



TRRA INC. NEWSLETTER
December 2022

**Our General Meeting scheduled for 12 December
will be held at the**

**Nelson Room, Ground Floor,
Nelson Bay Bowling Club commencing at 6.30 pm.**

**The earlier start time is to allow for an adjournment
to the [Nelson Way](#) restaurant in the Landmark
Resort for an optional dinner for TRRA members to
celebrate Christmas together (own choice and
payment). All welcome!!!**

**Please advise Robyn at secretary@trra.com.au
if you intend to join us for dinner**

TRRA Inc GENERAL MEETING
Monday 12th December 2022, 6.30 pm
AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting** ([*Refer president's report*](#))
3. **Business Arising**
4. **Correspondence In and Out**
5. **Business Arising from Correspondence**
6. **Treasurer's Report** - see [HERE](#)
7. **Reports**
 - i. TRRA AGM report - President's Report [HERE](#)
2022-2023 Committee [HERE](#)
 - ii. PSC proposed rate increase
 - iii. Port Stephens Roads Rain Damage
 - iv. Draft Hunter Regional Transport Plan
 - v. Council policies on the Environment, Climate Change and Tree management
 - vi. Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy and results of its 2022 Community Satisfaction Survey
 - vii. Retirement Villages
8. **Planning.** TRRA Current Issues - DAs of Interest
9. **General Business**

NEXT MEETING: Monday 06 February 2023

NEWSLETTER

Construction underway on a 9 storey Apartment block at the corner of Yacaaba and Donald Streets, Nelson Bay



Reports

TRRA 2022 Annual General Meeting (held 10 October)

Annual Report by President, Ben van der Wijngaart .

See [HERE](#)

TRRA 2022- 2023 Management Committee. See [HERE](#)

Annual Financial Report to 30 June. See [HERE](#)

2021 Port Stephens Council Rate Increase Proposals

TRRA has, over the last year, received a number of briefings from Council's senior financial executives on the financial sustainability of the Port Stephens Council and the options which have been under consideration to cope with the existing and predicted cost pressures which are challenging most Councils in New South Wales. These sessions have provided members with an opportunity to express their opinions on the situation and the proposals being considered by Council.

TRRA has urged its members to respond to Council's "Have your say" surveys on their analysis of the situation and proposed revenue raising options. Other than acknowledging the magnitude of the cost pressures from inflation

generally and the impact of climate-driven damage to our roads and other infrastructure, TRRA has not, on this occasion, indicated its support or rejection of the Council's options to deal with the financial scenario. TRRA has also noted that Port Stephens' current rate level is lower than that of our neighbouring Lower Hunter Councils.

The Council's latest advice on their decisions and proposed actions are reported on their website [HERE](#).

Their summary of the current situation and future roadmap is quoted below:

We've been talking with our community about Council's financial position and ways we can balance our budget since August 2022.

The Council met on 8 November 2022, and after carefully considering the community feedback received, unanimously agreed to submit an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Rate Variation of 9.5% each year for three years.

Council is now working towards preparing the application which will be submitted prior to 3 February 2023.

The community will be able to make further community consultation via IPART which is expected to occur during February to March 2023.

Port Stephens Road damage and repair

For the last couple of years, and especially over recent months, Tomaree residents have had to cope with severely potholed road surfaces which have necessitated careful driver navigation and in many cases caused damage to their vehicles.

At our last general meeting, TRRA members received a report from the Council's Facilities and Services Group Manager, Greg Kable, on the situation and on Council's efforts to deal with pot-holes. He acknowledged the severity of the damage caused by constant and excessive rainfall and pointed out that

this was a problem impacting on most New South Wales councils. The basic problem has been the build-up of water from beneath the road surface resulting in the cracking of the top bitumen layer and further penetration of water.

Mr Kable outlined the repair options available to Council ranging from quick patching of each hole (a temporary solution) to resurfacing of whole stretches of pavement, the latter being very expensive. In all such works it is essential to wait until the affected location dries out before repair.

Council has attempted to monitor the problem areas and to prioritise the repairs accordingly. The predicted continuation of wet weather going forward, means that this damage can be expected to continue and the this will be an ongoing drain on the Council's budget sustainability.

