



TRRA INC. NEWSLETTER

February 2024

**Our General Meeting scheduled
for 12 February 2024
will be held at the**

**Nelson Room, Ground Floor,
Nelson Bay Bowling Club commencing 7:00 pm.**

AGENDA
(Newsletter follows below)

TRRA Inc GENERAL MEETING
Monday 12 February 2024, 7:00 pm

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of the 11 December General Meeting**
- 3. Business Arising from previous minutes.**
- 4. Correspondence In and Out**

5. **Business Arising from Correspondence**
6. **Treasurer's Report**
7. **Guest Speakers – Immediate Past President Ben van der Wijngaart and Imagine Cruises owner Frank Future will lead a discussion on the rules and regulations associated with the use of small leisure watercraft (including jet-skis) and its impact on Marine Ecology**
8. **Reports**
 - a. TRRA input to Council's Housing Strategy
 - b. TRRA Membership Recruitment Strategy
 - c. Soldiers Point Marina extension appeal against refusal - Land & Environment Court Hearing 5 February
9. **Planning.** TRRA Current Issues - DAs of Interest
See detailed background briefing in the **Newsletter below**.
10. **Notice of Motions**
11. **General Business**

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 8 April 2024

Conditions on matters raised by members at General Meetings

Consistent with Section 26 (4) of the TRRA Constitution, members are reminded that should they wish to put an item of business before a general meeting, that item needs to be submitted in writing to the Secretary before the notice of the meeting is issued to members (usually 14 days prior) so the matter may be included in the notice.

The Committee may allow exceptions in the case of genuinely urgent issues.

Any motion approved by members at a meeting shall be taken as an instruction to the Committee to investigate further and ensure all relevant facts and the context are considered in any resulting action.

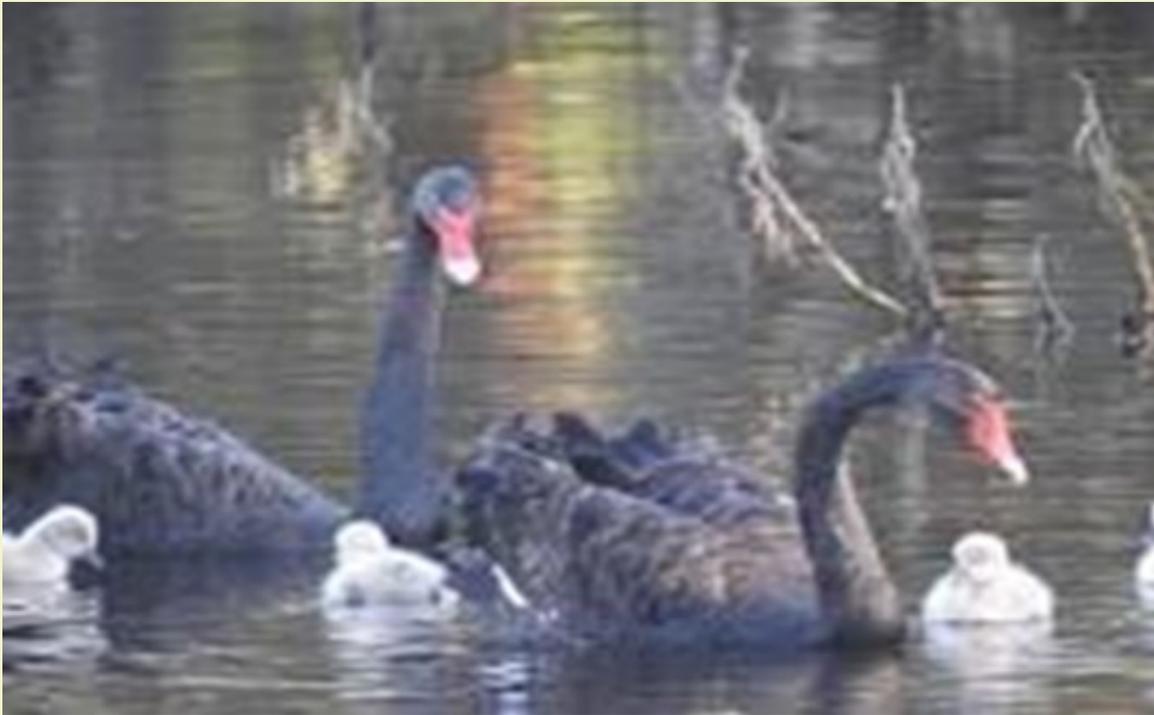
TRRA FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Personal Watercraft (Jet Skis or PWC)

