

CULTURAL PLAN SUBMISSION



**IN RESPONSE TO
THE PORT STEPHENS
DRAFT CULTURAL PLAN
2009 - 2013**

TRRA

'Culture is system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, artefacts that members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation.'

CREATING CULTURE

'The ultimate aim of this cultural policy is to increase the comfort and enjoyment of Australian life. It is to heighten our experience and add to our security and well-being...by creating new avenues for artistic and intellectual growth and expression and by supporting our artists and writers, we enable ourselves to ride the wave of global change in a way that safeguards and promotes our national culture. This cultural policy is also an economic policy. Culture creates wealth...Culture adds value, it makes an essential contribution to innovation, marketing and design. It is a badge of our industry. The level of our creativity substantially determines our ability to adapt to new economic imperatives. It is a valuable export in itself and an essential accompaniment to the export of other commodities...It is essential to our economic success.'

Creative Nation, 1994



'Councils primary purpose is to strengthen social inclusion and community building through arts practice and community cultural development. This means engagement with community in the broadest sense, while noting



the particular relevance of community cultural development for marginal and high needs groups'

Melbourne City Council

CULTURAL IMPERATIVES

To discover and recognise new ways of seeing ourselves and the world around us.

In a world where change is an every day occurrence we need the arts more than ever.

We come to understand and respect difference.

In a world where difference often leads to conflict, the arts help us appreciate the value of diverse perspectives.

We connect with our own heritage and the heritage of others.

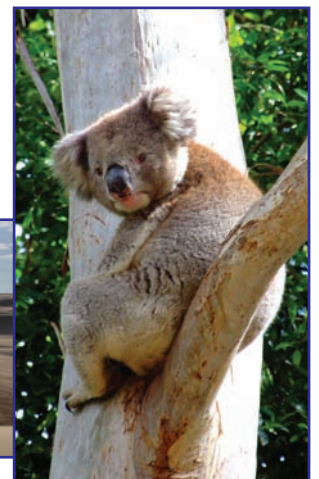
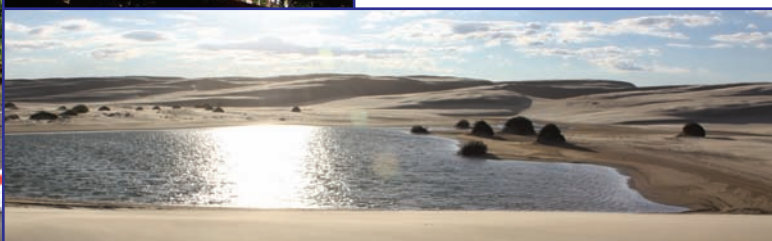
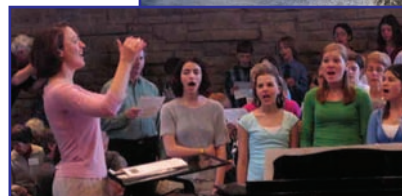
The arts speak across time and across language.

We can celebrate our achievements and express our dreams.

We can discover our creativity, as individuals and within communities.

We can enhance our physical environment and our connection to it.

The arts and creative industries make a crucial contribution to the economic sustainability...



Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association (TRRA) welcomes the Council's Draft Cultural Strategy and identified action plan together with the opportunity to comment.

The following comments should be read in conjunction with the Port Stephens Council 'Response' document and the final section of our submission identifying priorities. Whilst this final section is based on specific objectives contained within the draft plan, together with TRRA recommendations it does not encompass all objectives and actions.

It is accepted and understood that there are considerable challenges for a local government area such as Port Stephens, with its diverse population, separated by considerable distances, plus the significant financial restraints - partially as a result of the global financial crisis but also as a result of questionable financial decisions made by council.

However, TRRA finds that the draft Strategy has no real 'vision' and no long-term outcomes, and has opted towards the 'small' or 'individual' view of cultural development. There are very few new initiatives with no budgetary considerations, for funding of initiatives, identified.

