PORT STEPHENS GATEWAY EXCELLENCE

PROJECT BRIEF

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DOCUMENTATION AND APPROVALS

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Name	Signature	Title	Date Of Issue	Version
		Project Manager		

Signed approval forms are filed in the Management section of the project file.

Distribution

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PROJECT DEFINITION

BACKGROUND

Project Mandate

1. To remediate the roadway entrance to Port Stephens for it to reflect the current Destination Port Stephens marketing strategy as 'Incredible by Nature'. This entails presenting a visual impression along the road entry to Port Stephens as the premier regional NSW Tourism destination.

Present Status

2. The gateways to Port Stephens, particularly the approach roads to the Tomaree Peninsula, do not match the outstanding quality of the tourist destination. Problems which need to be addressed include the following:

a. Major infrastructure and development sites which are lacking in design quality and which pay insufficient attention to the visual impact on the approach road. The entry to Newcastle Airport is cited as a prime example of a missed opportunity.

b. Existing commercial and semi-industrial developments on rural zoned land (many of which rely on "existing use" exemptions) e.g. car wrecking yards and Port Stephens Removals shipping container yard.

c. Approved and illegal advertising signage proliferation with less than optimum formal directional tourist signage.

d. Parking of large road transport vehicles on road verges or disused roads e.g. south of the Airport entry.

e. Numerous scrap heaps of defunct farm machinery, transport vehicles and building waste on farmland which are clearly visible from the roads.

f. Poorly screened utility substations and the Council's Depot in the Tomaree sports precinct

g. Derelict roadside buildings

h. Unattractive road designs such as the recently installed roundabouts which are simply concreted but not landscaped.

i. The absence of a "signature" landscaping scheme on the entry way to tourist hubs such as Nelson Bay e.g. an avenue of attractive trees.

Objective

3. The objective of this project is to put in place the necessary plan of action, memorandums of agreement (MOAs) (or alternative documentation) and supporting policies that will achieve the Mandate.

PROJECT SCOPE

Included

4. The scope of the project includes the following:

    a. The geographic area of the principal roadways and their adjoining visual environs, travelled by new arrivals to Port Stephens, which include:

        (1) Nelson Bay Road from the Newcastle Airport to Nelson Bay, and

        (2) entry/exit roadways in the Airport precinct.

    b. Delivering the necessary draft policy documents and draft revisions to existing policy documents to allow Council to regulate and enforce the mandated environment.

    c. MOAs with other government, NFP and private stakeholders that may assist in managing the mandated outcome.

    d. Development standards that address the need for gateway quality considerations to be included in plans for and approvals of future developments such as the Williamtown Special Activation Precinct, sand mines and lifestyle centres fronting approach roads as well as big box retail developments.

Excluded

5. The scope of the project specifically excludes direct tourist marketing activities, and

OUTLINE PRODUCTS

6. The following products are perceived to be the likely result of this project:

    a. An overall strategy for remediating current Gateway issues that need addressing under the mandate and the ongoing maintenance of the Mandate.

    b. Plans of action to address specific issues identified as requiring remediation.

    c. A stakeholder awareness and engagement plan to support the mandate.

    d. Draft policies that will facilitate the achievement of the mandate.

    e. A compliance enforcement action program.

    f. Necessary motions to Council to put in place the products outlined at a-e.

CONSTRAINTS

7. There will be several constraints affecting this project. These will need to be addressed through a strategy of cooperative rather than coercive approaches. The constraints include the following:

a. Council does not have responsibility for or ownership of the principal carriageway, Nelson Bay Road and will need to seek the cooperation of RMS NSW.

b. Council has limited powers to compel landowners to comply with litter and nuisance issues.

c. A number of existing billboards comply with existing regulations and are a source of income for landowners. Changes will likely need to be introduced over time and grandfathered.

d. Budget resources for this project do not currently exist/are limited?

