

1. Attendance and Apologies

*Members:*

Cr Ben Smith  
Cr David Wright (Mayor, via Zoom)  
Cr Eoin Johnston  
Cr Sharon Parry (via Zoom)

Mary Birch - Wollongbar Progress Association  
Pat Carney - Wardell Progress Association  
Steve Miller - Rous Mill Ratepayers Association (via Zoom)  
Des Burke - Alstonville Lions (via Zoom)  
Jane Gardiner - Ballina Plateau Historical Society (via Zoom)  
Jim Hahn - Probus Club of Alstonville (via Zoom)  
Wayne Garrard - Alstonville and District Cricket Association  
Malcolm Johnson – Ballina Environment Society  
Russell Priddle – Alstonville FC

*Council Staff:*

Matt Wood - Director Planning and Environmental Health Division (via Zoom)  
Janelle Snellgrove - Executive Support Officer

*Others in Attendance:*

Marilyn Perkins  
Marilyn Hahn

*Apologies:*

Nil

**Recommendation:**

Nil

2. Declarations of Interest

Nil

3. Confirmation of Minutes 9 September 2021

**Recommendation:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 September 2021 be accepted as a true and correct record (Pat Carney/Eoin Johnston).

4. General Business

a) **Tuckombil Landcare Representative**

The committee were advised that Barry Jeffress will no longer be representing Tuckombil Landcare.

**Post meeting note:** The committee will be re-formed post the Council elections and membership will be confirmed for the next Council term through this process.

5. Outstanding Business – 9 September 2021

a) **Wollongbar Hall Vandalism**

Mary Birch raised the issue of children vandalising the Wollongbar Hall and intimidating people. Police have been informed and have undertaken surveillance. Police have suggested cameras and Ron Birch has discussed with Craig Brown. The camera that is recommended is around \$1000. Mary requested Councillors support the costs of the camera and installation.

Cr Smith suggested the Progress Association submit a formal request to Council.

Staff Comment

Craig Brown, Council's Manager Community Facilities advised that the vandalism at the Wollongbar Hall has been monitored over the past 3 months and indeed over a number of years. The vandalism has decreased but the site does suffer from sporadic vandalism, usually damage to the eave sheeting.

Given the location and height of the building, installing, and maintaining a camera system does have some complexities. This is because the height the cameras would be placed is low meaning they would most likely be damaged prior to any vandalism occurring or be the focus of the vandalism.

Council's high profile community centre's have security camera systems that are well located height wise and generally in view of the public. This is due to the open location of those buildings.

The installation of a quality monitored security camera system capable of digital footage that can be used by the police and covering all sides of the building would cost approximately \$15,000 plus ongoing monitoring costs of approximately \$380 per month. This would include installation of the security cameras at a height which would be difficult for vandals to access.

There is currently no budget allocation for the installation of security camera / system or monitoring services.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

Mary agreed the cameras would be vandalised. Mary further advised that Andrew Ross from the Police has been monitoring the area and the community

have been involved. Vandalism has decreased now student have returned to school and behaviours have improved.

**b) Wardell Toilets Signage**

Pat Carney requested direction signage in the Wardell village centre for the new toilets located in Fitzroy Park at Wardell.

Staff Comment

Directional street blade signage to be ordered and installed on corner of Cedar and Carlisle Streets. An additional site for signage will be looked at corner of Sinclair Street and Bridge Drive.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

**6. Business with Notice**

**a) Bruxner Highway Works**

Jane Gardiner would like to discuss the changes to the entry onto the Bruxner Highway.

Staff Comment

This is not a Council Project and all calls regarding the changes at Alstonville need to be directed to contact Transport for NSW as it is their project - 1800 653 092.

Transport for NSW are encouraging community feedback to help shape plans to upgrade the Bruxner Highway intersections with Ballina and Ellis Roads at Alstonville.

Their preferred option involves building a westbound on-ramp at Ellis Road and implementing a range of safety improvements at the Ballina Road intersection.