The Strategy defines 'culture' as *"culture is what counts as culture for the people of a defined area - the shared beliefs, customs, rituals and values of a people in a given place at a given time"*. This definition is pedestrian, narrow and totally lacking foresight.

TRRA does, however, applaud some objectives and areas of the draft Action Plan, in particular the emphasis on a sense of 'place' being central to community wellbeing and growth. However, TRRA questions delivery of this objective.



OVERVIEW

In general, TRRA finds that the Draft Strategy has been conceived with little or no public consultation or participation. There has not been an adequate consultation process with either the general community or the major stakeholders on which an informed and considered Strategy could be developed.



The basic tenet of any strategy is to identify 'values' on which a 'vision' can be defined. Without the appropriate consultation process, values and vision do not stamp the direction of cultural growth nor give ownership to its development.

There has been no reliable and up to date market research carried out. All information, figures and statistics appear to date from 1998 to 2006, so an accurate picture of the profile or demographics of the LGA or profiles specific to each Ward of the LGA cannot be clearly established.

There have been no audits, evidence based feedback or community analysis responses to the 2005-07 cultural plan. There is, for example, no evidence to indicate any research and assessment such as:

- access and attendance at events and activities;
- preferences for cultural activities;
- movement between Wards of the LGA for cultural activities; changing values;
- priorities for infrastructure and resources and so on.

This is surely the basic information required to expand and provide directions for any future growth in the cultural sector.

With such outdated information it is impossible to determine the 2009 -2013 profile of the LGA and in particular the Tomaree Peninsula, or to plan cultural activities, resources, infrastructure and budgets to meet the needs of changing values and communities now and for the next 3 to 5 years. A SWOT analysis would have lent weight to the document in identifying future needs and directions.

It would have been useful for a discussion regarding cultural values with the recognition that these are not fixed and change due to many influences.

It would have been uplifting to see values such as excellence, freedom for creative expression, imagination, originality and making a difference, mentioned in the draft strategy.

No methodology has been included to indicate how council has decided on what objectives and strategies to pursue and invest in.



Whilst the council has indicated an intention to integrate this cultural plan with other council strategies, this plan is essential for the Tomaree Peninsula if the benefits, opportunities and challenges are to be engaged for economic growth and social growth. The strategies and potential outcomes should be integrated into the Port Stephens Futures Strategy, Nelson Bay 2030 Plan, and the Port Stephens Economic Strategy.

The economic reality for the Port Stephens LGA is that the Tomaree Peninsula, is the most

densely populated area with the LGA, with the largest and most diverse group of residents of approximately 26,000, with a further estimated 23,000 non resident property owners.

It also provides the major proportion of all LGA revenue - approximately 66% from rates, tourism, land sales etc.

The Tomaree Peninsula is the principal tourist destination in the LGA with an estimated 1.5 million tourist (20,000 beds) annually - approximately 700 000 domestic overnight visitors and similar numbers for day visitors. It is also a fact that despite the economic returns from the Tomaree Peninsula less than 30% of revenue collected is returned to the Peninsula for investment and growth.

The Draft Cultural Plan does not consider this, is not equitable nor it is it designed to invest in the primary growth market.

The Strategy does not strongly identify Cultural Tourism as an outstanding opportunity for the area to use its natural resources as an economic driver.

Not enough weight has been given to the environment and youth initiatives and there are major gaps in the objectives - including health, well being and built heritage.

Recommendations

- Consultation and Participation to achieve a common cultural goal.
- Council has missed a great opportunity to include the community in the development of this document to get substantive feedback on such things as:
 - changing values
 - infrastructure
 - value of arts and cultural development for the wellbeing of the community
 - economy and tourism
 - environmental sustainability and biodiversity
 - natural heritage
 - the museum sector

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

There has also been far too little community consultation leading up to the drafting of this document and a rather ad hoc adoption of activities without supporting substance.

Following from the 2006 Cultural Plan council should have established a Reference Group to audit the LGA in terms of success of the previous plan, cultural activity, cultural groups, resources and infrastructure and the individual needs of each major community with the LGA.

