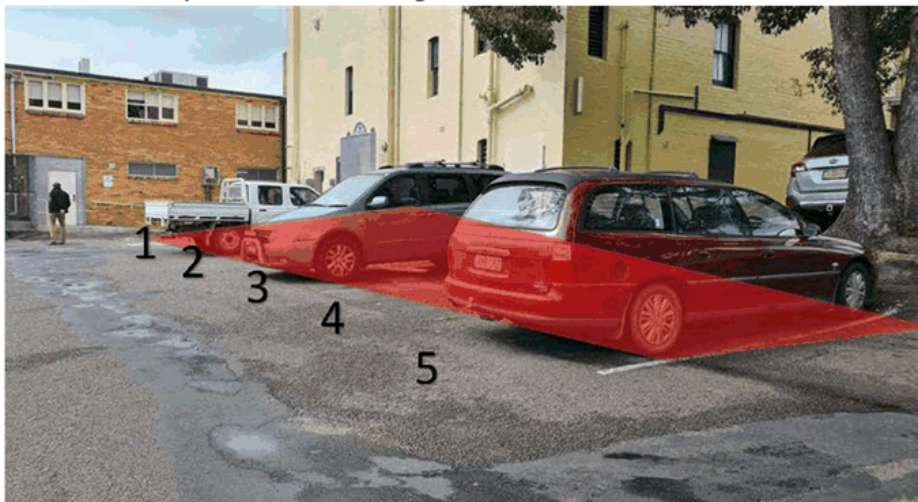
122 Faulkner Street Armidale, Old Library Building Refurbishment

REQUEST – Provision of Contractor Parking and/or Parking Permits

Request a permit for the use of 5 Car Spaces adjacent to the requested Site Compound for use by contractors for the duration of the works as highlighted in **Red** in **IMAGE ONE** and demonstrated in **IMAGE FOUR**. Car Spaces, if permitted, will be sign posted "No Parking between 7am and 5pm. Contractor Use Only".

NB In the provision that sign posting is not successful and the spaces are taken up by public vehicles, it is requested that Contractors be provided with parking permits to use in the Cinders Lane Car Park valid until September 2021.

NB – Requesting permission to control access to 5 Parking Bays and/or sufficient permits for contractors to utilise for parking within the Cinders Lane Car Park for the duration of the works. Parking Bays/Permits will be managed by Head Contractor

IMAGE FOUR – Proposed Contractor Parking

Attachment 1

Faulkner Street Construction and Maintenance

ARC Construction and Maintenance Work Application

122 Faulkner Street Armidale, Old Library Building Refurbishment

REQUEST – Removal of old Bicycle Rack

Request removal of the aged bicycle racks that previously serviced the Armidale War Memorial Library as demonstrated in **IMAGE FIVE**. The purpose is to allow unrestricted use of the footpath for pedestrians during repair of the front facia and glazing replacement which will require hoarding. It will also assist ease of access for delivery to the Faulkner Street Entrance

NB – Requesting ARC complete the removal of the bicycle rack

IMAGE FIVE – Removal of bicycle rack

ARC Construction and Maintenance Work Application

122 Faulkner Street Armidale, Old Library Building Refurbishment

REQUEST – Permission to erect temporary fencing on footpath

Request permission to erect site safety fencing as appropriate on the Faulkner Street Footpath as indicated in **IMAGE SIX**.

Hoarding is required to provide an exclusion zone for the external works which will be conducted on the building. These works include repair/replacement of the fascia and glazing to the eastern side (front) of the building.

Pedestrian access will be maintained. Potential to reassess during actual replacement works.

Temporary fencing will be the typical 1.8m high panels secured with clamps and feet.

NB – Requesting permission to erect temporary fencing on footpath to ensure exclusion zone for works

IMAGE SIX – Safety Fencing to Building Front



ABN 39 642 954 203
Armidale Regional Council
135 Rusden Street (PO Box 75A)
ARMIDALE NSW 2350
Phone: (02) 6770 3600
Fax: (02) 6772 9275
Email: council@armidale.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT WORK ON LAND TO WHICH COUNCIL IS THE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE WORK

2020/2021

PRIVACY PROTECTION NOTICE

This information is being collected, stored and used for Armidale Dumaresq Council to make further contact with you.

