

**Minutes of the 'A' Ward Committee Meeting
Held 10 July 2018
In the Committee Rooms, 40 Cherry Street, Ballina**

Time Commenced

The meeting commenced at 4.05pm.

1. Attendance and Apologies

Attendance

Cr David Wright	Mayor
Cr Phil Meehan	Councillor
Cr Stephen McCarthy	Councillor
Yvonne Scarrabelotti	Ballina CWA
Ross Pickering	Ballina & District Citizens & Ratepayers Association
	Ballina Environment Society
Therese Collick	Ballina Lighthouse & Lismore Surf Lifesaving Club
George Young	Ballina Lions Club
David Felsch	Ballina Peninsular Residents Association

Council Staff in Attendance

John Truman	Group Manager Civil Services
Joanne Cordery	Secretary - Civil Services Group

Apologies

Cr Nathan Willis	Councillor
Marilyn McIntosh	Ballina Evening View Club
Andrew Dougherty	Ballina Lighthouse & Lismore Surf Lifesaving Club
Margaret Hains	Ballina Day View Club
Neil Denison	Ballina Environment Society
Andrew Playford	Ballina Coast High School & East Ballina Lions Club.

2. Resignations/Changes to Memberships

Nil

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Deputations

Nil

5. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 May, 2018 were accepted as a true and correct record.

Yvonne Scarabelotti/Cr David McCarthy

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6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Enforcement Program near 848 River Drive

The information in the staff report was noted.

David Felsch asked if we could inspect the headwall on the southern side and place some asphalt to help with the noise.

John Truman agreed to arrange a work request for staff to inspect the site.

Floodgates at South Ballina

The information in the staff report was noted.

Captain Cook Park

The information in the staff report is noted.

Update from Cr Meehan

- The opening date of both pools will be held over the last weekend in July and free entry for the weekend is provided. The swimming season will commence in August and both pools will be open seven days a week.
- Ignite Studios have been awarded a State Government grant of \$160,000 for lighting and other works.
- The Lions Club have been awarded a State Government grant of \$12,500 to replace the equipment lost at Saunders Oval due to fire.
- Ballina Surf Club – The second club building and gymnasium construction is progressing
- Shark Net Trial – DPI is scheduled to present the latest data to Council in July.
- Rural Floodplain Mitigation – Council has reviewed the request to amend the current planning requirements for residential buildings in flood prone rural areas. To implement any changes, it is a requirement for Council to update its Floodplain Management Plan. This will incur a significant expense therefore Council has programmed this review to occur when it is due in 2020/21.

7. General Business

Reporting of Safety Related Matters

The information in the staff report is noted.

South Ballina Beach/Patchs Beach – Correspondence from Gabrielle Upton MP

The information in the staff report is noted.

In addition it was noted Council has asked staff to prepare assessing the feasibility of a trial installation of a toilet at the Keith Hall Boat Ramp.

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Presentation on Stormwater Program

Council's Engineering Works Manager, Paul Busmanis provided a presentation on the Ballina Shire Stormwater Management Program. The information included advice about a project to install a pilot program in Burns Point Ferry Road of new in line technology.

Presentation on the Commercial Services Unit

Council's Manager Commercial Services, Paul Tsikleas, provided a presentation on the activities of the Commercial Services Unit of Council. This presentation included information about the Airport and our land development projects.

8. Council Documents on Exhibition

The list of previously advertised documents was noted by the Committee.

9. Business Without Notice

i) Porter Park Signage

Ross Pickering asked when the signs in Porter Park would be amended.

Post Meeting Note

Staff advise that the Porter Park regulatory signs have been reviewed and will be replaced with new signs prohibiting alcohol between 10.00pm to 7.00am.

ii) Update on Surf Club

Therese Collick requested information about Council's approach to cleaning up after storm events.

John Truman advised that a new draft policy on this service issue is now on public exhibition and invited the Surf Club to comment on the draft.

iii) Pedestrian Crossing Signage

George Young asked whether signage could be installed to assist pedestrians crossing in West Ballina.

John Truman advised additional signage is not a preferred solution at this location. John also reported the Council has recently adopted an update to its Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and the works program in this plan included projects to improve safety and access for pedestrians using River Street in West Ballina.

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iv) Keith Hall Boat Ramp

David Felsch thanked Council for the new ramp installed at Keith Hall and noted the consultation resulted in an outcome that is highly regarded by the community.

v) Mowing in River Drive, Keith Hall

David Felsch thanked Council for mowing the area opposite his property.

vi) 4WD South Ballina

David Felsch suggested that the Association would like to liaise with Council on any plans to resolve the 4WD issues at South Ballina.

vii) Update on Ferry Survey

David Felsch discussed the survey results about the Ferry prepared by the Association and suggested Council consider a concession for residents living on the Ballina side of the Ferry.

John Truman noted the Council's new fees were adopted in the last week of June and this process included consideration of the Association's submission. A copy of the staff response to the submission as reported to Council is attached.

viii) Loading of Ferry

David Felsch advised that he was still concerned with the way that the Ferry was being loaded. He suggested Council look at painting additional lines on the Ferry to delineate parking areas.

ix) Captain Cook Park

Yvonne Scarrabelotti asked when the rest of Captain Cook Park was going to be completed.

John Truman advised that the project was now scheduled for the next financial year.

x) Western Arterial Road

Ross Pickering tabled a letter regarding suggestions for this road and discussion was held regarding the future plans for this road. For further information regarding Council's planning for the Western Arterial Road, Ross was directed to Council's Developer Contribution Plan which is available on Council's website.

xi) A Ward Committee - Delegations

Ross Pickering suggested the Committee should pass resolutions and require Council to consider and respond to Committee motions.

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Cr Meehan advised that the Ward Committees do not have any delegations. Councillors are able to submit Notices of Motion in response to items raised by the Committee or individual members. The Committee can make recommendations if it elects to do so and these will be recorded in the minutes which are distributed to all Councillors.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be held at 4.00pm on Tuesday 11 September 2018.

11. Meeting Close

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.00pm.