Council's Communications team have shared the media release on Council's website:

<https://ballina.nsw.gov.au/news/have-your-say-on-alstonville-intersection-upgrades--578>

Feedback on the upgrade is now open and can be provided until Friday 12 November through their website at [nswroads.work/alstonville](https://nswroads.work/alstonville), via email at [region.north@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:region.north@transport.nsw.gov.au) or by calling 1800 653 092.

A copy of the Mayoral Minute and resolution - Bruxner Highway and Ballina Road Intersection, Council's October Ordinary meeting is provided below:

1. That Council confirms that it does not support the preferred option as currently on exhibition by Transport for NSW, for the upgrade of the intersection of Ballina Road and the Bruxner Highway at Alstonville,

which is based on an on ramp at Ellis Road and permanently removing the right hand turn out of Ballina Road.

2. The reasons for not supporting this option include, but are not limited to:
  - a) traffic is diverted through the Alstonville town centre and Wardell Road
  - b) drivers will still be motivated to turn left at Ballina Road, and then do a UTurn on the Bruxner Highway to head west, to save driving time
  - c) the travelling time to the existing Kays Lane exit is similar to the Ellis Road option, which results in little benefit being gained from the on-ramp at Ellis Road; and
  - d) it still leaves the dangerous right hand turn into Ballina Road from the Bruxner Highway.
3. Council confirms its support for a roundabout at this intersection, as the preferred option, as it maximizes the functionality of the Ballina Road and Bruxner Highway intersection.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

Cr Smith reiterated that there was a mayoral minute and agreed with feedback that the proposed exit doesn't provide any benefit. Council's preference is a roundabout.

Cr Johnston advised he had previously raised a notice of motion. Council's position is clear and that is that Council agrees with the community. Cr Johnston felt the RMS have not allowed adequate comment time and that points raised at the Councillor briefing haven't been considered.

Cr Parry raised concerns that a roundabout is the least worst option and raised the option of an overpass/underpass.

The Mayor advised he had recent discussions with the RMS and enquired when there will be a decision. The RMS had proceeded with the works without consulting Council.

Marilyn Perkins commented that there is a survey the RMS are offering for the community to complete but there is only 1 option. Marilyn has been encouraging the community to email the RMS.

**b) Byron Studios / Tuckombil Quarry Update**

Jane Gardiner would like an update on Byron Studios and the Tuckombil Quarry.

Staff Comment

Byron Studios continue to be committed to working with Council to enable them to relocate and construct new studios at Tuckombil Quarry site.

Representatives from Byron Studios continue to have regular meetings with Council staff.

Council engaged a consultant to investigate potential uses for Tuckombil Quarry site including the operation of a movie studio industry. This report is due to be provided to Council in late November 2021.

A progress report will be provided to the new Council at the February / March 2022 meeting.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

Matt Wood added that the project is ongoing and Council is currently working through the planning considerations relating to the Tuckombil Quarry site including opportunities and constraints.

Jane enquired when Byron Studios would be able to move into a new facility as the community would like access to the Alstonville Cultural Centre.

Matt indicated the timing is difficult to estimate as establishment on the Tuckombil Quarry site involves an LEP Amendment (to enable the film studio use on the land), a Development Application for construction and then construction works.

Cr Smith noted that the lease to Byron Studios at the Alstonville Cultural Centre will expire before the Tuckombil Quarry development will be finalised. The Byron Studios status will likely be determined by the address of the lease before the Development Application.

**c) Candidates for the Upcoming Council Election**

Jane Gardiner would like to know the candidates for the upcoming Council Election.

Staff Comment

The NSW Electoral Commission is conducting the election for Council. The link below is provided for candidate information:

<https://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/Elections/Local-government-elections/Local-Government-Elections-2021/Candidates/Ballina>

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

Cr Eoin Johnson briefed the members on the nominated candidates.

Mary advised that Wollongbar Progress Association are in the process of organising a meet the candidates at the Wollongbar Hall.

**d) Severe Weed Infestations on Private Land**

Mal Johnson (BES) raised the problem of severe weed infestations on private land.

