

Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting

An Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting of Byron Shire Council will be held as follows:

Venue	Conference Room, Station Street, Mullumbimby
Date	Thursday, 19 May 2022
Time	9.00am

Shannon Burt
Director Sustainable Environment & Economy

*12022/538
Distributed 12/05/22*



**BYRON
SHIRE
COUNCIL**

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

What is a “Conflict of Interests” - A conflict of interests can be of two types:

Pecuniary - an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated.

Non-pecuniary – a private or personal interest that a Council official has that does not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in the Code of Conduct for Councillors (eg. A friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union or involvement or interest in an activity and may include an interest of a financial nature).

Remoteness – a person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to a matter or if the interest is of a kind specified in the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Who has a Pecuniary Interest? - a person has a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is the interest of the person, or another person with whom the person is associated (see below).

Relatives, Partners - a person is taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter if:

- The person’s spouse or de facto partner or a relative of the person has a pecuniary interest in the matter, or
- The person, or a nominee, partners or employer of the person, is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

N.B. “Relative”, in relation to a person means any of the following:

- (a) the parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descends or adopted child of the person or of the person’s spouse;
- (b) the spouse or de facto partners of the person or of a person referred to in paragraph (a)

No Interest in the Matter - however, a person is not taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter:

- If the person is unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of the spouse, de facto partner, relative or company or other body, or
- Just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, the Council.
- Just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of the Council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter provided that the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

Disclosure and participation in meetings

- A Councillor or a member of a Council Committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the Council or Committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- The Councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the Council or Committee:
 - (a) at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or Committee, or

- (b) at any time during which the Council or Committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

No Knowledge - a person does not breach this Clause if the person did not know and could not reasonably be expected to have known that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which he or she had a pecuniary interest.

Non-pecuniary Interests - Must be disclosed in meetings.

There are a broad range of options available for managing conflicts & the option chosen will depend on an assessment of the circumstances of the matter, the nature of the interest and the significance of the issue being dealt with. Non-pecuniary conflicts of interests must be dealt with in at least one of the following ways:

- It may be appropriate that no action be taken where the potential for conflict is minimal. However, Councillors should consider providing an explanation of why they consider a conflict does not exist.
- Limit involvement if practical (eg. Participate in discussion but not in decision making or vice-versa). Care needs to be taken when exercising this option.
- Remove the source of the conflict (eg. Relinquishing or divesting the personal interest that creates the conflict)
- Have no involvement by absenting yourself from and not taking part in any debate or voting on the issue as of the provisions in the Code of Conduct (particularly if you have a significant non-pecuniary interest)

RECORDING OF VOTING ON PLANNING MATTERS

Clause 375A of the Local Government Act 1993 – Recording of voting on planning matters

- (1) In this section, **planning decision** means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a council under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979:
- (a) including a decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but
- (b) not including the making of an order under that Act.
- (2) The general manager is required to keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the council or a council committee, the names of the councillors who supported the decision and the names of any councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.
- (3) For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is required to be called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the council or a council committee.
- (4) Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document, and is to include the information required by the regulations.
- (5) This section extends to a meeting that is closed to the public.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL
BUSINESS OF MEETING

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 3.1 Report of Minutes of previous Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting held
9 September 2021 5

4. STAFF REPORTS

Corporate and Community Services

- 4.1 Delivery Program - Workshop Session 12

Sustainable Environment and Economy

- 4.2 Review Constitution of Biodiversity Advisory Committee 66
4.3 Regenerative Agriculture 76
4.4 Brunswick Valley Landcare Support Officer quarterly reports June to
December 2021 108
4.5 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update 116
4.6 Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road Avifauna Survey 2021 130
4.7 Renewal of MOU with Brunswick Valley Landcare 158

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

**Report No. 3.1 Report of Minutes of previous Biodiversity
Advisory Committee meeting held 9
September 2021**

5

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy
Report Author: Michelle Chapman, Project Support Officer
File No: I2022/499

10

RECOMMENDATION:

**That the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 9
September 2021 be noted.**

15

<Section5>

Attachments:

20

1 Minutes 09/09/2021 Biodiversity Advisory Committee, I2021/1433 , page 7 [↓](#)

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1

Report

The attachment to this report provides the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting of 15 September 20221 .