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A Ward Meeting Attendance Sheet – 10 July 2018		
Name	Business	Signature
Cr Nathan Willis	Ballina Shire Council	Apology
Cr Phil Meehan	Ballina Shire Council	<i>P. Meehan</i>
Cr Stephen McCarthy	Ballina Shire Council	<i>S. McCarthy</i>
Cr David Wright	Ballina Shire Council	<i>D. Wright</i>
Yvonne Scarrabelotti	Ballina CWA	<i>Y. Scarrabelotti</i>
Jacqueline Mountford	Ballina CWA <i>Not Applicable</i>	
Ms Elaine Ballard	Ballina CWA	<i>E. Ballard</i>
Mr George Young	Ballina Lions Club	<i>G. Young</i>
Mr Michael Young	Ballina Chamber of Commerce & Ballina Retail Action Group	<i>M. Young</i>
Ms Narelle Besseling	Ballina Chamber of Commerce & Ballina Retail Action Group	<i>N. Besseling</i>
Ms Margaret Hains	Ballina Day View Club	<i>M. Hains</i>
Ms Marilyn McIntosh	Ballina Evening View Club	Apology
Ms Mary O'Brien	Lighthouse Day Club	<i>M. O'Brien</i>
Mr David Felsch	South Ballina Community Association	<i>D. Felsch</i>
Dr Ann Mulder	South Ballina Community Association	<i>A. Mulder</i>
Mr Stephen Wills	Ballina Bears Cricket Club	<i>S. Wills</i>
Mr Ross Pickering	Ballina & District Citizens & Ratepayers Association	<i>R. Pickering</i>
Andrew Dougherty	Ballina Lighthouse & Lismore Surf Lifesaving Club	Apology
Therese Collick	Ballina Lighthouse & Lismore Surf Lifesaving Club	<i>Present</i>
Andrew Playford	Ballina Cast High School & East Ballina Lions Club	Apology
Neil Denison	Ballina Environment Society	Apology
	West Ballina Quays Consultative Group	<i>W. Denison</i>
Mr John Truman	Group Manager Civil Services	<i>J. Truman</i>
Ms Joanne Cordery	Civil Services Group	<i>J. Cordery</i>
<i>PAUL BUSHAWKS</i>	<i>MGB EDG WORKS</i>	<i>P. Bushawks</i>

Therese Collick Surf Lifesaving Club

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COPY

BALLINA DISTRICT CITIZENS & RATEPAYERS ASSOC Inc.

10 Daydream Avenue,
WEST BALLINA 2478
Phone: 0266 964726

The General Manager,
Ballina Shire Council,
PO Box 45
BALLINA 2478.

Dear Sir,

Our organisation in writing to you would like to take part in addressing the Council's Traffic Committee and the Local Emergency Management Committee to assist in the problem currently being experienced and selecting a proper roadway taking traffic to and from West and North Ballina to relieve the many problems associated with present and future traffic flows. We are seriously concerned regarding the management of traffic through the township of Ballina particularly to and from the routes between the south, west and north. Specifically, the congestion even now being experienced, let alone the future of the traffic flow, is and will be a major problem for those given the responsibility of managing this very complex and obvious problem.

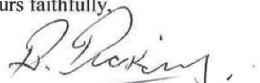
We feel the more involved in the planning of this, the better perspective those responsible for the planning for the future will be properly able to understand the real and obvious solution. There are many who are concerned in this situation who would be available to genuinely assist in future planning to solve the associated facts and myths surrounding it. In this regard we refer to residents of West Ballina; Cumberlum and Ballina Heights; the future residents of Cumberlum Ridge area (recently approved); the local Chamber of Commerce; and the Airport Industrial Estate (including the activities in and associated with the Ballina Byron Gateway Airport); and the future re-construction of North Creek Road and the bridge over North Creek.

All the above involves numerous bodies and businesses associated with the viable financial survival of Ballina and the Northern Rivers Region, ultimately affecting Ballina's future as a major town (city) on the Far North Coast of New South Wales. At this stage no mention has been made of the most important services dealing with the safety of the community. As you would be well aware the emergency services within Ballina are seriously hampered by the constraints placed upon them when endeavoring to attend life threatening incidents on a daily basis, when required to wend their way through congestion confronting them when required to travel to an emergency via Tamarind Drive, Kerr, River and West River Streets, as well contend with four sets of traffic control lights. These services need no mention of identification. Having spoken with the people in charge of these services it is obvious all are very concerned, not only for the present but the future.

It is for the reasons of the foregoing our organisation requests this council to involve and endorse the proposal of having a community body to assist in the planning and overall solution to such a project as enormous as this obviously is, confronting so many. It is acknowledged this council has the ultimate responsibility to complete this project. It is not one which should be ignored because of the obvious costs involved but being of such a major importance, not only to Ballina but the region, should and would attract the attention of both state and federal governments to obtain financial assistance.

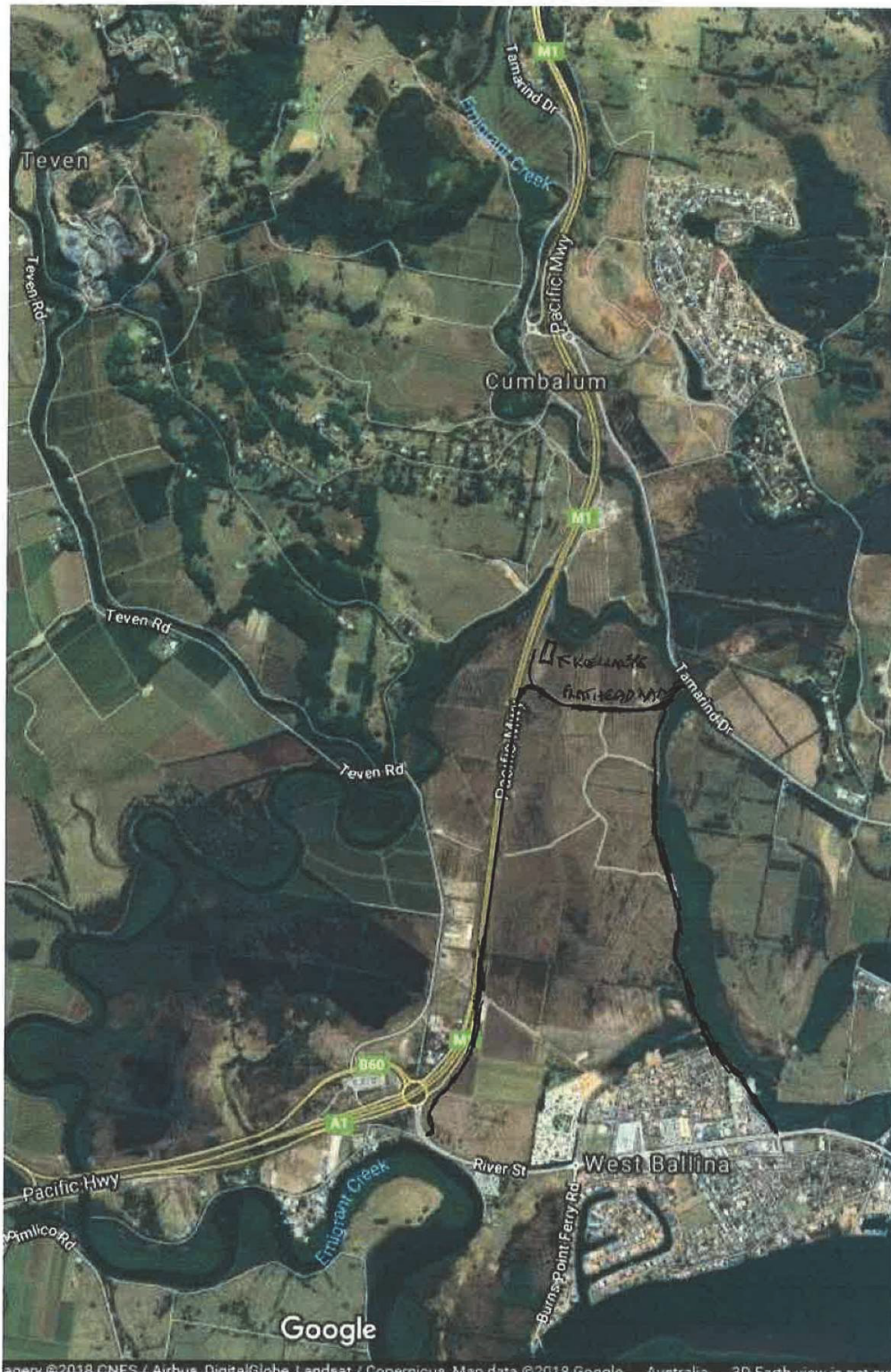
We believe this is of such high priority that it requires serious consultation with those directly connected and affected by it that there is a place for a community body to advise and assist the council in the planning and eventual construction of a major projection for the benefit of Ballina.