### Staff Comment

The weeds authority for the Ballina Shire LGA is Rous County Council. The County Council summaries its functions as follows:

- Provide the Local Control Authority function with respect to weed biosecurity under the Biosecurity Act 2015 and Biosecurity Regulations 2017
- Conduct property inspections for compliance with the Act
- Identify, inspect and treat high risk sites and pathways, and develop weed management plans for the region including rapid response plans for new incursions
- Control high priority weeds on roadsides, and rapid response control to new weed incursions
- Create and distribute weed education material including flyers and media releases, "best practice" advice, and information on weed control
- Provide plant identification assistance
- Deliver training and information to landholder and community groups and schools, at workshops and field days
- Provide access to biological control agents through the Department of Primary Industries.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

Mal Johnson explained that large infestations of weeds are concerning as they are difficult to eliminate and noted particular concern with weeds spreading from private land. Large amounts of grant money is spent to employ larger machinery operators to destroy the weeds (which are often coming from private land). Mal advised he will contact Rous County Council to see if they can encourage private owners to clean their properties.

Matt agreed the Rous is a starting point and indicated Council is supportive of engagement with Rous County Council on this matter.

Wayne Garrard indicated that if the weeds aren't noxious weeds, Rous most likely won't assist. The weeds Mal is referring to may be environmental weeds.

#### e) **Bulwinkel Park Meeting Update**

Mal Johnson would like to discuss the Bulwinkel Park meeting with Sheryn Da Re (Council's Landscape Architect).

Council's Landscape Architect provided the following update. Council met with community representatives at Bulwinkel Park on Tuesday 2 November 2021.

The group discussed the site features and individual aspirations for the future of the park. Sheryn raised the key matters for consideration in any future design as being the heritage context of the site and the processes and approvals that this status necessitates. The heritage assessment only addresses minor changes to certain areas of the park. Some key design features to be explored that we discussed in some detail included:

- Demolition of the existing brick shelter

- A new toilet located in a better position (possibly closer to the existing parking area on the top side of the trees where passive surveillance and access is better)
- Car parking (a variety of possible locations and options were discussed)
- Drainage improvements (this is a significant item of concern for the group which some felt required consideration of upper Main Street)
- Restoration of Maguires Creek generally as per the Vegetation Restoration Strategy retaining key views to the butter factory / peanut factory
- Picnic shelter facilities
- A desire to achieve wheelchair access between the carpark, picnic shelter and toilet block. The slope of the land and substantial existing trees may impact upon the ability to achieve this. Council identified this as a key design challenge and hopes to be able to resolve this

The group worked their way through a list of suggested ideas provided by Malcolm with the discussion covering additional items such as:

- Safety of Main Street – concern regarding conflicts between vehicles and bikes on steep hill with narrow road
- Play equipment - A desire for some more play equipment suited to younger ages
- Cadagi - There was no desire to keep the Cadagi tree
- Litter bin - The bin location near the memorial garden was seen as inappropriate
- Lighting - The park light is at the edge of the flood area
- Plant species suitability for certain areas
- Neighbouring property - A need to protect sunlight access to the neighbour's house and yard
- Managing vehicle access to the park grass area
- The camphor laurel stumps – to keep or remove (the group would like to see them stay in the short term)
- Monetary contributions - Donated funds available as a contribution towards the picnic shelter provisional upon a plaque (this needs to be confirmed against Council's Policy)
- Pool area – holes and safety issues
- Dog use - A need for dog waste bags
- Cadastral boundaries – possible use of land west of the walkway bridge for carparking (some could be Department of Education Land)
- Services – There is an NBN pit within garden areas and a water pipe connection which has been damaged by tree roots (may be decommissioned)
- Creek restoration - Restoration of the area on the southern side of the creek crossing bridge was seen by some as integral to the park with a request made for support from Council to remove large camphor laurel trees overhanging the bridge. Confirmation of the extent of the scope of the plan will be sought. This has been referred to James Brideson
- Connectivity - There was a desire to connect the walkway on the western side of the school oval to the park
- Opportunities to provide habitat for the Richmond birdwing butterfly.