RELATED INITIATIVES

8. The projects and other initiatives shown in the table at Figure 1 have a bearing, or are in some way dependent on this project:

Related Project/Initiative	Nature of Relationship
Destination Port Stephens Marketing initiative 'Port Stephens, Incredible by Nature'	This project strongly supports the new DPS marketing initiative and can use it as a lever for action and as a source of support
Marine Park Project (proper name - Frank Future's initiative)	This project would support efforts to market the Marine Park initiative.
NPWS Tomaree Coastal Walk Project	This project would support efforts to market the new Coastal Walk
Friends of Tomaree Head and Tomaree Museum initiatives	This project would support efforts to market the tourist potential for these initiatives
Airport Precinct Commercial Development	There should be a common interest in developing the attractiveness of this area for both employment and tourism purposes.
PSC Strategic Asset Management Plan 2020	On-going capital asset works associated with the area of this project's interest, including the Nelson Bay Council Depot relocation and rehabilitation and bus shelter improvements
PSC 2020 Community Advocacy Priorities	1. Progressing the Williamtown Special Aviation Precinct 5. Major Investment in Roads
Covid-19 Stimulus Package	This project should contend for use of these funds as it is an ideal candidate for stimulating the local tourism business

Figure 1

OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

RELATIONSHIP TO CORPORATE PROGRAM(S) AND STRATEGY

9. Aside from Destination Port Stephen's tourism initiative, Port Stephens Council espouses that:

> *'(t)he recommendations and actions in the Visitor Economy Action Plan are those which the Taskforce has assessed as being key to accelerating overnight visitor expenditure to NSW. The Plan nominates seven (sic) strategic imperatives:*
>
> 1. *Increase visitation*
> 2. *Grow physical capacity*
> 3. *Renew and revitalise NSW destinations*
> 4. *Improve the visitor experience*
> 5. *Increase visitor spend*
> 6. *Make NSW more competitive*[1]*.*

10. This project directly supports Strategic Imperatives 3 and 4 and indirectly Imperatives 1and 6.

BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES

11. The following benefits are expected to flow from this initiative:

a. Greater tourism attraction due to the consistency of a total 'incredible by nature' experience, including return visits. The half hour drive to the attractions of Port Stephens is distinctly out of character with what visitors expect to experience. First impressions last and here these are generally quite negative. Anecdotal evidence abounds from visitors coming into Port Stephens. These first impressions of a messy, junky and commercialised gateway sit ill with the image of the magnificent marine park and natural wonders that are supposed to attract visitors. The first impression can often be 'this place has been oversold'. Tourist operators are then dealing with potentially skeptic customers who look for further fault to enhance these first impressions, instead of people who have been delighted by a naturally welcoming entry that fits the image they have been sold and wish to hold.

b. The second major benefit is the potential positive impact on community attitudes and ownership of their (natural) environment and pride in location. These translate into general greater care for the place where they live and this in turn is picked up by visitors to the area. Pride in the natural attributes of the region leads to a change in values. What is valued, leads to lasting changes in behaviour.

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1 Port Stephens Council Economic and Tourism Strategy – 2018-2 20, p7

c. Tellingly, a recent interview with the General Manager of the Barossa Council in SA, discussing their success at maintaining numerous pristine gateways to the Barossa, elicited the statement that the single biggest factor was a general residents' and business understanding that the 'Barossa' was a global brand. He believed that the local culture, history and ownership of the 'Barossa' brand was the single largest factor in keeping the Barossa so well presented. While Port Stephens has a very different history, it's future success probably also depends on creating a cultural change to further its collective prosperity.

d. This will mean identifying the stakeholders who have a potential investment in the outcomes of this project and working with their concerns to get their support. The known stakeholder groups are:

(1) PSC

(2) Tomaree Business Chamber

(3) Destination Port Stephens .

(4) RMS

(5) The Port Stephens Community, represented by community organisations, including, but not limited to TRRA

(6) The Airport Authority

(7) Landholders

(8) Billboard owners

(9) Billboard advertisers

(10)

COSTS

Project Costs

12. An estimated summary of Project Costs is provided at Figure 2. *Costings have not been completed as TRRA is prepared to assist Council staff in developing the necessary products for the project and Council staff costings are unknown to the drafter. However, the total cost of the project is low as it relies on a combination of work by existing Council staff and largely other volunteer community members. No significant additional budget allocation should be required as all physical activities should fall within current litter control and landscaping responsibilities.*

Capital (Contractor)	0
Capital *(Equipment)	0
Salaries & On-Costs	?
Training	0
Travel	0
Total	

Figure 2

Operating Costs

13. There are essentially no changes to operating costs associate with this initiative. Potentially, the behavioural changes referred to previously could reduce littering and demand on Council for clean-up operations.