Yours faithfully,



Ross Pickering,
President – BDCRA.

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<https://www.google.com.au/maps/@-28.80446211,153.0251718,902m/data=!3m1!1e3>

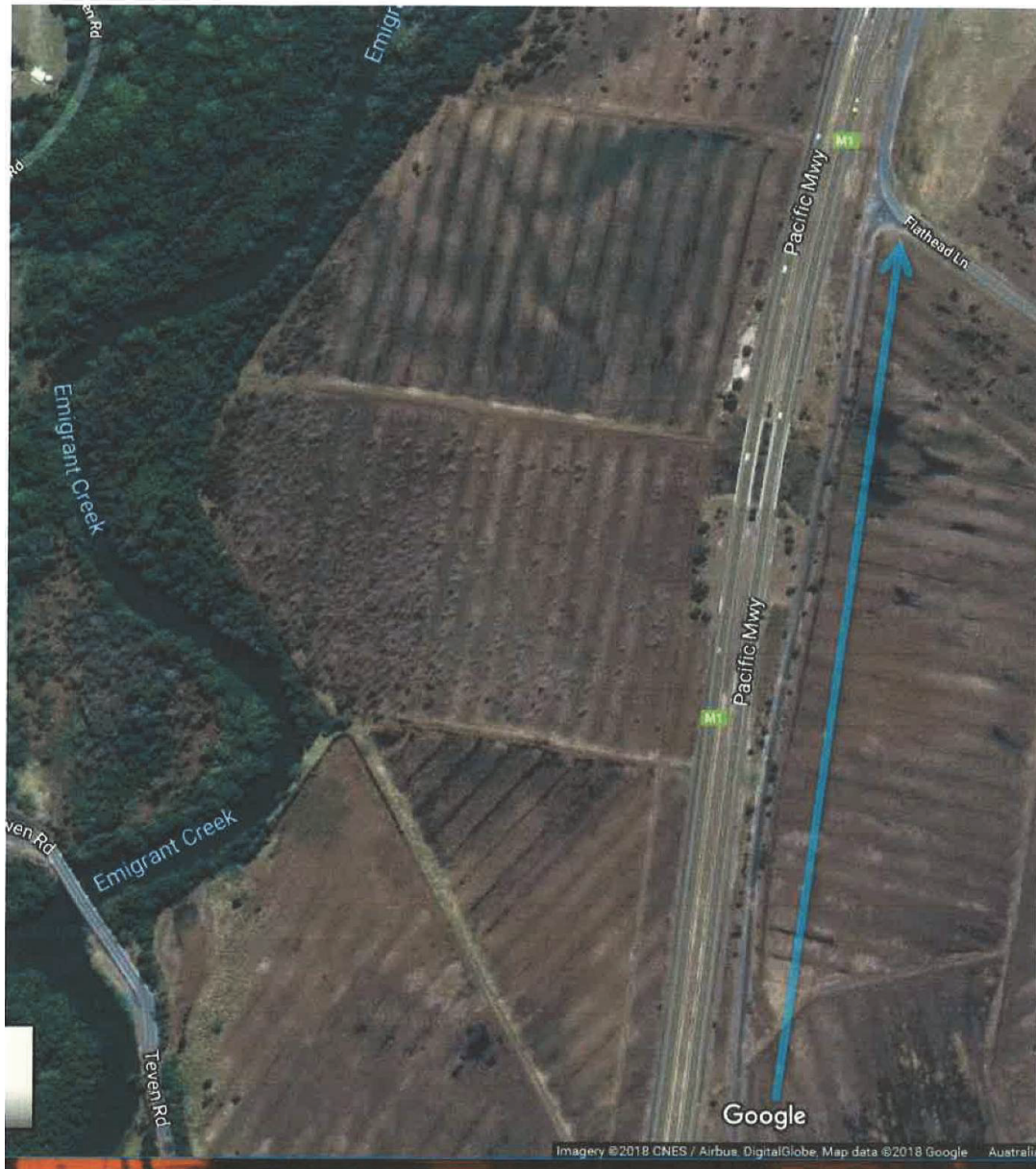
OVERALL VIEW SHOWING WHERE FRATHEAD LANE
JOINS BARLOW ~~LANE~~ ROAD.

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<https://www.google.com.au/maps/@-28.8440621,153.0525178,90a/data=!3m1!1e3m>
SHOWS HOW EASILY THIS PROPOSED ROAD
CONNECTS EASILY WITH CUMBALUM & BALLINA HEIGHTS