Recommendations

- A Reference Group made up of stakeholders and other community representatives to be established to advise council on objectives and action plans and a vision for cultural life in the community.
- Participation in the planning process leads to ownership of the Plan and joint responsibility for outcomes - a survey on cultural attitudes should encompass the needs of all members of the community.
- A SWOT analysis should be carried out to understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in regard to cultural planning for the community, including benchmarking against previous Cultural Plans and those achieved by other councils.



Whilst the idea of establishing an 'annual forum to bring cultural practitioners and stakeholders together to facilitate networking' is a good one and supported by TRRA, it is 'putting the cart before the horse!'

MARKET RESEARCH

Statistics are not only outdated but there are a number of discrepancies in figures used in the draft strategy - even down to basic statistics on population growth for Port Stephens LGA - 1.57% over a 5 year period according to Department of Local Government, is very different to statistics quoted in the proposal.

Unless the Strategy is based on sound and up-to-date research, analysis of successes and failures, feedback and community participation there can be no vision for community culture, or the ability to plan cultural activities to address the needs of the community and to grow the economic and tourism potential,

What people actually want in their communities has been sadly neglected.

For example, do people want amateur theatricals, restaurants, galleries and museums, eco tourism activities, musical events, outdoor activities (bushwalking, water associated and sporting), indigenous cultural activities, better resources such as libraries and local community centres, National Parks, botanical gardens, lectures and education activities etc.?

This Strategy gives no evidence that it understands community attitudes to culture.

Many types of council designing their cultural strategy have carried out relevant and timely market research to establish demographics, and socio-economic profiles. They have organised community reference groups to advise council and some have used cultural mapping which provides a 'vision' incorporating values and identifying 'place' to cultural planning based on future growth patterns and demographics. Others have taken advice from cultural researchers and planners.

None of this is evident in this Strategy.

The Strategy does not offer any evidence-based affirmation of the success of established cultural activity presently undertaken in the LGA. eg festivals, concerts, theatre, youth activities, educational activities, NAIDOC. There is no accurate or up to date tourism

statistics for the LGA, in particular the 'tourism hub' - Tomaree Peninsula, nor is there a strategy to harness tourism as a major economic driver.

Recommendations

- Cultural mapping be used to identify changing values and demographics, and future growth patterns and involvement in a cultural life.

"Cultural mapping is a valuable tool for identifying a community's strengths and its resources. This process can help as communities move into the planning and implementation phase by identifying early resources, efficiencies and links between arts and cultural groups, as well as their common aspirations and values."

(UNESCO)

- A tourism strategy should be developed specifically for the Tomaree Peninsula based on sound market research and focussed on cultural tourism.
- Community surveys should be distributed to all ratepayers to establish values, rituals, customs, cultural preferences and access issues including travel for cultural activities outside local areas, and where, together with a needs assessment.
- Market Research needs to be implemented in conjunction with the development of a tourism strategy for the Tomaree Peninsula.
- New funding avenues from the state government and Tourism NSW to carry out market research and cultural mapping should be investigated.



METHODOLOGY

The methodology on which this Strategy has been designed should be outlined to indicate what core characteristics were used to guide the development of the Strategy.

Recommendations

- Identify methodology and provide supporting evidence.



AUDITING CULTURAL CAPITAL & CAPACITY

Achievements of the 2005-2006 Cultural Plan should have been audited with an analysis of successes and failures of the Plan to determine outcomes and community attitudes and ideas for the future. It is hardly a strategic success to nominate *"introduction of a traditional welcome and acknowledgement at all council meetings and events."* This is a national obligation and a moral call, not a strategy success!!

Despite a Cultural Plan in 2006, this Plan is still only *"investigating an audit"* of all cultural capital - resources, facilities, groups, individuals, on-line information etc. This should be a principal objective to identify what exists, what works and where gaps exist and opportunities are available. Each Ward within the LGA should also have been audited to establish their position on the cultural ladder.

The Strategy should identify objectives to grow the capacity of the community - to assist stakeholders, individuals, organisations, businesses - to better perform functions, solve problems and to set and achieve objectives.