Office Use

Approval	Action:	Officer:	Date:
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2020/2021

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT WORK ON LAND TO WHICH COUNCIL IS THE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Roads Act 1993, part 9 section 138

Applies to all Council roads, road reserves, footpaths, parks and reserves
(Check for permit exemptions overleaf)

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CONTRACTOR

Name of Contractor: <u>Adam Webb (EBE Project Manager)</u> Business Name: <u>University of New England</u> Postal address: _____ Phone: <u>6773 4397</u> Mobile: <u>0438 728 156</u> Email: <u>awebb30@une.edu.au</u>	I hereby apply for approval to carry out the work described SIGNATURE OF CONTRACTOR <u>Adam Webb</u> <u>13.05.21</u>
--	--

WORK SITE DETAILS

No. <u>122</u> Street/Road: <u>Faulkner</u> Lot No. _____ Locality: _____ Planned commencement date: <u>24/06/2021</u> Planned completion date: <u>06/09/2021</u> Provide a map (overleaf) that clearly identifies the site and the extent of proposed works	approval has been given for the works to be undertaken SIGNATURE OF PROPERTY OWNER _____
---	---

SPECIFY REQUIREMENTSHalf Road Closure ☐Full road closure..... ☐

(Note: Following approval of this application for a half or full road closure, the applicant shall contact the Police, Ambulance, Fire Brigade, Local Bus & Taxi Companies, local residents and businesses and Council's Mobility Officer (see below), advising the details of the closure. The applicant will be required to request council to advertise the closure in the local media, 7 days in advance of the closure. Advertisement of the closure will be at the cost of the applicant.)

Parking lane closure or pedestrian restrictions only..... As detailed in attachment ☒

(Note: Following approval of this application for parking lane and or footpath closure, Council will notify internally Council's Mobility Officer of the planned works. If the construction schedule or site details change, the applicant shall contact Council's Mobility Officer Hayley Ward Ph 6770 3832 or hward@armidale.nsw.gov.au), 7 days notice is required prior to the change.

A Traffic Control Plan (TCP) is required for all work covered by this application.

Use Council supplied TCP for minor work only ☒TCP supplied by Contractor (must be prepared by an RTA licensed person or Council by fee) ☐

RTA certificate number:

Request Council to draw a TCP for the works..... ☐**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**Public Liability Insurance to \$20 million (attach current copy) ☐Risk Management Plan (requirement under OH&S Act 2000) ☐

Successful Contractor to provide Liability Insurance and Risk Management Plan upon Site Establishment

SITE PLAN

SITE SKETCH/LOCALITY PLAN (locate north, name all affected and adjacent streets and clearly indicate proposed works in relation to site boundaries and buildings)

Works description detailed in attachment

IMAGE ONE – Site Location



PROMPT PROCESSING OF YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE ASSISTED IF YOU ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE AND ACCURATE DETAILS, AS SPECIFIED ABOVE, ARE SUPPLIED.

14 WORKING DAYS ARE REQUIRED TO PROCESS APPLICATIONS
FEES MAY APPLY ON RECEIPT OF APPLICATION APPROVAL

Permit Exemptions

A permit is not required for:

- Contractors undertaking work for or on behalf of Council, not as part of a Development Application.
- Footpath levelling to remove pedestrian trip hazards where machinery is not required
- Manual patching of bitumen or gravel vehicle crossings where pedestrian access is not restricted
- Emergency work

Fee Schedule

Permit to conduct works\$ 166.00 (incl. GST)
Full temporary road closure (incl. hire of barricades)..... PI # required.....\$ As per Operational Plan 2020/2021
Charge for erection and removal of barricades/signage PI # required\$ As per Operational Plan 2020/2021
Provision of Traffic Control Plan (TCP).....\$ 121.00 per hour/min 2 hrs (incl. GST)
Advertisement of Road Closure.....\$200.00 (incl. GST)

Traffic control signs & barricades may be hired from Council Depot Co-ordinator: 6770 3914

Office Use

Total fee payable: \$	Receipt number:	Officer:
-----------------------	-----------------	----------

HAZARD ANALYSIS

How to use this risk assessment form

1. List each basic step for the job in the table provided and all the hazards associated with each step in the next column. Use the **Hazard identification** table to help you identify the hazards for each step (use the numbers). Hazards need not be restricted to those listed.
2. Use the **Assessment of risks** table to identify and record the initial risk rating of each step. High risk = 1, low risk = 6.
3. Use the **Risk control measures** table to help you list control measures required to eliminate, reduce or change the hazard for a safer workplace.
4. Revise the risk ranking using the **Assessment of Risks Table**.