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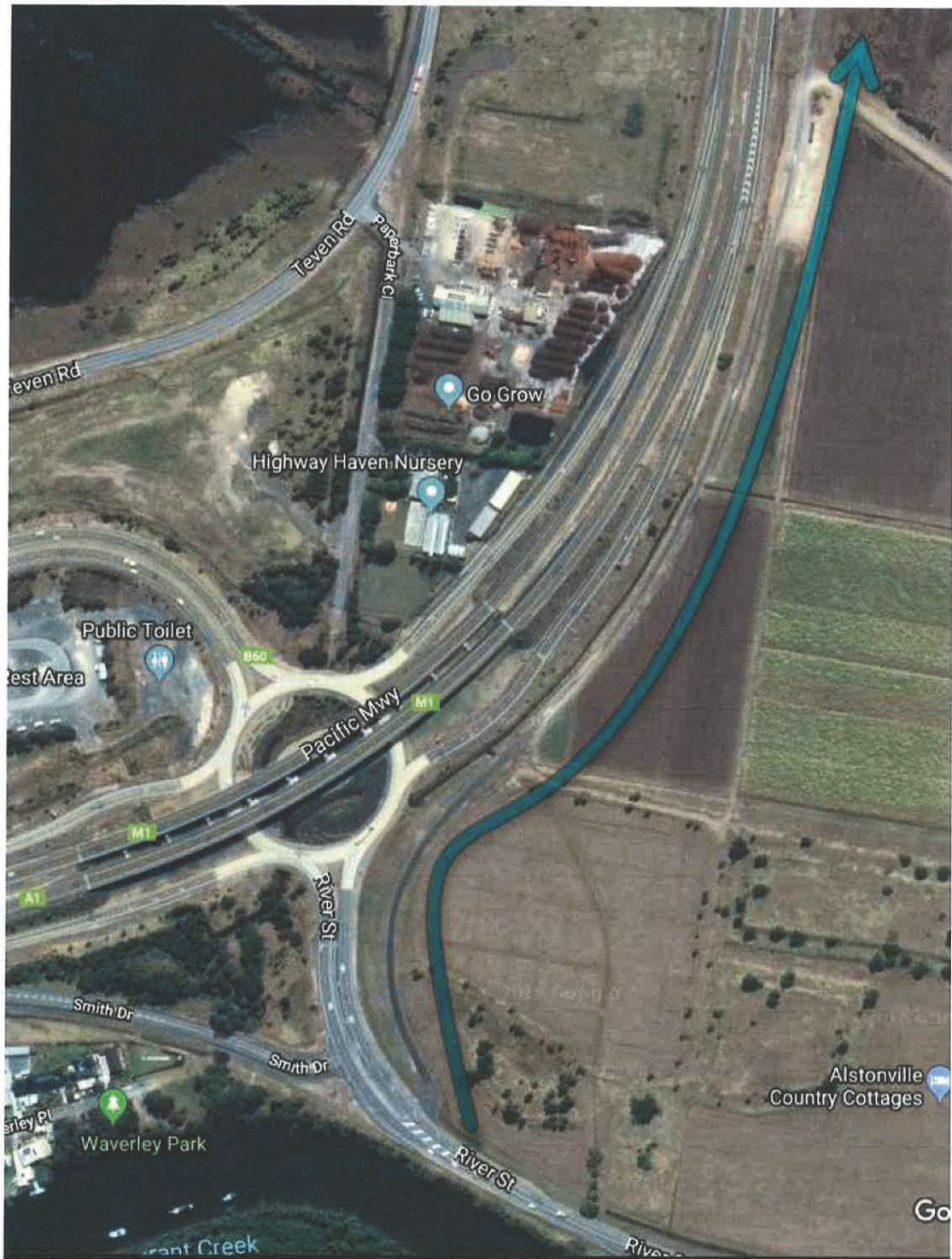


<https://www.google.com.au/maps/@-28.8552096,153.5265364,902m/data=!3m1!1e3>

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*SHOWS WHERE FLATHEAD LANE JOINS
PROPOSED ARTERIAL RD.*

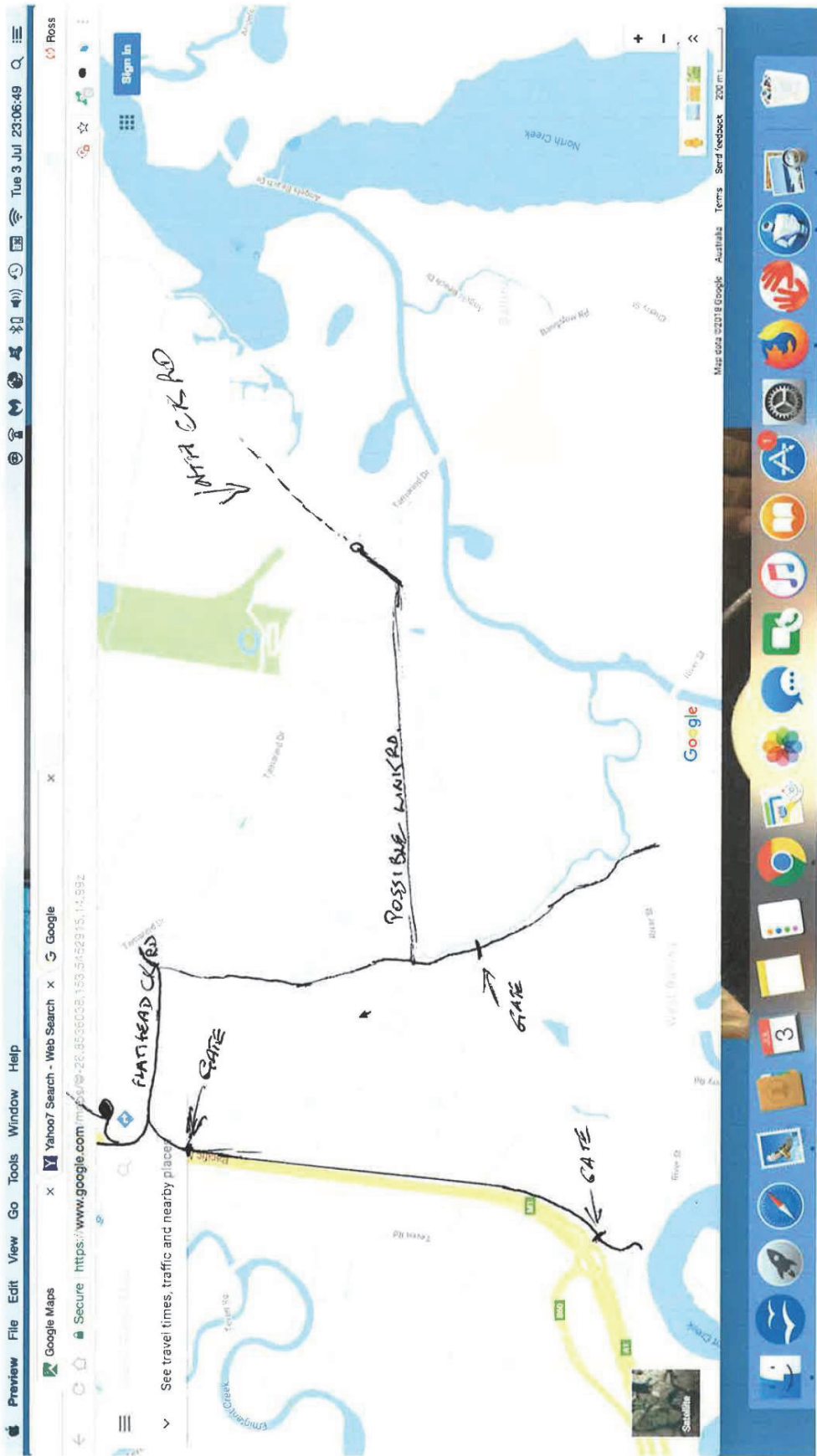
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<https://hackaday.com/2015/03/18/how-to-directly-program-arduino-express-boards-via-usb-serial-protocol/>
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Southern End near Smith Drive