'Capacity building refers to investment in people, institutions and practices that will enable them to achieve their development objectives. Investment in people, institutions and practices requires knowledge, time and dollars. While some emphasis on the physical resources is a part of the capacity building process, it is not the whole.'

Council has identified a number of actions that should build community cultural capacity - assistance with liability insurance, one-stop shop, and offering support to local groups for a range of activities, research statistics. Basic cultural capital is still unknown and not budgeted.

Recommendations

- Establish a Reference Group to advise on cultural capital growth and form a network for cultural industry groups and organisations.



- Provide economic assistance to small start up business in the cultural and tourism sectors - through advice on funding programs; consideration of rates etc.

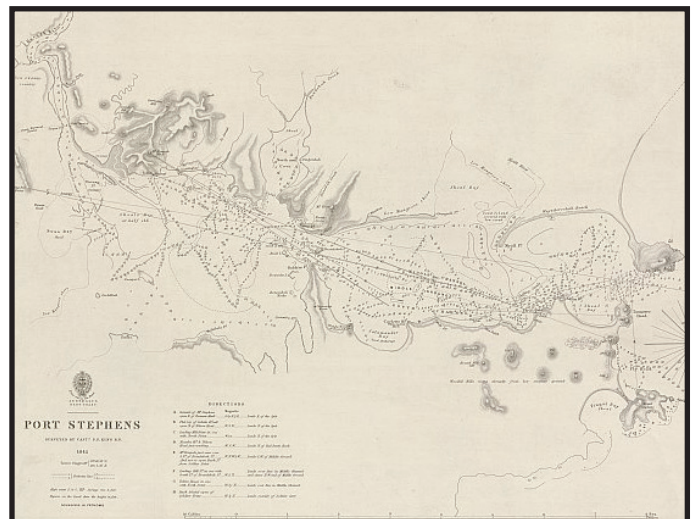
ACCESS HIERARCHY

Lack of research and community involvement has meant that there is no evidence to indicate community members' willingness or desire to travel outside their residential area for cultural activities. In fact anecdotal evidence would suggest the opposite.



Recommendations

- Community survey/market research to determine travel patterns and cultural preferences.
- A statement of access and distance to facilities and resources should be included, for example, Nelson Bay is approximately 40 minutes drive to Raymond Terrace and 1 hour to Karuah. Distances and time to access local, regional and district facilities must be incorporated.



BUDGETS AND TIMELINES

Whilst this Strategy identifies a number of very good ideas for cultural activities and events, there is no identified 'budget' nor is there a time line for implementation. Many of the actions are categorised as “*explore and develop*”, rather than as identified as a priority, or having some actions as priorities that need to be completed before the strategy can then achieve momentum.

Additional funds need to be identified for new initiatives and infrastructure, touring programs and educational activities

Recommendations

- Detailed plans and budgets need to be identified for proposed infrastructure and resources, whether new initiatives or upgrading of existing facilities.
- Timelines for implementation and evaluation should be included.
- Access funding programs within the Federal Government - Department of Environment Water Heritage and Arts
- Source funding programs for cultural activities for example, Festivals Australia, Visions Australia and Playing Australia (http://www.arts.gov.au/grants_and_funding)

FINANCIAL IMPERATIVES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The majority of all public funds flow into the Port Stephens Council from the Tomaree Peninsula as a result of, for example:

- The size of population and collected rates are higher than those in other areas of the LGA.

- tourism
- sale of land in the area and other council held assets
- Developer's fees.
- Community owned and council managed assets. i.e. caravan parks

If economic opportunities and benefits are to grow, Council should return a greater percentage of the income to the Tomaree area for general infrastructure, better quality resources, cultural and tourism activities and public/tourism related facilities.

Recommendations

- Tomaree Peninsula should receive a more equitable return on community capacity building activities and infrastructure.

CULTURAL PRECINCT

The establishment of a cultural hub is important and integral to creating a 'sense of place' however it is a very difficult concept to support in a LGA where communities are so widely dispersed, with little research or evidence to support current community values and preferences and attitudes to a 'cultural hub' in Raymond Terrace.