In recent news Council is soon to receive **\$250,000** for urgent pothole repairs from a NSW Government Pothole Repair Program.

Draft Hunter Regional Transport Plan

A summary of the draft Plan may be viewed [HERE](#)

TRRA's submission was generally supportive of the broad objectives and proposed actions offered in the Plan.

We pointed out that there could have been a stronger emphasis on the specific transport needs of the Tomaree Peninsula and Port Stephens as a sub-region, and that the Plan's continuing reference to Nelson Bay as the strategic center on the Peninsula may no longer be valid given the dramatic growth of Salamander Centre which has become the major transport interchange.

Proposals for fast train services (not **very** fast) linking to Sydney and other regional centers were supported as was improved interconnectivity, for example at the Newcastle Interchange

Attention was drawn to the need for more careful projection of the requirement for all forms of transport to serve the Williamstown Special Activation Precinct

and the expanded Newcastle Airport and the potentially growing tourism hub on the Tomaree Peninsula, (e.g. implications of the \$ 7 million Tomaree Coastal Walk together with a major project for the adaptive reuse of the Tomaree Lodge). The problem of parking for coaches at the Nelson Bay Marina with predicted increased international visitation was raised.

The inadequacy of parking generally in Nelson Bay and Shoal Bay/Tomaree Headland areas was raised as a problem to be addressed. Remote parking combined with shuttle bus services was suggested as a solution.

Improvements we proposed for the transport links to Newcastle and the lower Hunter included:

- More express buses
- Car- pooling with designated parking areas along Nelson Bay Road
- Better timetabling to improve the connectivity at major interchanges such as Newcastle

Other proposals supported were:

- Trials of “on demand” feeder bus services in residential zones
- Proposed initiatives to encourage low emissions vehicles, cycling and walking
- Improved design of urban areas to facilitate movement of pedestrians such as imposition of more 30 kph zones.

Another transport issue that TRRA will continue to raise is the cumulative impact of heavy truck movements to and from the many existing and proposed sandmines and hard rock quarries in Port Stephens, in terms of both traffic congestion and safety and road damage.

Tomaree Headland Heritage Group – progress with plans for the future of Tomaree Lodge Site

Significant progress towards a decision as to the future status and use of the Tomaree Lodge site has been made over the past two months.

Decision on an appeal by the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land council to

the NSW Land and Environment Court concerning their Claims for land at the Lodge site.

In a decision of this Court on 19 October 2022, this appeal was dismissed.

The Department of Communities and Justice which is currently responsible for the Lodge site had repeatedly advised **THHG** that no progress towards a determination on the future of the Lodge site could be made until the court had made a decision on the Land Claim appeal.

Announcement by the Minister for Families and Communities and Minister for Disability Services Natasha Maclaren-Jones, 20 October 2022

Immediately following this decision she made the following announcement which reaffirmed the Government's commitment to retain the Tomaree Lodge site for community use and that community consultation will commence at the end of October towards a decision on the best future use of the site.

Press Release

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION BEGINS FOR TOMAREE LODGE SITE

The NSW Government has re-affirmed its commitment to retain the Tomaree Lodge site at Port Stephens for community use following a judgment in the Land and Environment Court of NSW.

Minister for Families and Communities and Minister for Disability Services Natasha Maclaren-Jones said that community consultation, which will commence at the end of October, is vital to deciding the best future use of the site.

"The NSW Government recognises the importance of Tomaree Lodge to the Port Stephens community, and we are immediately looking to plan the future of the site with a focus on the needs of the local community," Mrs Maclaren-Jones said.

"From the end of October we will be consulting with the community and interested

parties including Port Stephens Council, Worimi Aboriginal Land Council, and local community groups about how best to repurpose Tomaree Lodge for community use.”

Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Taylor Martin is encouraging members of the community to have their say.

“The Port Stephens community is passionate about the future of Tomaree Lodge, and I’m looking forward to hearing more from the community about how this historic and iconic site can be repurposed”, Mr Martin said.

The site of the former large residential centre for people with disabilities was subject to a land claim by the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council.