Cost Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 & Beyond
Maintenance			
Lease costs			
Salary & On-costs			
Insurance			
Totals			

Figure 3

TIMINGS

14. There are no predetermined timings for this project; however, it would seem prudent, to ensure maximum momentum for its success, to commence work as a soon as possible to lever off the advantages offered by the recently launched Destination Port Stephens major remarketing initiative. Indicative timings could be:

a. Project concept approval and establishment of Project Board membership - end June

b. Complete Project Plan, develop 1st Stage Plan for initial investigations of remediation Issues. Get Project Plan and Stage 1 Plan approved by Project Board - mid-Aug 20

c. Commence Stage 1 investigations and stakeholder consultations - mid Aug 20.

d. Complete Stage 1 Report and Stage 2 plan (1st implementation Stage) - Mar 2

15. Further timings are not practical, as they depend largely on the Stage1 consultation outcomes with Stakeholders. However, it could be anticipated that substantial progress towards concluding the drafting of policy documents and MoAs with relevant Stakeholders cold be complete by 3rd quarter 2021, with relevant strategies approved by Council and implementation started in the 4th quarter of 20121.

INVESTMENT APPRAISAL

16. While no direct cost/ benefit analysis is practical for this project, its low anticipated cost, with no requirement for additional budget

OUTLINE QUALITY PLAN

CUSTOMER QUALITY EXPECTATIONS

17. While these need to be defined and agreed between stakeholders, the essential expectation would be one where community members and tourist operators are proud to bring visitors onto the Tomaree Peninsula and where the Gateway reflects the expectations of the current marketing initiative, 'Port Stephens, Incredible by nature'.

ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

18. This project has both objective and subjective quality criteria.

19. The objective criteria would be:

    a. the visible absence of dilapidated buildings, machinery, or other equipment from the Gateway roads;

    b. rubbish and storage of materials hidden from view;

    c. buildings and installations in good repair;

    d. all utility installations and commercial operations effectively screened from view;

    e. advertising hoardings reduced in size and limited to display at associated business premises only; and

    f. the airport precinct, road intersections and town entries attractively and invitingly landscaped.

20. Subjective criteria would be those associated with:

    a. Community pride in their local gateways

    b. Positive visitor feedback on first impressions of Port Stephens.

    These criteria would be measured by suitable before and after project surveys.

RISKS

BENEFIT RISKS

21. Benefit risks are those risks to the project that affect the validity and viability of the Business Case and whether the project continues to support the corporate business strategy, including such elements as;

a. strategic direction,

b. commercial issues,

c. market change,

d. the consequences to the corporate body of failure or limited success;

e. the stability of the business areas involved,

f. programme requirements,

g. legislative changes,

h. political factors including public opinion,

i. environmental issues,

j. impact on the customer of the results of the project, and

k. the risks of the end-result meeting the stated requirements, but not fulfilling expectations.

22. The business risks associated with this project are very limited while Port Stephens is still believed to be a premier State tourist destination and the community feels a need to live in an attractive environment. These factors are considered stable and enduring.

23. The principal benefit risk would appear to be associated with the ability to effect regulatory changes needed to meet the acceptance criteria owing to pressure from stakeholders who might not consider changes to the status quo in their immediate, short-term financial interest. However, other councils have faced and overcome similar risks.

DELIVERY RISKS

24. Delivery risks could typically be many and varied, but could include such broad categories as:

a. **Procurement Issues**, covering those risks caused by being dependent on a third party, including:

(1) failure of the third party,

(2) failure by them to deliver satisfactorily,

(3) contractual issues, and

(4) mismatch between the nature of the task and the procurement process,

b. **Organisational Factors** such as:

(1) additional staff responsibilities alongside project work,

(2) the project culture, or lack of it, within the Customer organisation,

(3) personnel and training issues,

(4) skill shortage,

(5) potential security implications, and

(6) culture clashes between Customer and Supplier;

c. **Specialist Issues** there will be a wide variety of issues here because each project has its own particular specialist elements which bring with them their own risk elements; however, there are some general issues which will apply to many project types, such as:

(1) how well requirements can be specified,

(2) to what extent the requirements can be met using currently available and understood facilities and approaches,

(3) the extent to which a project involves innovative, difficult or complex processes and/or equipment,

(4) the challenges and problems regarding quality testing, and

(5) the risks that the specified requirements will not be achievable in full, or that not all requirements will be correctly specified.