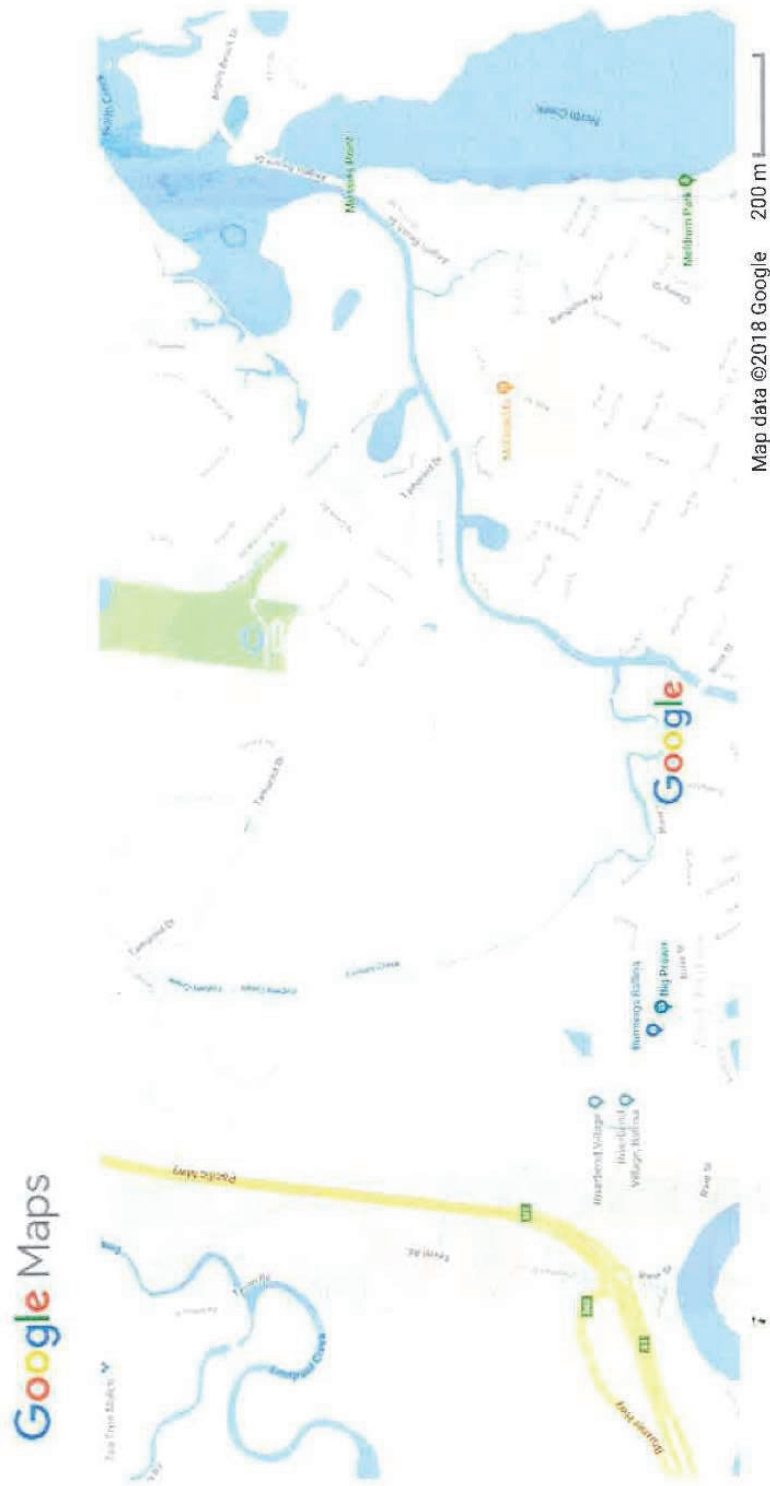
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Google Maps

7/3/2018



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Sandra Bailey

From: Ann Mulder <ballinapeninsula@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, 11 June 2018 2:32 PM
To: Ballina Shire Council
Cc: David Felsch
Subject: Delivery Program/Operational Plan (draft) 2018/19 to 2021/22_Ballina Peninsula Residents Association
Attachments: Rates, Fees and Charges 2018_19_Burns Point Ferry Survey_BPRA submission.pdf; Capital works 2018_2019_Public toilets_BPRA submission.pdf

Dear Paul,

Recently the Ballina Peninsula Residents Association complied an online survey to gauge the Ballina Shire residents and visitors thoughts regarding the Burns Point ferry. Attached is the report outlining the results and comments of responders for your consideration in the future costing and management of the Burns Point ferry.

In addition, I attach a submission for the construction of public toilets on the Ballina Peninsula. Defecation and urination has become an increasing hygiene issue on River Drive and the South Ballina beach. We therefore ask you to consider and prioritise the construction of public toilets; one at the Keith Hall Reserve to service among others, cyclists and users of the Keith Hall boat ramp and pontoon, and a second at South Ballina beach or at the entrance to the 4WD beach access track.

I thank you for your consideration and look forward to your response.

Kind Regards

Ann

Dr Ann Mulder PhD

Secretary Ballina Peninsula Residents Association Incorp

www.ballinapeninsula.org.au

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BALLINA PENINSULA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

President: David Felsch

Secretary: Ann Mulder

ballinapeninsula@gmail.com

www.ballinapeninsula.org.au

RE: Fees and Charges 2018-19: Burns Point Ferry Survey

The Burns Point Ferry is a significant piece of infrastructure and part of life for residents of the Ballina Peninsular. Therefore the cost of its use and its future operations are an ongoing point of concern. Council has been trying to increase ferry revenues by increasing fees but many residents feel that this strategy, as applied to annual passes, is counterproductive.

The percentage of vehicles on the peninsula that have passes has fallen dramatically since Council began its policy of increasing annual fees. The Residents Association lobbied for the pensioner discount and maintained that its adoption would not reduce income because more passes would be sold. This has been borne out. Similarly they believe that more general passes will be sold if the prices are reduced, with an increase in overall revenue.

In order to gauge the peninsula, shire and visitor thoughts regarding the ferry, an on line survey was developed. Below is a report outlining the results and comments of responders for your consideration in the future costing and management of the Burns Point ferry.

SUMMARY

- 146 people responded to the survey
- 97% were Ballina Shire residents
- 69% of responders purchased an annual or quarterly pass
- 90% thought the pass should be cheaper for Ballina Shire residents
- 92% thought that Ballina Peninsula residents should receive a concessional discount
- 50% of responders used the ferry at least daily
- Over half of responders made comments including why fees should be cheaper for Ballina residents, suggestions on maintenance of ferry, use of driver expertise, 'user pay' principle, and payment by cyclists.

The survey was developed and hosted online through the Qualtrics platform. It was open from 1st May to 3rd June 2018 to the general public; i.e. it was not restricted. It was advertised by poster on the ferry and the Empire Vale PO; through the Ballina Peninsula Community facebook page and the Ballina Peninsula newsletter; and through interview in The Advocate and Northern Star. The survey was hosted by our community website www.ballinapeninsula.org.au.

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RESULTS

146 people completed the survey; 97% were Ballina Shire residents. Of those, the majority resided on the Ballina Peninsula (68%), followed by Ballina (22%), Alstonville (5%), Tintenbar/Lennox Head (4%), Wardell (1%). There were no responses from Queensland. The five non Ballina Shire residents were from Sydney and coastal NSW towns.

The age of responders was widespread although just over a half were 50+ years of age; 17-30 Years (17%), 31-40 years (8%), 41-50 years (20%) 51-60 years (24%) and 60+ years 31%. Gender was equal with 51% male and 49% female.

The following responses relate only to the 141 Ballina Shire residents.

Just over two thirds of responders (69%) purchased a season or quarterly pass; 55% purchased at full rate and 14% at concessional rate. 31% did not purchase a pass. Of these 31%, 49% said it was too expensive while 51% said they wouldn't use it enough.