Over the recent school summer holidays various social media articles claimed that a Jet Ski driver allegedly deliberately, drove into a flock of black swans on the Port Stephens Harbour.

This has caused concern amongst visitors and residents alike and many are asking what can be done to prevent this happening again. At our upcoming General Meeting Immediate Past President, **Ben van der Wijngaart** and Imagine Cruises owner, **Frank Future**, will lead a discussion on the rules and regulations associated with their use.

In the interim, if you observe anti-social and/or dangerous behaviour call NSW Maritime PWC hotline on **13 12 36**. You may also like to [read an article about this subject in the EcoNetwork Port Stephens newsletter](#), EcoUpdate, which you will find here.



Proposed Hunter Offshore Wind Farm

Opinion on the proposal in the Hunter/Port Stephens regions is divided both in the community and within the membership of TRRA. For this reason, the Committee has chosen not to take a position on this matter. It does however urge all members to complete their own research for any submissions that may be necessary in the future.

Membership Drive

This is planned to take place late in April/May 2024, over a two-week period. It is being designed to capture street traffic at various shopping locations across the peninsula: Once dates are confirmed for this promotion we will be seeking volunteers to staff our 'stalls' .

You can register to volunteer at General Meetings or via e-mail to secretary@trra.com.au. Likewise, if you have any suggestions to ensure the success of this project, please pass these on to our membership committee via the same email address.



Spencer Park

TRRA has been advised by Port Stephens Council (PSC) that the refurbishment of Spencer Park has been placed on hold until further notice. This is a result of advice from Heritage NSW that additional investigations to adequately address the risk to cultural heritage are required. These costs are not part of the original funding and PSC advise that they have been unsuccessful in their request for additional grant monies to cover same.

To retain the awarded funding, PSC has worked with the funding body to identify an alternative project, of a similar scope, that could be delivered before 30 June 2024. The suitable project that was identified is the planned playground upgrade at Taylor's Beach.

PSC confirms it will continue working towards completing the necessary heritage investigations at Spencer Park and in the interim maintain the existing playground in accordance with relevant legislative conditions. Any future upgrades at the park will be subject to the outcomes of the heritage investigations and TRRA will continue to keep abreast of the progress and report it to members..



Soldiers Point Marina

In February 2022, Port Stephens Council (PSC) refused an application (DA 16-2019-8-1) from Clippers Anchorage, the owners of Soldiers Point Marina, to construct a two storey addition to the marina comprising of a members lounge, gymnasium, pool, spa, pool lounge, patio, decking, amenities, storage and plant rooms, landscaping and site preparation works including partial demolition of existing slipway and earthworks.

This decision was subsequently appealed in the Land and Environment Court. An onsite Conciliation conference, held in July 2023, was unable to resolve the matter. On 5th February TRRA will make representations to the 'Full Court' supporting the PSC's refusal decision, along with other members of the community at a second onsite hearing.

TRRA Representations

Port Stephens Council Housing Forum

TRRA members attended this very successful forum 10 November 2023 and following a general discussion at the last General Meeting of its members, decided to make a submission to PSC. Further details can be found under the heading planning matters below.