EXAMPLE

Basic task steps	Hazards Identified	Initial risk rating Refer to risk table	Control measures Refer to control measures table	Revised risk ranking
Excavate trench with backhoe on footpath	4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 24, 25	2	Training certificates/licenses Standard Operating Procedures, Toolbox talk Barricades, Warning signs PPE (Personal protective equipment) First aid equipment	4
List other steps			Check location of services	

Hazard Identification

1 Manual handling	8 Unauthorised entry	15 Changed conditions	22 Falling objects
2 Electrical	9 Pressure	16 Uneven ground	23 Temperature
3 Hazardous substances	10 Confined space	17 Slippery surface	24 Noise
4 Working near traffic	11 Excavation	18 Auto start	25 Dust
5 Working with plant/equipment	12 contact with utility services	19 Heights above 1.5m	26 Biological (plant irritants, insect other animal bites)
6 Contaminated water/earth	13 Radiation	20 Scaffolding	27 Weather conditions
7 Pedestrian traffic	14 Movements	21 Guarding	

Assessment of Risks

Likelihood Probability of occurrence	Consequences			
	First aid needed	Medical attention/days off work	Long term illness/serious injury	Kill or permanent disability or ill health
Very Likely	3	2	1	1
Likely	4	3	2	1
Unlikely	5	4	3	2
Very unlikely	6	5	4	3

Risk Control Measures

Procedural	Practical	Personal
Risk assessment	Traffic control plan	PPE (Personal protective equipment)
Standard Operating Procedures	Barricades	Protective clothing
Training certificates/licenses	Warning signs	First aid equipment
Instruction/induction	Mobile Phone/2 way radio	Wet weather gear
Check location of services (Dial before you dig)	Work in teams	Solar protection
Impose restrictions on certain activities	Time of day	Amenities (drinking water toilet/washing facilities)
Tool box talks	Use of an observer or spotter	
Inspect site for changed conditions	Reduce exposure time	
Work breaks and routine changes	Enforce limited site access	
Material safety data sheets		

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

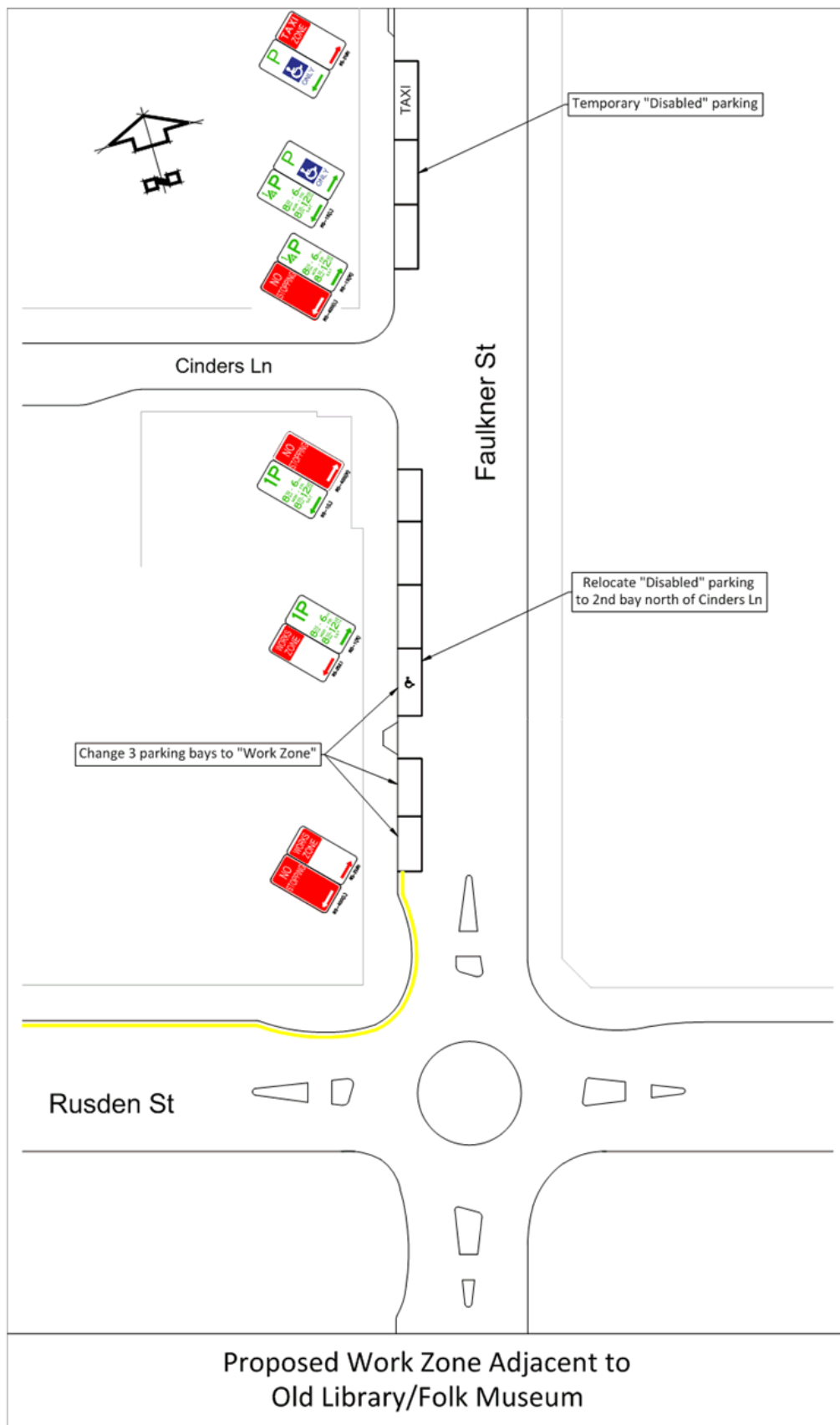
Job:
Location:
Contractor:

Supervisor's Name:	Will the work be supervised by this person at all times?
I agree to implement these control measures and any additional measures to maintain a safe work site for workers, pedestrians and vehicular traffic.	
Supervisors signature:	

Basic task steps	Hazards Identified refer to hazard table	Initial risk rating refer to risk table	Control measures refer to control measures table	Revised risk ranking

Attachment 3

Proposed Work Zone





BUSINESS PAPER

SPORTS COUNCIL

To be held on

Wednesday, 9 June 2021

5:30pm

at

Armidale Regional Council Chambers

Members

Councillor J Galletly (Chair)

Mr S McMillan

Mr M Porter

Mr J Campbell

Mr M Fittler

Mr G Parsons

Mr D Copeland

Ms S Sincock

Mr J Cohen

Ms A Biggs (Armidale Regional Council)

Quorum: 5 Members to be Present

AGENDA

Armidale Regional Council
Sports Council
Wednesday, 9 June 2021

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Armidale Regional Council
Sports Council
Wednesday, 9 June 2021

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Item: 5.1 **Ref:** AINT/2021/17369
Title: Sports Council Financial Report to 31 May 2021 **Container:** ARC16/0330
Responsible Officer: Sport & Recreation Development Officer
Author: Brad Munns, Financial Accountant
Attachments: Nil

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Sports Council Financial Report for the period to 31 May 2021.

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That the committee note the financial report for the period to 31 May 2021.

3. Background

The Sports Council has an operational project budget for operating revenues and expenses. This budget is reported against at each meeting in this financial report.

No capital projects relating to Sports Council were included in Council's capital budget for FY2021.

4. Discussion

The table below shows:

Sports Council Financial report for:

1. FY2019/20 Budget and Actual Results; and
2. FY2020/21 Budget and Actual Results to 31 May 2021.

<u>Operating Income</u>	<u>Budget FY19/20</u>	<u>Actual FY19/20</u>	<u>Budget FY20/21</u>	<u>Actual to 31May2021</u>	<u>FY21/22 Budget</u>
Project No. 240250	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Association Levies	41,000	17,588	42,000	26,816	42,000
Add June 2019 Invoices that related to FY2020	-	21,000	-	-	-
Subtotal	41,000	38,588	42,000	26,816	42,000
Other Contributions – Get Active Program	-	6,000	-	-	-
Total Operating Income	41,000	44,588	42,000	26,816	42,000
 <u>Operating Expenditure</u>					
Donations – Small Grants paid	10,000	6,750	10,000	1,250	-
Association levies into separate bank account					42,000
Total Operating Expenditure	10,000	6,750	10,000	1,250	42,000

Armidale Regional Council
Sports Council
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<u>Operating Income</u>	<u>Budget FY19/20</u>	<u>Actual FY19/20</u>	<u>Budget FY20/21</u>	<u>Actual to 31May2021</u>	<u>FY21/22 Budget</u>
Project No. 240250	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Capital Income (Allocation from Council)	75,000	75,000	-	-	-
Allocation of June 2019 Player levies from Operating Income to Indoor Cricket Project	-	21,000	-	-	-
Revised Capital Income	75,000	96,000	-	-	- Pending Grant Funding opportunities-
Capital Expenditure					
Indoor Cricket Upgrade	75,000	78,332	-	-	-
Add extra costs/ overruns (Q3 budget update)	20,000	20,000	-	-	-
Total Capital Expenditure	95,000	98,332	-	-	- Pending Grant Funding opportunities
Capital Surplus/(Deficit)	(20,000)	(2,332)	-	-	-

Operating Income

- As a result of Covid, Sports registrations are noted as being approximately 40% down compared to the same point last financial year. This has impacted and will continue to impact on the Sports Council's ability to achieve its \$42,000 budgeted Association Levies for the full year.
- Support by Newcastle Permanent Building Society ceased for The Get Active Program in FY2020.
- As a note for the close out of last financial year (FY2020), invoices of \$21,000 raised in June 2019 that related to FY2020 were reallocated into FY2020's income. The \$21,000 income was applied towards the additional \$20,000 of extra costs associated with the Indoor Cricket Capital Project.
- The FY21/22 Budget is currently on public exhibition until 24 June 2021. With the relaxation of Covid restrictions, the FY21/22 operating budget for Sports Council has been set at a consistent income of \$42,000.

