



## **Notice of Port Ballina Taskforce Meeting**

A Port Ballina Taskforce Meeting will be held in the Ballina Shire Council Chambers, Ballina on **Tuesday 2 February 2021 at 4.00 pm.**

### **Business**

1. Attendance and Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes Port Ballina Taskforce meeting held 29 June 2018 (attached)
4. Deputation – Mr Pat Grier
5. NSW Boating Now Program
6. Martin Street Boat Harbour
7. Ballina Boat Harbour
8. Healthy Waterways Program
  - a) Shaws Bay Coastal Management Plan
  - b) Lake Ainsworth Coastal Management Plan
  - c) North Creek Coastal Management Plan
  - d) Richmond River Coastal Management Plan
  - e) Emigrant Creek and Others
  - f) Other
9. Tuckean Program
10. Ballina Bar - Dredging
11. Smith Drive Marine Industry Precinct
12. Business Without Notice
13. Next Meeting

Paul Hickey  
**General Manager**

1. **Attendance and Apologies**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

3. **Minutes from Port Ballina Taskforce Meeting held 29 June 2018**

The Minutes from the meeting held 29 June 2018 are included as an attachment to this agenda.

**Recommendation**

That the Taskforce confirms the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 June 2018.

4. **Deputation – Pat Grier**

Mr Pat Grier will provide a deputation on the opportunities available in respect to the Richmond River, particularly the Ballina Boat Harbour.

5. **NSW Boating Now Program**

Council has been successful with two projects for round three of the NSW Boating Now funding program:

- 1) Detailed investigations for the Martin Street Boat Harbour following the initial master plan work funded under Boating Now Round 1.

The adopted master plan is available on Council's website as per the following link:

<https://ballina.nsw.gov.au/files/Martin%20Street%20Boat%20Harbour%20Precinct%20Master%20Plan.pdf>

The scope of this project includes bathymetric survey, geotechnical investigations and concept design – Total project cost \$120,000 – Boating Now funding \$90,000, Council funding \$30,000

- 2) Upgrade to the existing surface of the informal North Creek boat ramp at Skennars Head and to the car parking, which was designed under Boating Now Round 1 – Total project cost \$180,000 – Boating Now funding \$90,000, Council funding \$90,000.

Council also applied for the Brunswick Street boat ramp facility upgrade – based on the concept design prepared by Royal Haskoning DHV, 2019, with that project unsuccessful.

**6. Martin Street Boat Harbour – Master Plan**

The Martin Street Boat Harbour Precinct master plan was adopted by Council in 2016 to encourage redevelopment of the precinct. The value of the works in the plan range from \$8m to \$13m (2017 estimates). There are nine priority actions in the plan as per the following table.

**Martin Street Boat Harbour Precinct Master Plan (\$)**

Item	Low	High
<b>High Priority</b>		
New Harbour and Marine Infrastructure	3.0	6.0
Harbour Parkland and Western Plaza	0.4	0.5
<b>Medium Priority</b>		
Pilot Station	0.2	0.4
Regatta Avenue and Car Park	0.8	1.2
Park upgrade	0.3	0.5
<b>Low Priority</b>		
Harbourside Plaza	0.4	0.6
Harbourside Development	3.0	3.5
Museum Foyer	0.2	0.5
Harbour Beacon	0.1	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.4m</b>	<b>13.4m</b>

The precinct is on crown land with Council being responsible for the management of the eastern section of the reserve (marked in yellow below), including the Naval Museum. The boat harbour section is managed by the State Government.



The lack of State Government action on prominent sites, such as this, is an on-going frustration for Council, which is why Council completed the Master Plan in an effort to encourage State Government investment.

Council continues to use the Boating Now program to seek State Government funding to advance the Master Plan, as well as lobbying State Government Ministers and Agencies.

**7. Ballina Boat Harbour – Master Plan**

The Ballina Marina master plan, which focuses on the Ballina Boat Harbour Precinct, was adopted by Council in 2017. A copy of the master plan is available on Council’s website as per the following link:

<https://ballina.nsw.gov.au/files/17%2088414%20%20Ballina%20Marina%20Master%20Plan%20-%20FINAL%20%20ADOPTED%20-%20resized%20for%20web25.10.17.pdf>

Similar to the Martin Street Boat Harbour, the precinct is crown land, with Council only having control over a small section of the site (marked in yellow).



Council has continued to write to State Government representatives to encourage proactive action and more recently there has been some, limited, State Government and private sector interest in respect to the site. Council will continue to lobby State Government Ministers and Agencies to have the Master Plan implemented.

**8. Healthy Waterways Program**

Council's Healthy Waterways Program is into its third year with key actions and projects completed or underway including:

**(a) Shaws Bay Coastal Management Plan Actions**

The State Government requires Coastal Management Plans (CMPs) to be adopted by councils to set out the program of works to be undertaken to proactively manage coastal waterways. The adoption of a plan also helps with planning approvals and seeking State Government grant funding.

The Shaws Bay CMP was adopted in 2015 and gazetted by the Minister in June 2016.

