



TRRA September/October Newsletter 2017

1. *President's Invitation to the 2017 Annual General Meeting*

**7:00 pm 17 October 2017, Main Auditorium, Nelson Bay Bowling Club,
Nelson Bay**

Guest Speaker: Ryan Palmer, Mayor Port Stephens Council

I would like to personally encourage all TRRA members to attend this meeting which comes at a critical point for the future governance of Port Stephens. We have a newly elected Council led by a young and enthusiastic Mayor.

The Tomaree Peninsula Community needs to demonstrate to the new Council and the Council administration that it is an important driver of the local economy and that full and fair consideration be given to its needs for services and infrastructure. This can best be achieved by strongly supported Associations such as TRRA which have the resources and capacity to review Council initiatives and to effectively lobby their representatives.

As a first step please come to this meeting where we are privileged to have our new **Mayor Ryan Palmer as our guest speaker**. We have moved the venue to the lower floor auditorium in expectation of a good roll-up. Why not invite your friends to come?

It is equally important to [join TRRA](#) for \$10 as our formal membership list is a significant indicator of our support in the community. We also urge you to consider offering to [stand as a Committee member](#) as there are many skills we need to maintain our impressive record in lobbying council and other levels of government. Nomination procedures are provided below.

Geoff Washington - TRRA President

Full Information for AGM is available [HERE](#)



2. Report on first Meeting of new Council

New Look Council, but old culture survives.

This is a must read!



3. The fight to save the Mambo wetlands.

Mambo Fight Continues - 01 Oct 2017 Protest On Site



4. *Nelson Bay Now Report*

The last meeting was held on 27 September (chaired by Nigel Waters as deputy convenor) in the new Business Chamber premises at the end of the St George Bank Arcade (shared with Destination Port Stephens).

Mayor Ryan Palmer announced that he would be resigning from the position of Convener due to conflict of interest issues. Nominations for a replacement will be considered at the next meeting of NBN.

Council's progress with the revision of the Nelson Bay Town Centre and Foreshore Strategy was discussed with members expressing concern that the Traffic and Parking study commenced around Easter would not be released before the revised draft Is finalised.

Plans for the work for the Yacaaba Street extension, see [HERE](#), were discussed and the overall concept was welcomed. It was noted that the demolition work was well underway. There was a consensus that two trees at the northern end of the space should be moved to the eastern boundary to avoid blocking the view to the waterfront from the Yacaaba Street approach. It was agreed that the plan should include outdoor tables and seating to provide for those wishing to picnic or consume take away foods. The potential for temporary markets should also be considered

TRRA received a legible copy of the plans and will make its own submission so any ideas would be welcome.

5. *Birubi Point Aboriginal Place: [Draft Management Plan](#)*

A number of TRRA members attended a "Drop In" information Session on 12 August at Birubi Surf Club. This Session was arranged by the Council to invite public review and comment on a draft masterplan. Council staff, Worimi, National Parks, and the Surf Club had representatives present

The key proposal is to develop a transport interchange and Worimi interpretive centre on the corner of Gan Gan Road and the 4x4 entry road to Stockton Beach. The strategy is to divert tourist coaches from the congested parking areas at Birubi Point and to transfer visitors to the various dune based activity at this interchange. A secondary entry and parking facility is proposed to the East at Robinson Reserve.

TRRA made a submission to council pointing out that the Management Plan was deficient in that it did not have any introductory section which identified the legislative and planning instruments which governed the management and uses of the site. We also pointed out that there was no discussion of objectives or the environmental and cultural issues affecting this iconic location.

We queried whether the needs and opinions of the tourist operators and other recreational users had been canvassed.

TRRA suggested that consideration be given to constructing a new road along portion of the 4X4 track with a link to an upgraded car park in the vicinity of the parking lot for the camel rides. A final plan will be referred to council.

6. The future of the Tomaree Lodge Hospital Site:

The Lodge is due to close mid 2018 with current residents to be transferred to smaller group housing.

Geoff Washington, president of TRRA, recently met with representatives of the Shoal Bay Community Association Inc. to discuss their initiatives to ensure that this key site remains in public ownership and that it will continue to be accessible to the public.

The Shoal Bay group is seeking to establish a 'reserve trust' to manage Tomaree Lodge and its surrounds and has made representations to the responsible minister along these lines. They have called for the Government to consult with the Port Stephens community on the future of the site. Geoff has suggested that the community also give consideration to desirable future uses of the site which would justify retention in public ownership. He mentioned his vision for a nationally significant regional museum to conserve and interpret our natural, cultural and heritage combined with educational and research facilities. This concept which is at an early stage has received positive responses from the RSL's historian and Nelson Bay Now. Further refinement and consultation will be necessary before the concept is canvassed with TRRA membership.

7. Port Stephens Koalas:



Geoff Washington, Nigel Waters and Dick Appleby were given a guided tour of the new koala facility by Port Stephens Koalas Ron Land.

We were very impressed with stage 1 of this project. There are four enclosures completed which will have Koalas in them this week. There is an administrative office/treatment facility and the group has now

employed an experienced koala handler who lives onsite in the Treescape complex.

The whole facility is surrounded by a high fence and a high tech security system with 24 hr cameras monitoring the guests and surroundings. There are even infrared beams to warn of any predators, wild or human.

Ron gave us some disturbing statistics about the current and future prospects of Koalas in Port Stephens and he and his active bunch of volunteers are driven by the knowledge that if something is not done there we will be facing a future with no koalas our area.