Operating Expenditure

- \$6,750 was paid out in Small Grants in FY2020, compared with \$1,250 for this financial year to 31 May 2021. The significant reduction is due to Covid restrictions on sports events. Council understands the remaining balance of \$8,750 for FY20/21 small grants is to be applied as Council's contribution towards a defibrillator grant application.
- The FY21/22 Budget is currently on public exhibition until 24 June 2021. The allocation of budgeted Association levies (\$42,000) into a separate bank account to be held in reserve for future Sports Council capital projects is noted in the budget. The small grants program has not been continued in the FY21/22 budget. The quarantined Association levies of \$40,000 (per Council resolution 29 July 2021) is being held in reserve and will be

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transferred to Council's Trust Fund bank account to be used for future Sports Council capital projects.

Capital Expenditure

- For FY2021, the Sports Council has its list of priority capital projects. To date, no capital projects have been presented to Council's for approval due to funding and budget restrictions.
- Capital projects for FY2021/22 are subject to grant funding opportunities.

5. Implications

5.1. Strategic and Policy Implications

There are no strategic or policy implications from this report.

5.2. Risk

Overall financial management risk is considered to be low.

Identified risks include budgeted sports levies revenues not being achieved for the full year. This is as a result of Covid19 restrictions on sports events.

Small grant donations are also below budget due to Covid19 restrictions.

No capital projects have been approved or funded for FY2021.

5.3. Sustainability

While not directly related to this report, overall Sustainability Implications include:

- Promoting more efficient and improved service delivery through collaboration and innovation
- Demonstrating potential efficiencies to be gained through service delivery

5.4. Financial

Budget Area:	Nil						
Funding Source:	Nil						
Budget Ref: (PN)	Description	Approved Budget	Actual	Committed	Proposed	Total Forecast Expenditure	Remaining Budget
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

6. Consultation and Communication

Consultation and Communication occurs between Council and the Sports Council during the year as required.

7. Conclusion

This report is the Sports Council financial report for the period to 31 May 2021.

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Item:	5.2	Ref: AINT/2021/18523
Title:	Sports Council Priority List	Container: ARC16/0330
Responsible Officer	Coordinator Public and Town Spaces	
Author:	Amy Biggs, Sport & Recreation Development Officer	
Attachments:	1. Priority List without categories - Sports Council - JUNE 2021 2. Priority List - Sports Council - JUNE 2021	

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report is to have the Sports Council committee review the Sports Council Priority Lists (both with project cost categories and without), to make amendments to the lists as necessary and nominate projects the committee recommend to receive Sports Council funding.

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That the committee:

- a. Review the Sports Council Priority Lists with and without project cost categories
- b. Make amendments to both lists as necessary
- c. Nominate projects the committee recommend to receive Sports Council funding

3. Background

The Sports Council Priority List has been developed and implemented by the Sports Council successfully for a long period of time. The list organises community sporting infrastructure projects in order of priority as deemed by the Sports Council and provides details of funding needed for the project and funding requested from the Sports Council Development Fund. The Development Fund has previously been the revenue collected from Sports Development Player Levies and intermittent funding provided by Council.

4. Discussion

The Sports Council are required to review the priority list during each meeting to ensure the status of projects are still current and that any Development Fund applications that are received between meetings can be assessed for inclusion on the Priority List and prioritised accordingly.

It also is important that projects are assessed for their suitability for grant funding opportunities as they arise, and that the Sports Council determine who will be responsible for submitting the grant funding applications and managing the projects.

5. Implications

5.1. Strategic and Policy Implications

Reviewing and implementing the Sports Council Priority List links into the ARC Delivery Program 2018-2021 by supporting the characteristics of a strong council including robust community relationships, strong performance and outstanding service provision. The Priority list provides direct community input into the development and implementation of the Community Strategic Plan E3.3 through its contribution to ensuring that recreation facilities meet the on-going needs of the community.

5.2. Risk

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There are currently no risks identified for the Sports Council reviewing and amending the Priority List as recommended.