It was highlighted to the group that the area near the existing carpark would need to be looked at in some detail in order to resolve interlinked issue, specifically accessibility, drainage, carparking and tree management.

It was also highlighted to the group that any design for the park will need to be developed having consideration to the community input as well as other planning and good design principles such as:

- Council's resolution 250221/4
- Creek restoration objectives
- Crime prevention through environmental design principles (CTPED)
- Australian Standards "Design for Access and Mobility"
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Environmental management and stormwater management requirements and standards
- Many others.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

Matt further added that the project is progressing and information is being compiled to prepare the plan.

Mal thanked Council staff for meeting with his group on site.

Mal also noted the Tibouchina garden has been damaged by pruning assumed to have been undertaken by Essential Energy. Mal requested Council's arborist prune the trees properly when suitable for the trees.

**Action:** Refer to Open Spaces to review the circumstances associated with the pruning.

**Post meeting update:** Council will be giving further consideration to management options of the Tibouchina's as part of the development of concept plans currently underway. It remains appropriate for the plans to be finalised prior to undertaking interim works.

## **7. Business without Notice**

### **a) Fitzroy Park Toilets - Locking Schedule**

Pat raised the issue of security locking the toilets at 6pm each night and requested Council consider changing the schedule on a Monday night to assist tennis players using the adjacent courts.

Matt advised that the toilets are scheduled to be locked at certain times based on a shire wide security run. Staff will review though having regard for the request.

**Action:** Refer to Open Spaces to review Fitzroy Park toilet closing options.

**Post meeting note:** Council staff will discuss the provision of toilets with representatives of the Tennis Club directly as part of continued lease negotiations.



b) **Tree Pruning – Rous Reserve**

Steve Miller thanked Council for providing the Rous Reserve picnic table and noted the community is looking at re-establishing the tennis courts (which will be further discussed with Crown Lands and a Development Application is required).

The tennis shed has been vandalised and weather boards have been removed. The community plans on fixing the shed pending grants but requested Council remove tree limbs that are hanging low on the shed.

Matt Wood enquired about the location of the tree with Steve indicating the tree is located in the road reserve.

**Action:** Refer to Engineering Works to investigate the removal of tree limbs hanging low on the shed.

**Post meeting note:** Council staff inspected the tree and placed it on a list to be included in the next batch due for tree lopping (refer to CRM 21/105821).

c) **Gratitude to Retiring Mayor and Councillors**

Members of the committee thanked the C Ward Councillors for their contributions and efforts (and in particular the Mayor and Councillors who are not running in the next election).

Cr Parry commented that the C Ward committee members should be commended for their commitment to the community.

a) **Ant Problem - Plateau Playing Fields**

Russell Priddle indicated that ants on playing fields remains a concern.

**Action:** Refer to Open Spaces to review.

**Post meeting note:** Council continues to monitor ant activity as part of regular sportsfield safety inspections. Where intervention is required, control measures are implemented in accordance with adopted Council practices and applicable legislation, noting control measures have recently been scheduled on the plateau.

b) **Elizabeth Ann Brown Park Seat**

On behalf of the community Cr Eoin Johnston requested a seat at the southern end of Elizabeth Ann Brown Park in association with the new memorial. Many elderly would use the seat when they view the memorial. Cr Johnston enquired if a new Development Application would be required.

It was noted that there is a master plan for the park and seating would be considered in this context.

**Action:** Refer to Open Spaces to investigate potential for a seat.

**Post meeting note:** Council staff have commenced discussions with Alstonville RSL Sub-Branch regarding progressing seat installation within the park.

**8. Update on COVID-19**

Matt Wood provided a brief update indicating Council is continuing to operate in line with public health orders.

**9. Council Documents on Exhibition**

The list of Council documents recently exhibited for public comment was noted.

**10. Next Meeting - **Thursday 7 March 2022 at 5.00 pm****

**11. Meeting Closure - **The meeting closed at 6.05 pm****