Tomaree Headland Heritage Group (THHG) Progress Report

Following representations by the Board of THHG, at a Port Stephens Council Meeting on 12th December 2023 Council resolved:

1. Congratulate the community and the Tomaree Headland Heritage Group for their tireless advocacy on the future use of Tomaree Lodge
2. Take a strategic leadership role by demonstrating to the NSW Government its interest in the future of the Tomaree Lodge
3. Explore operational options and future management options that do not negatively affect Councils finances, with the community, the Tomaree Headland Heritage Group, and any other interested groups.
4. Commit to playing a role in planning the future of the Tomaree Lodge site being led by the NSW Government, including taking the necessary steps to formally establish a Master Plan
5. Acknowledge that currently up to \$1M is being spent on security and maintenance of the site and request that the NSW Government commits some of this funding be put forward for future planning.

THHG subsequently stated that

'it appreciates the commitment made by Port Stephens Council which we believe recognises the significance and the iconic status of the Tomaree

Lodge and its relationship with the people of Port Stephens as well as the opportunities.

THHG continues to make representations to the Minister responsible for the Tomaree Lodge site, the Hon. Kate Washington (Minister for Families and Communities and for Disability Inclusion and Member for Port Stephens) to secure a decision on the preferred future uses of the Tomaree Lodge and on a future strategy for the ongoing management of the Heritage Listed property.

The THHG Board and Members have also continued their practice of establishing 'Help Desks' at the entrance to the site during the summer holidays to survey visitor's views on future use of the site as well as seeking their thoughts on meeting current needs.'

TRRA members participated in the Help Desk and a report has now been submitted by THHG to the State Government and Council. See [Tomaree Headland Heritage Group](#) for more information.

Planning Matters

Housing in Tomaree

As requested by members at our December General Meeting, we have prepared a Discussion Paper Housing in Tomaree – Conditions for Success. We have submitted this to Port Stephens Council who are currently preparing a draft revised Housing Strategy, which will go on exhibition in March.

The paper argues that while all parts of Port Stephens will need to contribute to solutions to the current crisis in availability and affordability of housing, there are some serious constraints that will limit the number of new dwellings that can be provided on the Tomaree Peninsula

Infill development, involving higher density and in some cases increased height limits will be necessary but we argue there are 8 key conditions that must be met for this to be acceptable to local communities.

Read our Discussion Paper [HERE](#).

Shoal Bay Place Plan

A draft 'Place Plan' for Shoal Bay is now on exhibition, with submissions welcome up to 25 February. See PSC Shoal Bay Place Plan [HERE](#).

Council officers will be briefing the public at the Shoal Bay Holiday Park on Thursday 15 February from 4-6pm.

We encourage you to contact the [Shoal Bay Community Association](#) (SBCA) which will be making its own submission and can advise on the process and issues.

Fleet Street Salamander Bay - Land Clearing

Extensive clearing of bushland on Fleet Street, behind the derelict former Colonial Ridge Heritage Resort has caused much community concern. East ward Councillor and Deputy Mayor Leah Anderson responded quickly but was unable to halt the clearance, which was approved in 2018 as part of plans for redevelopment of the adjacent resort site (4 Fleet Street).

There is a complex history to this issue – the local community fought off proposals for multi-storey apartment buildings on parts of the site which were subsequently withdrawn. Unfortunately, approval for the clearance of a 70 metre Asset Protection Zone (APZ) on 8 Fleet Street, which had been sold by Council to the developer back around 2014, was linked to development of several single storey villas on the northern and eastern parts of the site, which were approved in 2018.

It is not clear why the APZ needed to be cleared now, given that no plans have yet been approved for the part of the old resort adjacent to boundary between Nos 4 & 8. But Council was apparently powerless to prevent the clearing, which went ahead in January.