Establishing Raymond Terrace as the cultural centre for the LGA is totally unsupported and there has been no substantive research or community involvement in this proposal. Because there is no research to determine demographics, or cultural mapping for tourism statistics, TRRA would suggest Raymond Terrace does not have the same demographics as the Tomaree Peninsula, and it would have little or no cultural tourism cultural significance or tourist related activities.

Given the supporting facts of population, revenue, tourism and cultural tourism, then Tomaree is far better suited and the most rational choice for a community cultural arts and entertainment Centre.

Such a Centre would establish 'the heart' or 'sense of place' as the catalyst for the redevelopment of the Nelson Bay CBD. It would also have the greatest potential to grow a non-seasonal audience.



There is no research/ evidence to suggest that communities in the LGA would travel to a venue located in Raymond Terrace - in fact anecdotal evidence suggests to TRRA that residents of Tomaree would not travel to Raymond Terrace for cultural activities but would prefer Newcastle for arts, entertainment and cultural diversity...

It is not appropriate to determine that a 'cultural hub' should be situated on the basis of Council headquarters' being located at Raymond Terrace.

As stated previously, the Tomaree area has the largest population within the LGA, attracts the bulk of all tourism and the subsequent economic benefits derived from this, and provides the largest financial return to the LGA. In turn this subsidises growth and development to other areas of the LGA.

Recommendations

- The idea of a sense of 'place' is a very important to establishing a strong community and a good basis on which to build cultural capital and capacity.
- TRRA recommends a community cultural Arts and Entertainment centre be established in Nelson Bay for its 26,000 residents and the substantial tourism industry.
- TRRA recommends a 'Gateway' Tourist

Information Centre, combining National Parks and Wildlife Centre, Indigenous Centre, Tourist Activity Advice, Accommodation Booking Agency and associated 'commercial' operators and retail outlets.



- Council also needs to consider upgrading or providing financial support for existing venues and spaces for cultural activities in smaller populated areas of the LGA.
- Support local artists and practitioners by inviting them to tender for community projects such as 'sculptures for roundabouts' and including indigenous art in appropriate public spaces. This not only adds currency to a 'sense of place' but encourages economic development.



LIBRARY

Tomaree Library caters for 26,000 people and needs upgrading in terms of resources and facilities. It has also recently been announced that Council has been approached to sell land surrounding the Salamander Shopping Precinct, and this may impact on the library and community services buildings and facilities. It is essential therefore that this facility should be considered within this proposal.

Recommendations

- Budget for upgrade of library resources.
- Long term plans for the Tomaree Library be considered.
- Provide for possible relocation and construction budget.

YOUTH FACILITIES

Whilst there are a number of good suggestions for youth, TRRA recommends a greater emphasis on consultation with this major target group to establish capital and capacity.

Recommendations

- Establish a Youth Reference Group to advise council on how to better empower young people to take ownership of cultural directions and show responsibility for outcomes.
- That youth cafes be encouraged and established in Tomaree, Medowie and Raymond Terrace to cater for 12 to 18 years old. Youth desperately need meeting places outside of the more formal organisations such as religious and Police Citizens Boys Clubs.

- A meeting place, such as a coffee house, operated by council but with a board of



young people deciding on activities, rules and maintenance of the facility. This would encourage ownership and responsibility, empowering this age group to find a place for themselves within the broader community.

- More and better outdoor facilities should



be provided for the 10 to 16 age group. For example, skate and bike parks incorporating basketball facilities and other similar types of sport activities popular with young people.

THE ECONOMY

The council identifies the need to develop joint cultural activities, markets and audiences within the LGA, a major challenge given the diversity and spread of the population in the LGA.

The Strategy needs to identify additional ways of encouraging economic growth through new business initiatives and employment opportunities associated with cultural tourism, particularly where such activity takes place, the Tomaree Peninsula.

The council should also acknowledge that Tomaree is the major contributor to the LGA economy and if this economy is to grow then there needs to be a more equitable investment in the area.