When asked if responders thought the pass should be cheaper for Ballina Shire residents than non-shire residents, as was the case till a couple of years ago, 90% said Yes, 4% said No, and 6% were undecided. When asked what would be reasonable to pay, approx. a third said \$0, a third said \$50, and a third said \$100-\$200.

When asked if residents of the Ballina Peninsula should receive a special discount or concessional rate 92% said Yes, 8% said No and none were undecided. When asked what would be a reasonable discount, approx. a third said free use, a third said 30% or 50% concession, and a third preferred the old concession for Ballina Shire residents of 1st vehicle full rate and subsequent vehicles registered at the same address having 50% discount.

About a half of responders used the ferry once or more per day; about a quarter used it once or a few times a week, while the remainder used it less frequently.

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RESPONDER COMMENTS

Just over a half of survey responders (56%) wrote comments on ways of improving the Burns Point Ferry service, demonstrating a high level of interest in this service by responders. Below are comments expressed on a variety of topics regarding the ferry.

Cheaper season pass for Ballina Shire Residents or Ballina Peninsula residents?

Overwhelmingly responders thought that residents and ratepayers should receive a discount or it should be free; i.e. it was too expensive. Many expressed an interest in it being viewed as a bridge or Council considering building a bridge. Suggestions included:

"If you are a resident of Empire Vale or Wardell you should be able to purchase a yearly family ticket at a discounted rate that covers 2 vehicles. Having to purchase a yearly ticket for each vehicle is cost prohibitive and it is cheaper and easier to drive on the highway. We no longer use the ferry even though we only live down the road as it is too expensive."

"The cost of the ferry should be incorporated into the shire rates allowing rate payers to cross at no additional cost."

"I think the ferry should be free to all Ballina residents who pay council rates. "

"Should be free like all the other ferries in the north region eg Lawrence"

"Peninsula resident ratepayers should have one free annual ferry ticket"

"the ferry fee is way too expensive and as a result people who would use it at a cheaper price chose to meet residents on the 'other' side or now use the long way to town. To counteract the costs families with several cars often use just one for the ferry"

"for those of us residing on this side, it is fuel wise and time expedient to use it, and should be considered a bridge and provided freely to us, or at a very reduced cost"

"I'm from patches beach I travel into ballina on a daily basis but I never use the ferry as it is too expensive if it was cheaper then yes I would definitely buy a pass"

"If annual fee was between \$70-100 i would definitely buy one. There are a lot of surfers/fisherman who would purchase one if it was that price. More and more now either paddle across or drive around to save \$12"

"Each peninsula ratepayer should be entitled to at least one free annual ferry pass"

"if council added a small charge to every rate payer giving rate payers free usage and continue with casual usage fees with discounts for weekly, monthly passes people residing but non rate payers should get a discount or owners of property could pass on free pass.."

"I think that BSC should really start viewing the ferry as a form of bridge for the local residents."

"Every weekend or holiday time the ferry is full of Qld registered vehicles wanting to access the beach as this is the closest beach to Brisbane that they can drive on for free. They should not receive cheaper rates."

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"I think it's ridiculous for a local to be paying \$350 odd dollars a year just to be able to get to their own home or to get into town."

"It is a critical transport route that requires either a bridge or ferry which should be part of government infrastructure."

"As residents of South Ballina, we should most definitely be offered a discounted rate for ferry tickets. Especially if you are buying for multiple cars."

"I would use the ferry a lot more to go surfing at south wall if it was maximum \$2.50 per crossing. I now drive around via wardell because it costs me only about \$5 or 6 extra in petrol, if that, and a little extra wear on the car, and I timed it once and it only took 20 minutes extra (before the roadworks started),"

"Council should examine why and how other important Ferries around Australia operate at no cost to users and seek to do the same (whether this is through lobbying RMS or other Government departments)"

"Just build a bridge"

"Having detoured off the freeways to purposely travel on many ferries around Australia as tourists, we were shocked to be charged in Ballina as nearly all other ferries are free. As a result we have never used it again in the 5 years since moving here, choosing instead to drive the long way around."

"I would like to see a 30 pass book so I can give two out here and then to friends and family for the odd times they come to visit as it is a big cost for someone to come and visit you."

"I don't believe you should have to pay double for a trailer or caravan especially if you already hold a pass"

Ferry maintenance and driver costs

Another topic of high interest with responses related to maintenance of the ferry and the appropriate use of driver expertise.

Comments relating to maintenance of ferry:

"it has more services than my car and the ferry stills breaks down on regular bases. council may be saving money on bio-diesel but loses on repairs, how many truck companies are using bio-diesel."

"I think the ferry has and is poorly managed from a business and economical perspective .Maybe it is worth looking at tendering its operation?"

"Why not the marine experts for ferry maintenance eg the Port Macquarie mob who do it routinely. - instead of huge costs fixing stuff ups and extra times out of service Nobody on the shire engineers staff are marine experts - have local marine consultants available if the Ballina Shire guys were willing to be helped - just saying"

"an accountable tendering process"

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"Council to apply for RMS grants for maintenance costs Tender ferry maintenance out for more competitive pricing"

"The costs for the ferry published by council do not stack up at all"

"Tender the annual ferry maintenance, the cost is recognised as outlandish! "

"The council should look into ways to reduce: a) the cost of their annual ferry maintenance and b) the amount of time it takes to complete the annual ferry maintenance."

Comments relating to appropriate use of driver expertise:

"Regardless it is time to rationalise and not have two crew working during peak [double time rate] periods often seen in holiday season."

"also we understand that a ferry pilot stays on board all night in case of an emergency - which would be costing money. my suggestion would be to put a local operator on call - as all emergency services have to rallied - which would give the operator time to get the ferry up and running"

"I think having a second person on the ferry in peak periods is a complete waste of money, in off peak times ferry drivers direct traffic when necessary, the main roads ferry drivers open gates, direct traffic and drive the ferry. There have been times when I have used the ferry and the person who has been responsible for the loading has stood on the platform and they never direct traffic off the ferry"

"Would be good if the ferry drivers were a little faster. Sometimes they are so slow you can nearly swim faster"

"Load ferry properly during busy times, having an extra person on board who directs vehicles into lanes but does not ensure that cars are positioned so space is not wasted is ridiculous"

"I don't know why the ferry drivers have to stay overnight on board the ferry."

"You should make the ferry drivers rev the ferry engine higher to make the trip faster, at the moment the ferry is running just above idle, the 6354 Perkins engine in the ferry would have no problem running at 2250 rpm all day long. Get it moving"

"But in saying that, the fact that the operator is onboard 24 hours., and presumably being paid is not helping with viability. We understand that they need to be there in case of emergency, but a local operator could be on call' and therefore reduce wage costs. It would only be a matter of minutes to rally a local operator to have the ferry ready for emergency vehicles "

"Have ferry operators show a bit of responsibility when loading and unloading the ferry rather than just sit on their clacker twiddling their thumbs"

"teach the drivers to do more than one thing at a time eg. drive and take money at same time"

"During peak times they are not loading to capacity"

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"Upgrade to a RFID system for cars boarding then the ferryman only needs to concentrate on loading unloading"

'User pay' principle

Commonly government departments justify additional or perceived excessive payments by the public for services provided based on the principle 'user pays' Many responders commented on this principle:

"We are even made to pay for the Ballina & Alstonville pools. Plus the rate payers paid for the new Missingham Bridge"

"The council has been saying user pay, I use the ferry but I do not use all the roads in the Ballina shire yet I pay for them to be maintained in my rates."