Submissions

TRRA has made several submissions over the holiday period, including:

- On a revised Council Policy on '**Signs on road reserves**'. We have pointed out the contrast with very weak control over signs on private property along main roads, and also called for more transparency on the fees charged for approved signs. A report on regulating signs on private land, initiated by Deputy Mayor Anderson, will come to Council in March – an important step towards TRRA's long running campaign on the 'out of control' proliferation of outdoor advertising.
- On a proposal to add more **Koala fencing and a Street Tree planting** policy to the long term 'wish list' called the Capital Works Plus program. While we welcome these projects, we submitted that they are both things that can be implemented in stages as and when funds become available. Adding them to the unfunded long-term program should not be used as an excuse not to do as much fencing and planting as possible in the short and medium term.
- Supporting stronger **controls on developments on flood prone land**.

Council's new **'Wellbeing Strategy'** remains on public exhibition until 25 February. We have previously advised Councillors that this welcome initiative should become an overarching 'super-policy' as everything else that Council does should be aimed at increasing overall community wellbeing. We would like members to look at the detail of the Strategy and send us input for a submission later this month. See Port Stephens Council's Wellbeing Strategy [HERE](#).

Council Meetings

TRRA regularly provides comments to East Ward Councillors on matters listed on Council meeting agendas and did so again for the meeting on 12th December 2023. What follows is a brief note of the item outcomes and TRRA reminds readers that this is merely a summary of what actually took place and urges members and others interested in particular items to read the actual minutes, and/or view the webcast, both available on PSC Council website for full details.

(Insert link to Minutes of PSC Meeting 12th December 2023 and webcast?)

Item 2. DA 2023-173, Function Centre, 5 Koala Place, Boat Harbour.

The DA was approved with a number of additional conditions some of them based on discussions between proponent and objectors and stands as a positive result of what can be achieved when people talk to each other.

Item 4. Display of development application information on DA tracker.

TRRA Committee member Nigel Waters spoke to this in public access and answered questions arguing for greater transparency. The result was very positive when an amended motion, moved by Councillor Giacomo Arnott and seconded by Councillor Jason Wells, resolved to retain all published development application (DA) documents on the DA Tracker in perpetuity in the same form as when it was published, commencing 1February 2024 was passed. TRRA welcomes this major enhancement of transparency noting that it was not made retrospective.

Item 5. Draft Shoal Bay Place Plan.

TRRA welcomed this long-awaited draft plan, and the draft plan has been placed on public exhibition until 25 February 2024 with the proviso that if no submissions are received, the draft Shoal Bay Place Plan be adopted, without further report to Council. TRRA will be making a detailed submission which will, when lodged, be placed on its website – we encourage members both to make their own submissions, and to provide input to our submission – to planning@tra.com.au.

Item 6. Community Wellbeing Strategy.

The motion to place this on public exhibition was adopted with CR Wells adding that Council Develop an 'Easy Read' version given its reference to PSC's Disability Inclusion Action Plan. for public exhibition. TRRA will be making a

submission and seeks your comments. Please see links in the section Planning Matters. TRRA welcomed this move and will be making a detailed submission. Please see links in the section Planning Matters.

Information Papers

CARBON NEUTRALITY 2025 Council recommendation was adopted with an added point to make quarterly progress reports to Council. TRRA welcomes the amendment.

Notices of Motion

Tomaree Lodge

TRRA supports the unanimous passing of this is motion. Please see separate item under TRRA Representations.

Advertising Signs - Nelson Bay Road

This motion was carried unanimously by those Councillors present. TRRA welcomes this outcome – see the item on ‘Signs in road reserves Policy’ under ‘Submissions’ above.

Town Centre Improvements Communications (p253)

This motion was carried unanimously by those Councillors present. TRRA welcomes this outcome and supports the better communication about town centre improvement works which will result.

For further information on **TRRA Inc submissions** to issues affecting our community, including Federal, State, LGA DA proposals and decisions refer to our website:

- [Critical Impacts](#)
- [DA Submissions & Objections](#)
- [Planning & Development](#)

Roz Armstrong

TRRA Media Officer

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