Report to Council

- 5 The minutes were reported to Council on 25 November 2021. **Comments**

In accordance with the Committee Recommendations, Council resolved the following:

Res 21- 557 **Resolved** that Council notes the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 9 September 2021.

MINUTES OF MEETING



**BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING**

Venue	Conference Room, Station Street, Mullumbimby
Date	Thursday, 9 September 2021
Time	9.00am

*I2021/1433
Distributed 02/09/21*

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 - ATTACHMENT 1

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 9 SEPTEMBER 2021

Minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, 9 September 2021

File No: I2021/1433

PRESENT: Cr J Martin, Cr S Ndiaye, Cr M Lyon

Staff: Sharyn French (Manager Environmental and Economic Planning)
Chloe Dowsett (Coast, Biodiversity and Sustainability Coordinator)
Liz Caddick (Biodiversity Team Leader)
Peter Boyd (Biodiversity and Agricultural Projects Officer)
Caitlin Weatherstone (Project Officer – Koala)
Andrew Cameron (Agricultural Extension Officer)
James Flockton (Infrastructure Planning coordinator)
Anthony Boyle (Operations Coordinator)
Ari McElroy (Project Support Officer)
Kelly Baker (Project Support Officer)

Community: Peter Westheimer

Luke McConell

Dave Rawlins (Brunswick Valley Landcare)

Cr Ndiaye (Chair) opened the meeting at 9.04am and acknowledged that the meeting was being held on Bundjalung Country.

APOLOGIES:

Cr Coorey

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY

Luke McConell declared a pecuniary interest in Report 4.2. The nature of the interest being that he is a neighbour to the area addressed in the report.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 - ATTACHMENT 1

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 9 SEPTEMBER 2021

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Report No. 3.1 Adoption of Minutes of meeting held 20 May 2021
File No: I2021/1183

Committee Recommendation:

That the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 20 May 2021 be confirmed.

(Martin/Westheimer)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Council adopted the Committee Recommendation (Resolution 21-217) to consider the Agricultural Extension Officer as a full time position. This will be considered in a restructure report to the Executive Team.

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

PROCEDURAL MOTION

Committee Recommendation:

That Council change the order of business to deal with Reports 4.2 next on the Agenda.
(Ndiaye/Martin)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

**Report No. 4.2 Council maintenance works adjacent to areas of High
Environmental Value**
File No: I2021/762

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee note this report.

(Westheimer/Ndiaye)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 9 SEPTEMBER 2021

Report No. 4.1 Biodiversity Projects and Operations Update
File No: I2021/1320

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee note the update on current projects and programmes being undertaken by Council staff.

(Ndiaye/Westheimer)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried

Report No. 4.3 Brunswick Valley Landcare Support Officer report April to June 2021
File No: I2021/1355

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee note the report. (Ndiaye/Martin)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11.03am.

STAFF REPORTS - CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Report No. 4.1 Delivery Program - Workshop Session

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

5 **Report Author:** Heather Sills, Corporate Planning and Improvement
Coordinator

File No: I2022/516

Summary:

10 The draft *Delivery Program 2022-26* and *Operational Plan 2022/23* is currently on public exhibition. Council is seeking feedback from community and stakeholders.

Advisory committees are asked to contribute to this process, specifically addressing the Community Objectives and Strategies related to their areas of interest and expertise.

15

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee provide input into the development of the draft Delivery Program 2022-26 (Attachment 1 E2022/19411).