The red tape and hurdles that the group has had to surmount to get this far this quickly has been astonishing and we can only hope that their vision of a properly funded Koala hospital and interpretive centre facility in stage two and three will eventually attract tourism to Treescape and make sure that these animals survive as we continue to remove their habitat for new developments.

Examiner 02 Oct 2017: [Port Stephens Koalas launches Go Fund Me page](#)

8. Lagoons Estate litigation:

The expensive litigation against PS Council at Lagoons estate continues.

“The conduct of the proceedings does not reflect well on the legal representatives or their clients. It has certainly not been in the interests of the parties or in the interests of justice. The current dispute has all the hallmarks of an attitude on both sides which is both myopic and pedantic. There has been an excessive focus on formality and minutiae, at the expense of the real issues in dispute”.
NSW Supreme Court Justice Michael Pembroke. 12 Sept 2017

[Lawyers picnic at Lagoons Estate 2017](#)





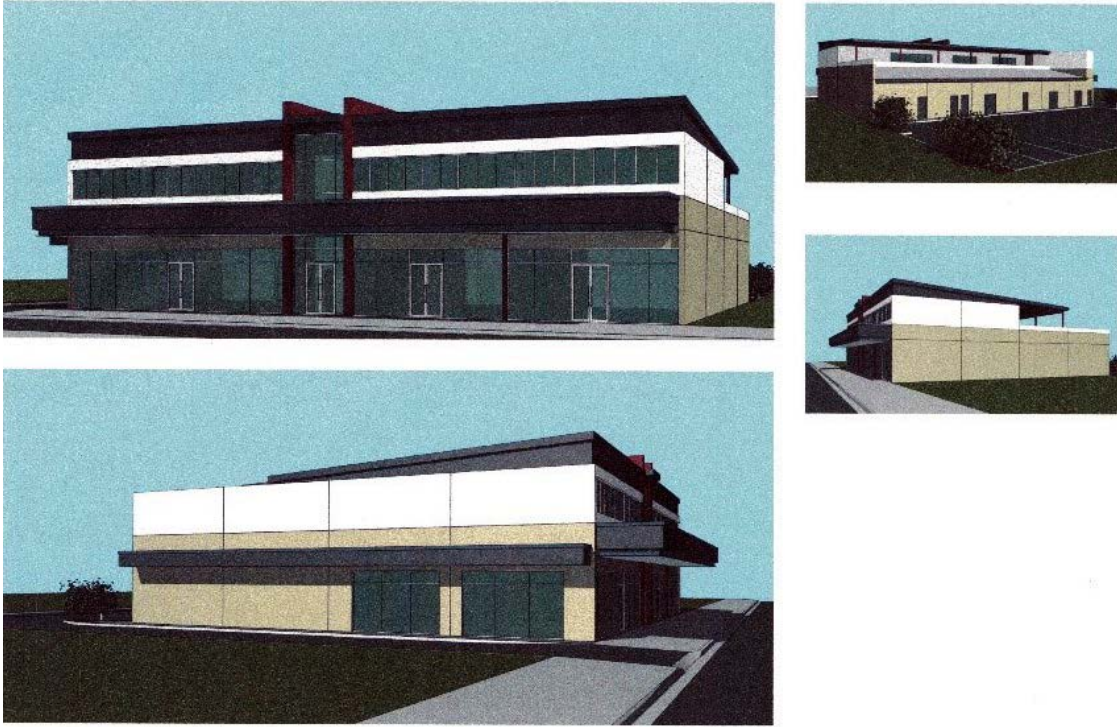
We remain very concerned about the 'precedent' effect of the approval for 11-13 Church St. The next stage of the **Nelson Bay Town Centre and Foreshore Strategy Review** will be the release of a report on the consultation earlier this year and probably a draft revised Strategy, hopefully in the next month so that the community can continue the conversation before the summer holiday period.

TRRA is fearful that the revised plan will try to 'verbal' the community into accepting major increase in permissible height throughout the town centre. This despite the clear message from the consultation that most people want to retain the character of the town.

We need everyone to be ready to insist that any new planning instruments reflect and respect the wishes of the local community rather than accepting a spurious argument that only tall buildings are viable, and are necessary to revitalise the town. We reject that conclusion, and point to recent applications for much more modest apartment buildings on Church and Donald Streets as evidence that we can have new investment without losing what makes Nelson Bay special.

Salamander Centre

Council continues its piecemeal development around the existing centre, with a DA now in for a very plain block of shops and offices on Lot 2 - backing onto the Rigby Centre, between the new Medical Centre and the new servo.



So called 'caravan park' bids to increase density

Ingenia, who have already bought two of the mobile home parks on the peninsula, are now building a huge new one – '**Latitude One**' off Nelson Bay Rd at Anna Bay – you can see the new access road to the north opposite 'Footrot Flats'. They have now applied for an extra 41 units on the same site, adding to the 229 already approved (**see plan below**).

We opposed the original development on the same grounds as we did the two other 'residential villages' already approved in the area – '**Sunrise**' on the old Diver's Luck winery site – with 188 long term occupancy sites and 'The Boardwalk' behind it on Trotters Lane with another 102 long term sites. We have opposed the application to squeeze the nearly 20% more units onto an already very high density development, which would bring the total number of new manufactured home sites in the Anna Bay-Bobs Farm area to 560!

While these residential villages seem to meet a demand for lower cost housing for seniors, we have questioned why they have been allowed on land zoned rural, far from shops and local facilities, and in the case of Latitude One, not even on a bus route. The planning system should be able to deliver better quality outcomes even for affordable housing.