Recommendations

- As Cultural Tourism has been identified as a major growth area by NSW Tourism in its reports since 2004, develop and implement a tourism strategy for the LGA with particular focus on cultural tourism. (refer previous comments on estimated tourist statistics 2009)
- Revenue from land sales in the Tomaree Peninsula should be primarily returned to the area to fund all primary and necessary infrastructure and facilities.
- Introduce assistance for small, start up tourism enterprises, for example, seminars of business planning and management; advice and assistance to achieve funding for start up business or organisations, developing synergies between the tourism communities.
- Develop a more integrated approach to economic growth through business associations and organisations.
- Indigenous tourism is uniquely Australian and is becoming increasingly popular with international visitors - increase support and funding for new initiatives with particular focus on employment and skills development.

CULTURAL TOURISM

Tourism must be factored into the overall economic benefits of a Cultural Strategy. (refer to previous comments on tourism statistics)

In the Tomaree Peninsula particularly, it provides substantial economic benefits to local businesses and to council revenue through tourist operator's licences, caravan parks, parking fees, tourist associated development, and a range of development fees etc.



Given that Tomaree is the cultural hub of the LGA consideration be given to rebranding the tourist hub for marketing purposes. This is the primary industry for the Tomaree Peninsula and there is no relevant or detailed research is available. TRRA research indicates that 95% - 97% of tourist accommodation, activity and spending within the Port Stephens LGA, is focused in this area.



It has major economic impact on Newcastle Airport growth, which in turn benefits council the Tomaree area and subsequently, the entire LGA.

The present tourist information office is situated in the middle of the Nelson Bay CBD and does not make information relating to cultural activities accessible to all tourists within the Peninsula.

To appropriately market cultural activities all tourists should be able to easily access services and information.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that tourists want access to a broad range of cultural activities within the immediate holiday vicinity.

Increased cultural activities, particularly in the eco environmental activities, (for example, programs run by Coastal Care Initiatives) and community events (concerts in the park, movies in the park, festivals), would attract a large number and range of tourists, particularly families.

State tourism figures show that there is strong interest in art galleries and museums amongst domestic and international tourists and there is a very large gap in this sector in the whole LGA and particularly in the Tomaree Peninsula. A rich indigenous culture, both heritage and environmental exists in the LGA and could be incorporated into programs not only to raise awareness but also to take advantage of the potential associated economic benefits.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that tourists attend one-off cultural activities, for example, concerts/movies in the park, festivals and organised sporting activities - sailing, fishing, diving etc

There are a number of businesses, community, tourist and stakeholder organisations working in the tourism industry without a single coordinated approach to tourism development.



Cultural tourism icons, for example Gan Gan Lookout and Fly Point are in a very sad state of disrepair, which is fairly representative for many of the other natural icons of the Peninsula.

Recommendations

- Develop a tourism strategy for the LGA but with particular focus on the Tomaree

Peninsula, and with an emphasis on cultural tourism and small business development. Look at new ways of branding Port Stephens, for example 'PS I love you!'

- As councils struggle to meet the cost of sophisticated market research a network of LGAs with similar profiles could be established to share knowledge and expertise to improve industry effectiveness and stimulate investment.
- A feasibility study is undertaken to look into rebranding the Tomaree Peninsula for marketing purposes - i.e. Tourists do not visit Port Stephens, they visit the Tomaree Peninsula.
- Identify and develop niche industry opportunities - through stakeholder and community reference group consultation and recommendations.
- Establish an upgraded cultural information facility on the outskirts of the Tomaree Peninsula - an accessible one-stop information shop for tourists at the entrance to the Peninsula.
- Develop a community cultural facility in Nelson Bay for the Tomaree Peninsula residents and tourists including a multi purpose performance space, visual arts gallery, museum/heritage gallery and café.
- A Tourism and Cultural Centre comprising outlets like an Information Centre, National Parks Office, Cultural and Indigenous History, and including accommodation booking office, tourist activities and booking centre should be located at the junction of Nelson Bay Drive Road and Port Stephens Drive to capture ALL visitors into the Peninsula.