20

Attachments:

1 Draft Delivery Program 2022-26, E2022/19411 , page 17 [↓](#)

Report

5 The draft Community Strategic Plan (CSP) has been developed to guide long term future planning to meet the needs and aspirations of the community. This review was an opportunity for Council to consider the objectives and strategies which sit at the highest level of Council's planning hierarchy to set the framework for the Delivery Program.

Outcomes

The review of the Community Strategic Plan is an evolution of the 2028 Community Strategic Plan. The review has led to a revised 'vision' and redefined the five community objectives.

10 **Vision - Our Byron Shire is a 'meeting place': Where all people can come together to connect, share, grow, inspire, and create positive change.**

The *community objectives*, while retaining the five original themes, have been refreshed to ensure continuing relevance, based on feedback from the community.

15 The inclusion of values-based terminology at the heading level seeks to better reflect community values and aspirations: Effective, Inclusive, Nurtured, Ethical, and Connected.

The associated *strategies* have also been redefined and realigned with the community objectives to more clearly articulate the intended priorities and aspirations of the community. A summary is below:

20 **Community Objective 1: Effective Leadership** – We have effective decision making and community leadership that is open and informed.

Strategies:

- 1.1 Enhance trust and accountability through open and transparent leadership
- 1.2 Engage and involve community in decision making
- 1.3 Ethical and efficient management of resources

25 1.4 Enhance organisation capability through innovative practices and regional partnerships

- 1.5 Empower community leadership through collaboration, capacity building, and cultivating community driven initiatives

30 **Community Objective 2: Inclusive Community** – We have an inclusive and active community where diversity is embraced, and everyone is valued.

Strategies:

- 2.1 Foster opportunities to express, celebrate and participate in arts and cultural activity
- 2.2 Enhance safety and contribute to the physical, mental, and spiritual health and wellbeing of our people

35 2.3 Respect Aboriginal culture, value cultural knowledge, and acknowledge history

- 2.4 Enrich lifelong learning and education and support services to help young people thrive
- 2.5 Create social impact and initiatives that address disadvantage

Community Objective 3: Nurtured Environment – We nurture and enhance our natural environment.

Strategies:

- 3.1 Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology
- 5 3.2 Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment
- 3.3 Protect the health of our coastlines, estuaries, waterways, and catchments
- 3.4 Support and empower our community to adapt to, and mitigate our impact on climate change
- 10 3.5 Minimise waste and encourage recycling and resource recovery practices

Community Objective 4: Ethical Growth – We manage growth and change responsibly

Strategies:

- 15 4.1 Manage responsible development through effective place and space planning
- 4.2 Enable housing diversity and support people experiencing housing insecurity
- 4.3 Promote and support our local economy
- 4.4 Foster sustainable visitation and the impacts of tourism on the Shire
- 20 4.5 Support a resilient community that can adapt and respond to change

Community Objective 5: Connected Infrastructure – We have connected infrastructure, transport, and facilities that are safe, accessible, and reliable.

Strategies:

- 25 5.1 Provide a safe, reliable, and accessible transport network
- 5.2 Connect the Shire through integrated transport services
- 5.3 Invest in renewable energy and emerging technologies
- 5.4 Provide accessible community facilities and open spaces
- 5.5 Provide continuous and sustainable water and sewerage management

30 **Delivery Program and Operational Plan**

Cascading out of the ten year strategies of the CSP come the four year actions in the Delivery Program. The Delivery Program outlines Council's commitment to the community on how it will work towards the CSP strategies during its term. The annual activities in the Operational Plan detail how Council works towards the Delivery Program year by year.

- 35 The Biodiversity Advisory Committee is asked to consider and inform the development of the Delivery Program actions that contribute to the following strategies:

Community Objective 3: Nurtured Environment – We nurture and enhance our natural environment.

Delivery Program:

3.1 Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology



3.1.1 Native species	3.1.2 Pest and weed management	3.1.3 Habitat restoration	3.1.4 Biodiversity
Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	Continue best practice Integrated Pest Management on council owned and managed land	Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value	Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity

A brief workshop session will be held as part of the meeting to provide opportunities for input and discussion.