During the past 18 months Council has undertaken a significant number of the actions identified in the Shaws Bay CMP, including the recent dredging and restoration of a number of embankments. A number of these actions implemented have been funded in part through Council's Healthy Waterways Program.

A copy of the Shaws Bay CMP and the information on the works undertaken is available as per the following link:

<https://ballina.nsw.gov.au/shaws-bay-improvements>

**(b) Lake Ainsworth Coastal Management Plan Actions**

Funding from the Healthy Waterways Program assisted in undertaking the eastern foreshore works at Lake Ainsworth, including the closure of the eastern road.

Council has also completed a comprehensive consultation process and adopted a new Lake Ainsworth CMP. The CMP sets out works totalling \$2.8m to be completed during the next ten years. Council has applied for significant State Government monies to undertake Action 3 in the CMP, being beach nourishment and revegetation, with an estimated cost of \$260,000. The outcome of that application is likely to be known shortly.

Further information on the Lake Ainsworth Coastal Management Plan is available as per the following link:

<https://ballina.nsw.gov.au/lake-ainsworth>

**(c) North Creek Coastal Management Plan - Development**

Dredging North Creek has been a priority for Council for a number of years, due to the excess silt build up, and similar to Shaws Bay and Lake Ainsworth, Council has been required to complete a CMP for North Creek, to determine whether dredging is an appropriate action, along with identifying any other actions that can help to improve the health of this waterway.

In accordance with the State Government requires for the preparation of CMPs, Council has completed the initial Scoping Study (Stage 1). That study has identified the following studies to be undertaken.

<b>Management Issue/Threat (Importance)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Estimate (\$)</b>
Altered hydrology (very important)	Hydrology and drainage patterns within the catchment have and continue to change. They are not well understood now, and there is a data gap for small to medium events which have greatest water quality impacts, and medium-high drainage impacts.  Condition of drains is not well understood. Includes impacts on adjacent land uses and ecosystems.	Collect high resolution topographic data to 0.1m vertical across entire catchment.  Bathymetric survey of all key drains and estuary channel.  Develop hydrodynamic model of catchment to understand flow dynamics and drainage pathways.  Map drain condition and capacity.  Assess impacts of drain on adjacent land uses and ecosystems.  Cost-benefit analysis of existing drainage works.  Review governance arrangements for drainage management.	\$250K-\$350K             \$60K
Catchment Runoff (Very important)	Agricultural and urban development, drainage works, and disturbance of acid sulfate soils has degraded WQ in North Creek and estuary.	Implement North Creek Water Quality Monitoring Program.  Develop source catchment model using outputs from studies above and WQMP to assess pollutant pathways through the catchment.	\$150K
Climate Change (Very important)	Project sea level rise will have significant impacts on environmental, social and economic impacts within the catchment.	Use hydrodynamic model to assess tidal inundation for a range of likely climate change scenarios for a range of impacts (ecological, rural land uses, aquifer, acid discharge etc)	\$100K
Sand accumulation in the estuary (Important)	Impact of dredging on water quality and tidal inundation is unknown, as is the benefit-cost associated.	Use the hydrodynamic study developed above to assess impacts of dredging, considering issues identified within North Creek Scoping Study and any other additional identified.	\$250K
Land use planning (Very important)	Land use planning decisions are currently made with uncertainty surrounding future conditions (ie SLR, altered drainage etc)	Use hydrodynamic model and climate change information to consider ongoing viability of land uses. Feed into Climate Action Strategy and Local Growth Management Strategy.	\$30K
Ecosystems (vegetation) (Moderately important)	Vegetation communities are highly fragmented within the catchment.	Map existing vegetation, and pre-European vegetation if possible. Consider future vegetation communities, under SLR and climate change.	\$50K
Ecosystems(saltmarsh, seagrass, mangrove) (Important)	These are important to estuary ecology and provide significant ecosystem services.	Determine likely changes to saltmarsh, seagrass and mangrove communities. Map potential reinstatement communities. Identify opportunities for migration.	\$25K

<b>Management Issue/Threat (Importance)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Estimate (\$)</b>
Ecosystems (fish and wild oyster populations) (Important)	The estuary is important habitat for fish and wild oysters.	Baseline and regular monitoring to characterise existing population and changes over time. Monitor cultural oyster health during WQMP implementation to identify parameters (and potentially land uses) which impact on mortality and morbidity of oysters.	\$40K
Ecosystems (shorebirds) (Moderate)	Estuary and catchment provide important habitat for birds.	Expand monitoring relating with dredging to include upper estuary.	\$20K
Ballina Nature Reserve (BNR) – High Important	BNR is a large and important area of catchment classified as a coastal wetland. Drainage through the area has been extensively modified.	Determine current outputs of BNR. Assess ecological condition of ecosystem and determine likely changes (climate change) to ecosystems. Update actions list within BNR.	\$50K (NPWS should assist with funding although have indicated little immediate financial capacity to do so).

As per this table the costs are significant and reflect the fact that North Creek is an extremely complex catchment, with diverse and sometimes competing land uses.