- Business nurturing - provide assistance for small new business ventures which need assistance with industry contacts and networks; assistance in finding start-up funding; and guidance in small business management;
- Investigate funding towards development of a Tourism strategy and cultural business plan from both state and federal government programs/Australia Council Tourism Australia and Tourism NSW.
- Take greater advantage of our natural resource i.e. national parks and marine parks for cultural activities for example, bush camps, flora and fauna nature treks, rock pooling etc and educational activities.



- Seek advice from the Australia Council regarding development of cultural capital, community cultural activities and cultural marketing; also investigate funding options.
- Encourage our indigenous community to actively and directly contribute to a vibrant tourism and hospitality industry as employees, business operators and providers of sustainable Indigenous cultural experiences.
- Carry out a feasibility study regarding business opportunity at Bagnells Beach central reserve - for example a traditional beach side tea shop similar to those on the harbour beaches in Sydney .
- Extend online one-stop shop for art and cultural stakeholders to include links to potential funding programs and business development assistance. etc
http://www.arts.gov.au/grants_and_funding



- Establish a marine awareness and education facility including an aquarium at Little Beach or Duchies Beach to showcase local marine life creating a great attraction for local and tourists bringing potential new business opportunities and employment.
- Substantial injection of new funds to restore and maintain all natural cultural icons in the Tomaree Peninsula.
- Invite member of all stakeholders groups and businesses involved in tourism to form a reference group to develop useful and cooperative networks, advise council on tourist issues and be involved in the development of a Tourist Strategy, and seek independent funding for new initiatives.
- Investigate backpacker market. Harness opportunities to benefit from the rapid growth in backpacker tourism - Tourism NSW states that backpackers "*spend more, travel further and stay longer than other travellers*". Tourism NSW actively seeks to attract more adventurous and independent international travellers into regional areas, through the development of more 'must see and do experiences'. This is an untapped market.
[See:http://corporate.tourism.nsw.gov.au/Strategies_and_Plans_p555.asp](http://corporate.tourism.nsw.gov.au/Strategies_and_Plans_p555.asp)



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

As a strong cultural value, and potential economic force, this has not received the attention deserved, and the draft strategy should include responses to:

- Management of biodiversity
- Land and water quality
- Community in the Land care - parks and gardens, native flora and fauna etc
- Climate change
- Flora and fauna
- Recycling



Many parks and public spaces, beachfront and bay front areas in the Tomaree Peninsula area are poorly maintained and in need of upgraded facilities.

Recommendations

- Increased funding for community projects that focus on sustainable issues and outcomes - for example parks and gardens, land care, marine habitats etc.
- Establish a 'volunteers' program to coordinate efforts in environmental sustainability activities throughout LGA and seek funding to support this new initiative.
- Increase council budget to recruit more parks and gardens employees to maintain

public spaces within the Tomaree Peninsula in particular.

- Expand and develop community awareness and education programs such as Ocean and Coastal Care Initiatives, an excellent small project already supported by the council. Whilst this initiative is supported by Council it has the potential to become not only a great educational tool but to deliver substantial economic benefits.
- Increase funding for activities that support community awareness and education programs on environmental sustainability and the importance of protecting aboriginal and non-aboriginal heritage sites.
- Conserve, enhance and protect biodiversity in the Port Stephens LGA through a natural heritage study and a community education program.
- Investigate opportunities for new funding for these issues from State and Federal Project program grants and expand the proposed one-stop shop online information service to include funding programs available to community groups.
- Continue high standard recycling initiatives including the recently promoted 'poly bloc' recycling which has just been cancelled due to cost. Recycling initiatives should be expanded despite the cost - the cost to the environment is much greater in the long term.
- Continue to support Clean Up Australia Day and Clean up Stockton Beach Day.



FOCUSSED CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

An excellent idea to provide 'event ready' information for cultural groups and whilst TRRA endorses council's investigation of increased usage for outdoor spaces, it does not agree to the 'commercial' use of public spaces which restricts community access or imposes any form of pollution.