5.3. Sustainability

The Sports Council Priority List model encourages sustainability by promoting more efficient and improved service delivery through collaboration between the sporting community and Council. The Sports Council acts as a direct connection between Council and the broader sporting community and enables Council to be aware of the needs and desires of the Sporting Community in a streamlined and organised fashion. This removes the need for Council to determine the sporting communities priorities based on council staffs assesment alone, and ensures that sporting infrastructure is prioritised and funded in line with community needs.

5.4. Financial

Budget Area:	Nil						
Funding Source:	Nil						
Budget Ref: (PN)	Description	Approved Budget	Actual	Committed	Proposed	Total Forecast Expenditure	Remaining Budget
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

The budgets for projects on the Sports Council Priority List are often made up of multiple funding sources including grant funding, sporting body contributions and requests for funding from the Sports Development Fund. The financial report included within the agenda will stipulate the funds available for the Sports Council to nominate projects to receive funding.

6. Consultation and Communication

The Sports Council Priority List is reviewed internally by Public and Town Spaces staff to ensure there is cohesion between the projects listed on the Priority List and projects within the Public and Town Spaces Forward Works Program and Asset Management Plans. This ensures that the priorities between the Sports Council and the Public and Town Spaces portfolio are aligned and that both council and the sporting community are working towards the same goals.

7. Conclusion

The Sports Council Priority List requires regular review by the Sports Council to ensure that the projects within the list continue to reflect the needs of the sporting community and that funding opportunities are identified for projects where appropriate.

Attachment 2

Priority List - Sports Council - JUNE 2021

Sports Council Priority List - No categories - June 2021

Priority	Location	Project	Land owner	Estimated Total Cost	SC Funds Requested	SC Funds Allocated	Sporting Body Contribution	External funding required	Proposed Year	Comments	Responsible
#1	Armidale Sportsground	New indoor cricket venue - stage 4	Crown	\$95,000	\$20,000		\$10,000	Yes	2021/22	SDP application to be received - MP	Cricket
#2	Moran Oval	Female change rooms/toilets & canteen/bar	Crown	\$264,000	\$30,000		In kind PM - 10% of project cost = \$26,355	Yes	2021/22	SDP application received 28/04/2021 - MF. Awaiting extinguishment of Native Title prior to being able to receive land owners consent from Crown.	Rugby (Blues)
#3	Armidale Sportsground	Carpark Development - Stage 1 & 2 (complete)	Crown	\$300,000	\$20,000		\$0	Possibly not	2021/22	SDP application received 05/02/2018 - MP. Listed for \$7.12 (development) project funding.	Cricket/Council
#4	Harris Park	Increase lighting to 200 lux	Council	\$150,000	?		?	Yes	2021/22	No SDP application received. Grant application submitted by ARC for \$180,000 in RSIF - outcome April 2021	Football/Athletics/ Cricket/Council
#5	Harris Park	Clubhouse renovation	Council	\$1,000,000	?		?	Yes	2021/22	No SDP application received. Possible grant application in RSIF round 2, late 2021.	Football/Athletics/ Cricket/Council
#6	Lynches Road netball courts	Court lighting	Crown	\$330,000	?		?	Yes	2022/23	No SDP application received. Grant application submitted by ARC for \$350,000 in RSIF - outcome April 2021	ARC/Netball
#7	Multiple fields	Commissioning existing bores	Council/crown	\$1.5 million	?		?	Yes	2022/23	No SDP application received. Grant application submitted by ARC for \$3.4 million in the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund on 25 January 2021. Outcome unknown.	Council
#8	Jack Vallance Oval	Field lighting and surface renovation	Council	\$400,000?	?		?	Yes	2021/22	No SDP application received. ARC seeking quotes.	Council
#9	Newling Oval	Field lighting	Crown	\$400,000?	?		?	Yes	2021/22	No SDP application received. ARC seeking quotes.	Council
#10	TBA	Premier Standard Field	Unknown	\$2 million				Yes		Further investigation required	Football
#11	TBA	Synthetic Athletics Track	Unknown	\$2 million				Yes		Further investigation required	Athletics
#1	Armidale Sportsground	Extend ADCA Clubhouse	Crown	\$25,000	\$10,000		\$15,000	No	2021/22	SDP application received 06/03/2021 - MP	Cricket
#2	Armidale Sportsground	Replace electronic scoreboard	Crown	\$27,000	\$15,000		\$12,000	No	2021/22	SDP application received 01/05/2021 - MP.	Cricket
#3	Moran Oval	Renovate grass cricket pitch	Crown	\$25,000	\$16,490		\$5,000	Yes	2021/22	SDP application received 24/08/2018 - MP. Updated quotes required.	Cricket
#1	Rologas	Cricket Storage Shed	Crown	\$12,000	\$10,000		\$2,000.00	No	2021/22	SDP application received 19/11/2019. Needs quotes and costings.	Cricket
#2	Guvera Tennis Club	Improve security - doors and windows	Council	?	?		?		2021/22	SDP application to be received.	Guvera Tennis/Council