Council is now seeking funding from the State Government to undertake these studies and unfortunately the completion of the CMP for North Creek is still a long way off.

#### **(d) Richmond River Coastal Management Plan**

There are various actions underway that contribute to the implementation this plan, which was jointly adopted by Lismore, Richmond Valley, Rous and Ballina councils.

Council is currently working on a new initiative - Keith Hall Drainage Options Study with Rous County Council and landowners.

This project aims to undertake a detailed investigation to improve the understanding of the current hydrology and potential sources of poor quality water in the Keith Hall drainage system.

Rous County Council and constituent councils have been actively progressing the review of this Coastal Management Plan and a brief for a Stage 1 Scoping Study was advertised in December 2020.

Quotations closed on 22 December 2020 and are now being reviewed.

**(e) Emigrant, Maguires and Houghlahans Creek, Marom and Chilcotts Creek – Riparian Revegetation Works**

The Healthy Waterways funding has allowed Council to secure in excess of \$100,000 in grant monies for on-going riparian revegetation works in various tributaries to the Richmond River.

**(f) Other**

The Healthy Waterways funding has also increased Council's program of water quality testing and monitoring, vegetation mapping and support of other non-Council programs, such as the Tuckean Project being undertaken by Ozfish, as per following agenda item.

**9. Tuckean Program**

The poor environmental and river health of Tuckean floodplain and wetlands has significant detrimental impacts on the Richmond River and the local chapter of Ozfish Unlimited (ozfish.org.au) is co-ordinating a project that has the objective of improving water quality and habitat values within the Tuckean Nature Reserve.

This project is moving into a second stage where it is considering the logistical issues around implementation of the options identified as possible in a report by WRL (UNSW's consulting arm) during 2020.

Ozfish Unlimited has applied for a grant to assist with undertaking a cost/benefit analysis, design and costing of infrastructure change and ongoing costs associated with their project management.

NPWS are also considering their options within the Tuckean Nature Reserve.

**10. Ballina Bar - Dredging**

There has not been any recent updates on plans by the State Government to undertake a possible one-off dredge of the Ballina bar.

**11. Smith Drive Marine Industry Precinct**

Council's staff are interested in any views on current and expected levels of demand for marine industry in the Smith Drive Industrial Area, as this precinct forms part of Council's strategic planning work program. Any ideas or feedback on planning options to encourage development of the site would be appreciated.

**12. Business Without Notice**

**13. Next Meeting**

As required.



**Minutes  
Port Ballina Taskforce  
Friday 29 June 2018 at 3.00 pm**

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**Attendance**

**Members**

Cr David Wright, Mayor, Ballina Shire Council  
Cr Keith Williams, Ballina Shire Council  
Cr Eoin Johnston, Ballina Shire Council  
Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Ballina Shire Council  
James Foster, Community Representative  
Michael Cocks, Community Representative  
Ian Hush, Community Representative  
Darren Watson, RMS, Maritime  
Phil Hilliard, Ballina Fishermen's Co-operative  
Mario Puglisi, Ballina Fishermen's Co-operative  
Glenn Costello, Ballina Chamber of Commerce  
Jennifer Littler, Ballina Chamber of Commerce  
John Larsson, Ozfish, Recreational Fisher Representative

**Observers**

Paul Hickey, General Manager, Ballina Shire Council  
Kerri Watts, Manager Public and Environmental Health, Ballina Shire Council  
Paul Busmanis, Manager Engineering Works, Ballina Shire Council

**1. Apologies**

Nil

**2. Declarations of Interest**

**3. Minutes from Port Ballina Taskforce Meeting held 29 August 2017**

That the Taskforce confirms the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 August 2017

(Ian Hush / Phil Hilliard)

**4. General Business**

**(a) North Creek Dredging Project**

Discussion in respect to project background along with estimated costs to obtain approval, with no guarantee an approval will be obtained.

Discussion also in respect to linkage with the preparation of the North Creek Coastal Management Plan.

Report to be submitted to the elected Council in the near future to determine if Council wishes to proceed with the project, or wait until the North Creek Management Plan is completed.

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**(b) NSW Boating Now Program**

Paul Busmanis provided an overview of the works completed to date, along with discussion on projects still to be completed (Brunswick Street and North Creek).

Additional grant funds will be sought to complete these two projects along with the next stage of the Emigrant Creek dredging project.

**(c) Tuckean Program**

John Larsson, Ozfish provided an update with the project progressing well.

**(d) Healthy Waterways Program**

Kerri Watts provided an overview of the works completed to date along with works planned for the next 12 months.

Implementation of Shaws Bay Coastal Management Plan, with significant works completed to date has been a priority. Next stage of this project is to seek grant funding for dredging.

The preparation of the North Creek Coastal Management Plan is also a high priority.

**(e) Ballina Bar – Dredging**

General discussion on the Ballina Bar and agreement that despite State Government assurances that the bar is satisfactory, dredging remains a high priority.

Paul Hickey to forward further correspondence to the State Government, on behalf of the Mayor to lobby for the dredging to proceed.

**5. Next Meeting**

To be advised

**Meeting closure: 4.00pm**