In particular TRRA is opposed to Fly Point being used for a commercial activity on New Years Eve or any other major celebration.

TRRA endorses increased council sponsored or funded community activities such as concerts, films, markets etc in public spaces.

Recommendations

- Fly Point or any major public space must remain open to all members of the community for any major celebration or festival.



- The New Years Eve music concert held at Fly Point for the last two years should be relocated to a more appropriate venue - the Tomaree Sporting Complex.
- Remove fair/circus type activities from the public spaces along the foreshore which not only cause visual pollution but use potential space for families.
- Expand concerts, films, markets in public spaces within the Tomaree community.
- Assist in establishing a fresh food market in the Tomaree Peninsula.

- Establish a museum or historical centre in the Tomaree Peninsula to take advantage of the rich historical background - early settlement, depression, tourist destination for Hunter Valley miners, WW2, fishing industry, oyster farming etc.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

This area has been completely neglected in the Strategy and is imperative that some consideration be given particularly through educational programs and sporting activities and activities for the young, families and senior citizens.



New infrastructure that focuses on healthy outdoor activity and development of physical skills for young people.

Using natural resources to introduce new outdoor activities and provide additional interest for tourism and business opportunities

Recommendations

- Adventure playground for children 5 to 15 years needs to be commissioned for the Tomaree Peninsula. The Adventure Playground in Tuggeranong in the ACT is an example of excellence.
- Additional physical education programs for seniors.
- Extend support for surf living clubs and expand activities around the marine environment, for example, swimming and surfing activities, children's sailing and kayaking groups etc.

References

NSW Department of Local Government
NSW Department of Planning
UNESCO - Cultural Mapping
Federal Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
The Australia Council
Eurabodella Council
Coffs Harbour Council
NSW Tourism Commission
Tourism NSW
Mid North Coast Tourist Organisation
Australian Association for Research in Education Conference
Melbourne City Council
Sydney City Council
University of Technology, Sydney
Creative Nation, Federal Government's Art Policy 1994

PRIORITIES

For many of the objectives and proposals within the draft strategy to be successfully addressed and implemented, TRRA has identified the urgent need for a list of priorities.

Recommendations

- Cultural Mapping to identify shared values, cultural preferences and visions for establishing a sustainable cultural environment for the community. If this were carried out it would also incorporate:

An audit of all LGA cultural groups within the performing arts, museum/visual arts sector, environmental, natural history, tourism, indigenous culture and heritage, and well as existing infrastructure and resources, cultural capital and capacity.



Cultural mapping involves a community identifying and documenting local cultural resources. Through this research cultural elements are recorded - the tangibles like galleries, craft industries, distinctive landmarks, local events and industries, as well as the intangibles like memories, personal histories, attitudes and values. After researching the elements that make a community unique, cultural mapping involves initiating a range of community activities or projects, to record, conserve and use these elements. ...The most fundamental goal of cultural mapping is to help communities recognise, celebrate, and support cultural diversity for economic, social and regional development

(UNESCO)

- Market Research is required to give much needed up to date statistics on demographics, socio economic profile and cultural tourism.



- Greater community involvement and participation in determining objectives and strategies for cultural life in the LGA.
- Establishment of a Reference Group to advise council on community issues in conjunction with a community survey to identify values and attitudes. Introduce consultancy programs with target groups i.e., youth, disabled.
- The development of a tourism Strategy is overdue and urgent for the Tomaree Peninsula, the tourism hub of the LGA.
- Community Cultural Arts and Entertainment Centre located within the Tomaree Peninsula and more specifically, Nelson Bay.
- Tourism, National Parks and Cultural History Centre to be built at the 'Gateway' to Tomaree - Nelson Bay Road and Port Stephens Drive.
- More equitable financial investment in the Tomaree Peninsula as a result of collected revenues and as a driver for future, long term economic growth and benefits enjoyed the entire LGA.
- Maintenance and upgrading of public spaces and infrastructure in the Tomaree Peninsula, including the graffiti action plan.