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Item:	5.3	Ref: AINT/2021/18539
Title:	Stronger Country Communities Fund - round 4	Container:
	ARC16/0330	
Responsible Officer	Coordinator Public and Town Spaces	
Author:	Amy Biggs, Sport & Recreation Development Officer	
Attachments:	Nil	

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report is to inform the Sports Council committee of the projects that ARC plan to request approval to submit applications for in the Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 4 grant opportunity that is currently available and to confirm any other projects that Sports Council community clubs/organisations plan to apply for.

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That the committee;

- a. Note the projects that ARC will request approval to submit applications for in the Stronger Country Communities Fund round 4 grant opportunity, being the Lynches road netball courts lighting installation (approximately \$380,000) and the Jack Vallance Oval lighting installation and field renovation (approximately \$400,000).
- b. Discuss and confirm other projects on the priority list that clubs/organisations plan to submit applications for.

3. Background

The Stronger Country Communities Fund – round 4 grant opportunity opened on 1 May 2021, with information regarding the grant becoming available that same day. The grant closes on 25 June 2021 and provides grants between \$50,000 and \$1,000,000. For grants over \$1,000,000, a financial co-contribution of 25% is required.

The grant opportunity is open to both Council and local sporting clubs to apply, and it is important that the Sports Council Priority List is consulted to determine any projects that may be suitable to submit applications for funding.

4. Discussion

On Thursday 3 June 2021, ARC staff held a community information session regarding the Stronger Country Communities Fund round 4 grant opportunity, inviting any interested community groups to attend. During the session, ARC representatives confirmed that ARC intend to submit applications for approximately half of the available \$1.68 million LGA allocation, i.e. ARC would submit applications for approximately \$800,000

The projects nominated by ARC to apply for are as follows:

- Lynches road netball courts lighting installation – Approximately \$380,000
- Jack Vallance Oval lighting installation and field renovation – Approximately \$400,000

A request for approval to apply for grant funding for the projects will go to the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held on 23 June 2021. ARC staff will prepare applications for the aforementioned projects ready to be submitted by the grant closing date of 25 June 2021.

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It is important to note that for any grant applications that intend to upgrade council infrastructure, approval from Council (during an Ordinary Council Meeting) to do so is compulsory, whether it be Council or clubs that plan to submit the application.

The new Financial Controller Protocol states the following:

All Council Reports referring to grants MUST include:

- What costs are eligible under the grant proposal.
- What costs are ineligible under the grant proposal.
- Regardless of whether or not a co-contribution is required the report must include costs to be incurred by Council including for design, consultation, obtaining approvals, inviting tenders and project management.
- A project timeline from anticipated grant approval date, through the stages leading to commencement, anticipated completion and occupation (if applicable).
- The impact on Council's regular works program and existing grant commitments.
- A business plan (if applicable).
- "Whole of life costs" to ensure Council fully understands depreciation and operating costs.

Without the above information being provided, Council will not be able to provide approval for grant applications to be submitted.

5. Implications

5.1. Strategic and Policy Implications

The Sports Council prioritises projects with reference to the Public and Town Spaces Forward Works Program to deliver sporting infrastructure projects (supported by grant funding). The forward works program informs the ARC Delivery Program 2018-2021 by supporting the characteristics of a strong council including robust community relationships, strong performance and outstanding service provision.

The Sports Council informs Council of priority projects that assist in the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan E3.3 through its contribution to ensuring that recreation facilities meet the on-going needs of the community.

5.2. Risk

As this report is only informing the committee of the grant that is currently available, there are no identified risks associated at this stage.

5.3. Sustainability

Sustainability Implications include:

- Promoting more efficient and improved service delivery through collaboration and innovation

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- Demonstrating potential efficiencies to be gained through service delivery

5.4. Financial

Budget Area:	Nil						
Funding Source:	Nil						
Budget Ref: (PN)	Description	Approved Budget	Actual	Committed	Proposed	Total Forecast Expenditure	Remaining Budget
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

All projects that are deemed suitable to submit funding applications for are to be approved by Council prior to any applications being submitted.