25. No significant **procurement risks** would seem evident as this project is not procurement dependent.

26. Some **organisational risk** may be inherent in Council staff taking on additional work for this project, but this work is seen to be limited and can be supported by community organisations. The project is not time-critical, and achievement of some deliverables will no doubt take years to realise. However, the important element in the project is to set in place a strategy that can be pursued over time to deliver the desired outcomes and maintain the gains made.

27. **Specialist Issues Risks** possibly predominate in this project. These may comprise:

a. resistant landowners and businesses who derive financial benefit from signage;

b. the number of stakeholders involved n the project and obtaining their engagement and support;

c. the time taken to achieve the outcomes may induce loss of focus among some stakeholders, that may also be exacerbated by personnel changes; and

d. the inevitable serious economic recession faced Nationally will both reduce available staff to work on the project, make unavailable even limited financial resources to be brought to bear by stakeholders and a collapse of the tourism industry for several years.

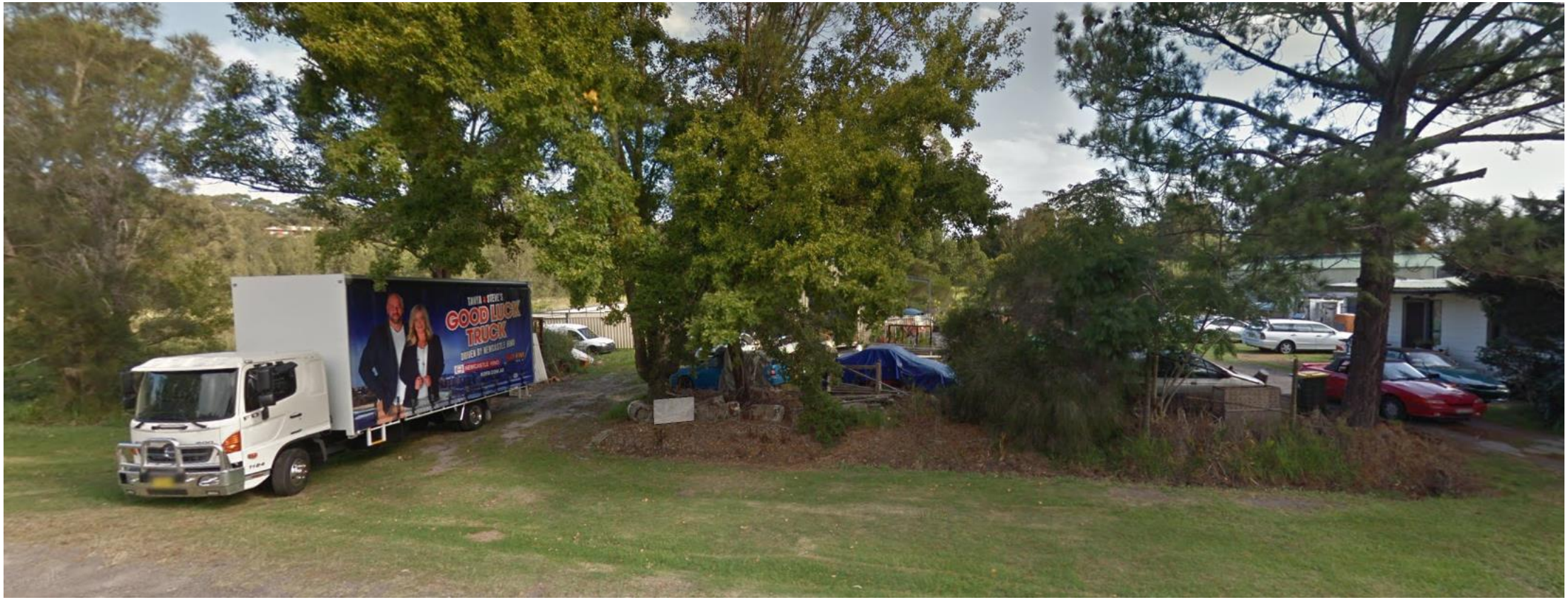
2115 Nelson Bay Rd

2339 Nelson Bay Rd

2365 Nelson Bay Rd

2807 Nelson Bay Rd

2936 Nelson Bay Rd



Bobs Farm Nelson Bay Rd

Proliferation of commercial signage at 4029 Nelson Bay Rd

Panorama before Anna Bay Turn-off

More billboards off the Anna Bay round-about

Shortly past Anna Bay Turn-off

Billboards, billboards and more billboards – 4449 Nelson Bay Rd to Nelson Bay