"Free of Charge, same price east ballina residents pay to cross the bridge to their homes"

"While I recognize there are maintenance costs many things the BSC support do not make a profit and are an additional expense"

"Government to pay for ferry like the roads we use every day. It is a road service so i dont know why the residents of south ballina should pay for the ferry when ballina resident dont pay to everyday use of there roads and bridges"

"Residents of Ballina island have bridges north and west and don't pay any extra to travel to and from home to work but we are seriously exploited."

"Should be free for residents- no differnt to second crossing of north creek"

"We are even made to pay for the Ballina & Alstonville pools. Plus the rate payers paid for the new Missingham Bridge"

"I think the ferry should be free to all Ballina residents who pay council rates. The council has been saying user pay, I use the ferry but I do not use all the roads in the Ballina shire yet I pay for them to be maintained in my rates"

Payment by cyclists

Around a half of the comments included remarks on the payment of ferry by cyclists. More responders suggested it be free than not however, there was also a strong push to continue with payment.

Comments sympathetic for non-payment by cyclists included:

"I would like to think that as a community we are actively encouraging exercise. This is not apparent if we charge bicycles and not really the environmentally astute way of the future."

"Bicycles should be free, the peninsular provides a great and save space for bike riding. If it were a cycleway council would spend hundreds of thousands to develop and maintain it. Instead for a few dollars they restrict it."

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"Pushbikes should be free especially as they take up minimal room, are eco friendly and encourage exercise"

"bicycles should not pay, but also the ferry should have a car on board or waiting before moving with a bicycle. "

"Bicycles are a wonderful form of exercise and should be encouraged. Too many obese people, both young and old cost our medical services heaps"

Comments non sympathetic to free use of ferry by cyclists included:

"There are plenty of bike paths in Ballina (built at great community expense) for them to get their exercise without having them meander over our narrow and potentially dangerous roads from East Wardell to South Ballina."

"I do not comprehend why they would like to cycle over South Ballina, they are almost single track roads, and i consider it a safety issue. They have very little regard to vehicles needing to pass - Burns Point Ferry Road is a prime example of 3 abreast"

Other relevant comments worth mentioning include:

Hygiene:

"Also, on a hygiene note - there are no toilet facilities for the waiting passengers, who constantly use the shrubbery around the boat house as the toilet"

No trucks during peak hour or early morning

"An improvement for residents going to work/school each morning would be that large trucks (sand) be prevented from ferry use during peak times"

"What I do object to is the quarry b double trucks using it particularly at 5.15am in the morning as they are very noisy and drive too fast along Burns Point Ferry Rd."

Turning circle on south side

"Council should plan to have a turning area on the southern side. Very difficult for cars to turn around let alone cars with caravans or semi trailers"

Turn off engines

"Make it compulsory for vehicles to turn off their engines while on the ferry. The fumes are terrible , and there are a lot of drivers leaving a vehicle running while going to pay, many of them with unrestrained children in the vehicles. A major accident waiting to happen"

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Increased damage to River Drive; false economy

"Most sand trucks seem to go via Wardell now due to cost of the ferry. This is ripping the roads up along River Drive"

"I think the casual toll is too expensive as it really deters family and friends from visiting. For South Ballina residents to travel to Ballina CBD via Wardell is an extras 70 km round trip. This contributes to increased road maintenance on what is already not a great road (River drive)."

Additional revenue/services

"Have papers for sale on the ferry "vending style"

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to your response.

Kind Regards
Ann



Dr Ann Mulder PhD
Secretary, Ballina Peninsula Residents Association Incorp.

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Extract from June 2018 Report on Delivery Program and Operation Plan

Ballina Peninsular Residents Association Incorp (BPRA) – Burns Point Ferry Fees and Management

The Association recently compiled an online survey to gauge the Ballina Shire residents and visitors thoughts regarding the Burns Point Ferry.

The submission outlines the results and comments of responders for Council's consideration in the future costing and management of the Burns Point Ferry.

The submission covers a number of matters including the cost of ferry fees as well as comments relating to the maintenance and management of the ferry.

Staff Comment

The submission from the BPRA primarily deals with the results of an online survey conducted during May 2018 dealing with ferry fees and charges. The submission from BPRA summarises the data gathered from the survey, where 146 responses were received.

Regarding the season pass the submission notes; "Overwhelmingly respondents thought that residents and ratepayers should receive a discount or it should be free; i.e. it was too expensive."

Council previously had a non-residents season pass, however this was removed as few were sold and the cost / benefit of having such a distinction was not justified. In respect to the level of fees, for 2018/19, the proposed fees have generally increased by CPI, except for motor cycle and motor car classes, which have not increased.

In preparing the 2017/18 fee structure the casual use fees for motor cycles and motor cars was rounded-up to \$3 and \$6.

This resulted in a higher than CPI increase of 7.1% and for this reason no increase has been recommended to these fees for 2018/19.

Recent feedback from the ferry drivers is that it also preferred to retain the pricing for the vehicle plus trailer fees at the same level, as outlined in the following table.

Table Four – Ferry Fees (2017/18, draft 2018/19 and revised 2018/19)

Vehicle Class	2017/18 (\$)	Exhibited 2018/19 (\$)	Revised 2018/19 (\$)	Revised % increase
Bicycle	1.00	1.00	1.00	0
Motor Cycles	3.00	3.00	3.00	0
Motor car (<3T)	6.00	6.00	6.00	0
Vehicle + 1 axle trailer/caravan	12.00	12.50	12.00	0
Vehicle + 2 axle trailer/caravan	14.00	14.50	14.00	0
Vehicle (3-10T cap)	13.50	14.00	14.00	3.7
Vehicle (>10T cap- truck)	15.50	16.00	16.00	3.2

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Vehicle (>10T cap- truck & dog)	22.50	23.00	23.00	2.2
Weekly - Motor Cycles	28.00	29.00	29.00	3.6
Weekly - Motor car (<3T)	56.00	58.00	58.00	3.6
Season - Motor Cycles	153.00	157.00	157.00	2.6
Season - Motor car (<3T)	306.00	314.00	314.00	2.6
Season – Ag tractor	50% above	50% above	50% above	2.6
Season – bicycle	52.00	53.00	53.00	1.9
Season – quarterly	25% above + \$7.40 admin	25% above + \$7.60 admin	25% above + \$7.60 admin	2.6
Season – discount pensioner/ health care card	30%	50%	50%	-66.7%

The vehicle and 2-axle trailer/caravan class was introduced last year to offset the pensioner discount.

The ferry drivers have provided their feedback regarding their observations that they do see larger caravans turning around and for this reason not applying the CPI could be applied similar to motor cycles and motor cars.