6. Consultation and Communication

As sporting grant opportunities arise, they are emailed to Sports Council members and Sporting Contacts. Any sporting clubs who wish to submit grant applications for the construction or development of infrastructure on council owned or managed land are advised that they require approval from Council prior to doing so.

As stated earlier in the report, a community information session was held on 3 June 2021 to inform the community of Councils intentions to submit applications for approximately half of the available funding, and to inform the community of any requirements for projects involving Council owned or managed land.

7. Conclusion

The Sports Council committee are encouraged to utilise grant opportunities that will help their desired infrastructure projects come to fruition, however it is important to note that Council approval (and other related approvals such as Development Approval or Land Owners Consent) are required to be obtained prior to an application being submitted. The Sports Council should review their Sports Council Priority List and determine any projects that may be suitable to submit funding applications for, and work towards obtaining the necessary approvals.



SPORTS COUNCIL

Held on

Wednesday, 9 June 2021
5:30pm

at

Armidale Regional Council Chambers

PRESENT:

Councillor J Galletly (Chair), Mr S McMillan, Mr M Porter, Mr M Fittler, Mr G Parsons,
Ms S Sincock, Mr J Cohen, and
Armidale Regional Council staff Ms A Biggs, Mr B Munns and Ms K Stidworthy

Quorum: 4 Members to be Present

MINUTES

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1. APOLOGIES

Mr J. Campbell was an apology for the meeting.

2. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES -

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPORTS COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 2 JUNE 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

That the minutes be taken as read and be accepted as a true record of the Meeting.

M: G. Parsons. S: M. Porter

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

4. BUSINESS ARISING

Mr D. Copeland tendered his resignation on the day of the meeting due to work commitments and did not attend the meeting. A. Biggs thanked Mr D. Copeland for his time and commitment to the Sports Council and wished him all the best for the future.

5. ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

5.1 Sports Council Financial Report to 31 May 2021 Ref: AINT/2021/17369 (ARC16/0330)

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That the committee note the financial report for the period to 31 May 2021.

NOTED.

B. Munns informed the committee of the legislative requirements regarding the transfer of Sports Council funds into the nominated Sports Council bank account. B. Munns advised that the Sports Council Newcastle Permanent account would require the Sports Council committee to be an incorporated body, which they are not. B. Munns advised that Council have a trust account that will safely hold the funds that will allow roll over of the funds across financial years, and as such, the Newcastle Permanent Sports Council bank account should have the existing funds transferred to the Council trust fund and then be closed.

K. Stidworthy and B. Munns advised that the Sports Council are an advisory committee, not a section 355 committee, and that their recommendation of funding from the Sports Development Levy Fund towards sporting projects needs to be documented in Sports Council committee meeting minutes to then be put to a Council meeting for adoption/approval.

K. Stidworthy then advised that once approved by Council, the payment of funds towards projects will either need to be managed by Council internally following Council procurement policies, or if paid to the sporting organisation whom submitted the application for funding, a

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public exhibition period of 28 days will be required for payment of funds in line with section 356.

The committee understood and agreed to the above information provided by B. Munns and K. Stidworthy of the Council finance department.

5.2 Sports Council Priority List

Ref: AINT/2021/18523 (ARC16/0330)

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That the committee:

- a. Review the Sports Council Priority Lists with and without project cost categories
- b. Make amendments to both lists as necessary
- c. Nominate projects the committee recommend to receive Sports Council funding

The committee recommend Council commit funds from the Sports Council development levy fund (current balance of \$68,816 held by Council) to the following projects:

- Rologas cricket storage shed - \$8000.00
- Armidale Sportsground replacement of electronic scoreboard - \$15,000.00
- Armidale Sportsground extension of Armidale District Cricket Association clubhouse - \$10,000.00

TOTAL FUNDING COMMITMENT: \$33,000.00

REMAINING IN FUND: \$35,816.00

M: Sophie Sincock.

S: Graham Parsons

5.3 Stronger Country Communities Fund - round 4

Ref: AINT/2021/18539 (ARC16/0330)

2. OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That the committee;

- a. Note the projects that ARC will request approval to submit applications for in the Stronger Country Communities Fund round 4 grant opportunity, being the Lynches road netball courts lighting installation (approximately \$380,000) and the Jack Vallance Oval lighting installation and field renovation (approximately \$400,000).
- b. Discuss and confirm other projects on the priority list that clubs/organisations plan to submit applications for.

NOTED.

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A. Biggs advised that Narwan Eels Rugby League and Sporting Club may submit the funding application for the Newling Oval lighting installation project, however this is yet to be confirmed.

6. CORRESPONDENCE
Nil

7. GENERAL BUSINESS
Nil

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 6:54pm.