A judgment handed down in the Land and Environment Court of NSW on Wednesday, 19 October ruled that the site be retained by the Minister.

The NSW Government remains committed to allowing locals to decide how Tomaree Lodge is best used for their community.

Community consultation will run for 60 days from the end of October. The community will be able to have their say at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/have-your-say>.

The ‘have your say’ link is provided above and there have already been pop-up booths, run by a consultant Umwelt, across the peninsula to advise residents and visitors of the process and to gauge their opinions on future uses.

MEDIA: Sarah Norton | 0456 359 283

A Newcastle consultant, Umwelt, has been commissioned to survey resident and visitor opinions on suitable future uses of the Lodge site. This process commenced with a pop-up booth near the entrance to the Lodge on **Sunday 27 November.**

As an alternative to the pop-up survey, newsletter readers are encouraged to indicate their opinions via the online facility “Have your say” as mentioned in the Minister’s press release **[HERE](#)**. **This links directly to the Tomaree Lodge survey.**

Tomaree Headland Heritage Group (THHG) has Released a Strategic Concept Plan for the Future Adaptive Reuse of the Tomaree Lodge Site see [HERE](#).



This plan prepared by planning consultants was commissioned by THHG, with the financial support of Port Stephens Council and the Shoal Bay Resort and Spa. The Plan provides a design framework based on a set of planning principles and also identifies the constraints and opportunities of the site. THHG will use this document in its approaches to the authorities responsible for decisions on the future of the Lodge site.

Planning Report December 2022

Several submissions have been made since the last Newsletter:

- On the State Government's '**Six Cities**' proposals. For the first time, the whole of Port Stephens has been included in a Newcastle/Hunter 'city', potentially increasing the pressure for further development in the Tomaree and Tilligerry peninsulas, which have until now been seen as

part of a coastal hinterland with greater emphasis on environmental protection and tourism.

- On the State Environmental Protection Authority (**EPA**)'s **climate change policy and action plan** – TRRA was critical of its lack of operational detail.
- On the DA for the major extension of the **Latitude One** land-lease community at Anna Bay, already approved in principle earlier in 2022. TRRA continues to raise concerns about some planning and traffic and environmental issues, as well as to the unsatisfactory level of financial contributions this type of development makes to Council to help fund physical and social infrastructure.
- On Council's revised Tree Vandalism Policy. TRRA submits that this is too 'high-level' and that important operational detail is either missing or has been weakened

Several other planning matters are ongoing:

- The proposed 11-storey apartment building at **11-15 Church St**, Nelson Bay (the crane site). Council is negotiating changes to the design with the applicant and the matter should return to Council early in 2023. In October, TRRA made a submission on the applicant's initial amendments, which we do not think go far enough to address community concerns.
- The proposed 9-storey apartment building at **17-19 Yacaaba St**. The same applicant's appeal against Council's refusal was the subject of a conciliation conference on 1 November – TRRA and neighbours presented their objections to the Commissioner in charge of the case. An independent expert has been engaged to defend Council's refusal. We await news of any concessions by the applicant, or the dates of a hearing in 2023.
- The proposed motel at **9 Shoal Bay Rd** was refused by Council on 27 September.
- The proposed major new suburb at **Kings Hill**, NE of Raymond Terrace. The applicant's appeal against refusal by the Regional Planning Panel is ongoing. A revised DA has recently been lodged, with only a short period of time to comment on a large volume of new documentation. TRRA and other community groups are struggling to understand the proposed changes and how these will affect the proceedings.

- The proposed apartment building at 18-20 Soldiers Point Road (DA 2022-223). This has been re-designed following earlier community objections. While the roof feature is still significantly (15%) over the 9-metre height limit at one point, the variation may be acceptable in this location. Anyone concerned about it can make a submission up until 5pm on 8 December.

Call for interest In TRRA Committee/specialist positions.

At present the key positions of

- **Vice President and**
- **Media Officer**

remain unfilled and are being covered on a temporary basis. Expressions of interest are invited from TRRA members or potential members who feel they may be able to contribute in these roles.

Please contact our secretary via email secretary@trra.com.au to discuss.

Geoff Washington
Acting Media Officer