In examining the contents of the BPR submission it is important to understand the financial results of the ferry in recent years, as outlined in Table Five.

This table includes the actual operating results for the period 2010/11 to current date, with the figures for 2017/18 up to 19 June 2018.

Table Five – Ferry Operating Results (20/11 to 2017/18)

Ferry Results	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Operating Revenues								
Toll Fees – Public	269,300	285,600	287,100	345,400	354,500	342,700	381,500	375,900
Toll Fees – Council	11,500	29,300	5,800	12,000	9,000	8,000	5,500	10,000
Season Tickets	76,800	61,800	76,400	82,100	80,500	99,500	92,200	94,200
Diesel Fuel Rebate	7,500	8,500	4,700	8,000	8,100	11,100	10,000	7,600
Total Revenues	365,100	385,200	374,000	447,500	452,100	461,300	489,200	487,700
Less: Operating Expenses (excluding Slip)	462,800	489,100	503,000	495,800	517,400	522,400	550,200	500,600
Operating Result Before Slip (Deficit)	(97,700)	(103,900)	(129,000)	(48,300)	(65,300)	(61,100)	(61,000)	(12,900)
Less Ferry Slip	102,700	124,000	110,000	151,400	146,800	132,600	10,200	216,600
Operating Result (Deficit)	(200,400)	(227,900)	(239,000)	(199,700)	(212,100)	(193,700)	(71,200)	(229,500)
Annual Increase in Op Revs		5.5%	-2.9%	19.7%	1.0%	2.0%	6.0%	-0.3%
Cumulative increase in Op Revs		6%	2%	23%	24%	26%	34%	34%
Average Increase in Op Revs							5.2%	
Annual Increase in Op Exps		5.7%	2.8%	-1.4%	4.4%	1.0%	5.3%	-9.0%
Cumulative increase in Op Exps		6%	9%	7%	12%	13%	19%	8%
Average increase in Op Exps							3.0%	
% Income from season tickets	21%	16%	20%	18%	18%	22%	19%	19%
% of Operating Exps (before slip) funded by Revenues	79%	79%	74%	90%	87%	88%	89%	97%

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Items of interest from these figures include:

- Operating expenses (with the slip removed as it is a variable cost) have increased, on average, 3.0% for the period which represents a reasonable containment of costs.
- Operating revenues for the period have increased on average by 5.2%.
- This increased margin between operating revenues and operating expenses has allowed Council to maintain the operating deficit at approximately \$200,000, which over this eight year period represents a reasonable reduction in real dollar values.
- Income from season tickets, as a percentage of total income, has remained relatively stable at approximately 20% of total income.
- The percentage of the operating expenses (before slip) funded by revenues is another interesting figure as it helps to highlight that during this period Council has been able to reduce the gap between operating revenues and recurrent operating expenses (excluding the slip).

This means that the reliance on rate income for this service has steadily reduced.

Total income from toll fees has increased by 37% for the period 2010/11 to 2017/18, acknowledging that the toll figures for 2017/18 are still not final. Income from season tickets for this period has increased 23%.

The toll fee income is now covering 77% of the recurrent operating expenses (excluding slip cost) for the ferry, whereas in 2010/11 it only covered 61%.

The income from season tickets now covers 19% of the recurrent operating expenses for the ferry, which is similar to the figure in 2010/11 which was 17%.

This highlights that relatively speaking changes introduced by Council over a number of years have seen the share of the burden (being the operating cost) carried by the casual users (toll fees) increase, whereas the contribution from season tickets has remained relatively stable.

The BPRA submission is based on the premise that there is a price elasticity of demand and that lowering fees will increase demand and increase the total revenue to Council.

As per the figures in Table Five there has been a general trend towards increased income from season tickets, although the figures can vary from year to year.

There was a significant reduction in season ticket income in 2011/12, although the reason for this is not readily available as a comparison between the 2010/11 and 2011/12 fees and charges, did not identify any major change between the years.

There was a significant increase in season ticket income between 2014/15 and 2015/16 with the changes in fees between those two years being:

- a) a significant increase in the annual season ticket charge for motor vehicles from \$250 to \$295 and

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b) the removal of the non-resident / ratepayer season ticket. That ticket price was \$450 in 2014/15 and it was reduced to the same fee as the resident season ticket of \$295 in 2015/16.

The elasticity of demand, particularly for the season tickets, is a debatable point, and if Council does wish to significantly decrease fees there is the risk that there will be a corresponding reduction in income. From a staff perspective, the survey sample of 146 people, is insufficient evidence to undertake such a process.

The BPRA also has a strong focus on equity in stating that Council rates should cover the cost of operating the ferry.

To support this recommendation, Council would need to reallocate funding from other areas to further subsidise the service.

This has been the subject of debate many times and to date previous Councils have not agreed to make such a change to the budget.

Ultimately it is a matter for Councillors as to how they wish to allocate the scarce Council resources available.

The submission also notes a number of comments about the management of the Ferry. These issues have been comprehensively discussed previously and only a brief response is provided here.

If Council requires further information a resolution should be made requesting a report.

- Ferry Drivers – Cost to Sleepover - Ferry drivers are paid a modest allowance to sleep in the ferry. The costs of this are so low to be immaterial in the budget. The advantage of this function is that it allows the ferry to be moored in the river overnight and away from the bank, reducing the risks of hull or other damage and vandalism or theft.

Previous reporting analysed reducing the rostered time the ferry would be available, however it was found the cost savings were small compared to the reduction in service level.

- Tender to the Private Sector - The key costs for operating the ferry are fuel, labour and maintenance.

The labour costs are determined by award conditions.

Council needs to be careful when tendering out labour based services, as contractors can make future claims against Council for paying less than the local government award rates.

In respect of fuel, Council has significant buying power and for maintenance Council has a wide range of skilled tradesman available with corporate knowledge to look after our asset.

A genuine tender to the private sector would need to allow the private sector to set their own fees, to allow the contractor to generate a commercial return on their investment.

That approach is not supported.

- Competitive and Skilled Services - Council's procurement processes apply to the ferry. This means assessments are made in respect of best value for money.

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When it is preferred to outsource work, competitive quotes are sourced and assessed.

Specialist services are used to complement the professional skills available within Council.

For example marine experts are used for the blasting, hull inspection and painting of the ferry during the slip.

In respect of comments about maintenance, the maintenance program follows manufacturer recommended service frequencies and the corporate knowledge of our tradesman to ensure unplanned down time is minimised to the extent possible.

- Loading and Operating Speeds - Drivers follow procedures for these operations. These have been developed over many years of operating the vessel and observing driver behaviour and responding to community feedback.

The submission from the BPRA is comprehensive with Council having previously considered many of the matters raised in previous years and on multiple occasions.

In reviewing the information submitted and the financial records, Council has managed to contain the operating deficit for the ferry reasonably well, in recent years, and on balance no major changes are recommended.

Council has already resolved to introduce a 50% discount for pensioners for season tickets for 2018/19 and that change should now be trialed to determine what impact it has on revenues.

If Councillors wish to provide further discounts to the ferry fees that will need to be determined as part of this report.