5 **Strategic Considerations**

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 5: We have community led decision making which is open and inclusive	5.2: Create a culture of trust with the community by being open, genuine and transparent	5.2.1: Provide timely, accessible and accurate information to the community	5.2.1.2	Undertake a community engagement program to review and develop Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework documents

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

The requirements for the Community Strategic Plan are governed by [Section 402](#) of the Local Government Act 1993.

- 10 Further requirements are outlined in sections 403-406 and in the Integrated Planning and Reporting [Guidelines](#) and [Handbook](#).

Financial Considerations

Not applicable.

Consultation and Engagement

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

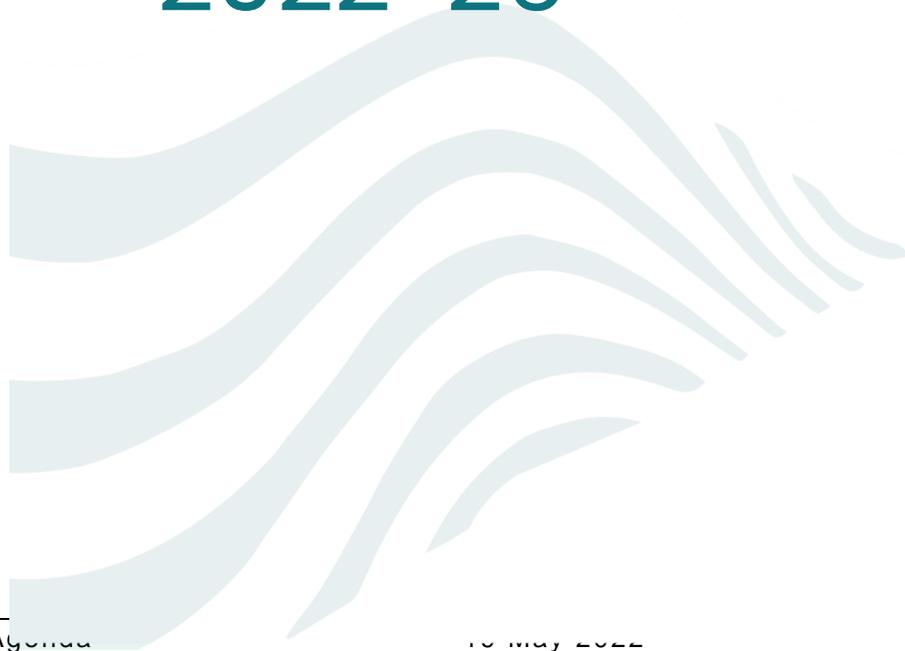
4.1

This discussion forms part of the community engagement program, as outlined in the [Community Engagement Strategy](#) for the Community Strategic Plan.

Draft

Delivery Program

2022-26



Acknowledgement of Country

In preparation of this document Council acknowledges the Bundjalung of Byron Bay - Arakwal People are the Traditional Custodians of the land in Byron Shire, and form part of the wider Aboriginal nation known as the Bundjalung.

Byron Shire Council and the Traditional Custodians acknowledge the Tweed Byron Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Jali Local Aboriginal Land Council under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983.

Council also acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within the Shire and their continuing connection to country and culture.



Executive Summary

Welcome to Council's Delivery Program 2022-26.

Council's Delivery Program turns the strategic goals found in the Community Strategic Plan into actions. All plans, projects, activities, and funding allocations of the council must be directly linked to the Delivery Program.

Importantly it is our commitment to you about what we will deliver. It is underpinned by a range of supporting documents such as the long-term financial plan, workforce plan and asset management plans.

Council's review of the Community Strategic Plan in 2021 and deliberations by the Community Solutions Panel in March 2018 provided an opportunity to significantly review the Delivery Program and ensure it met the new objectives.

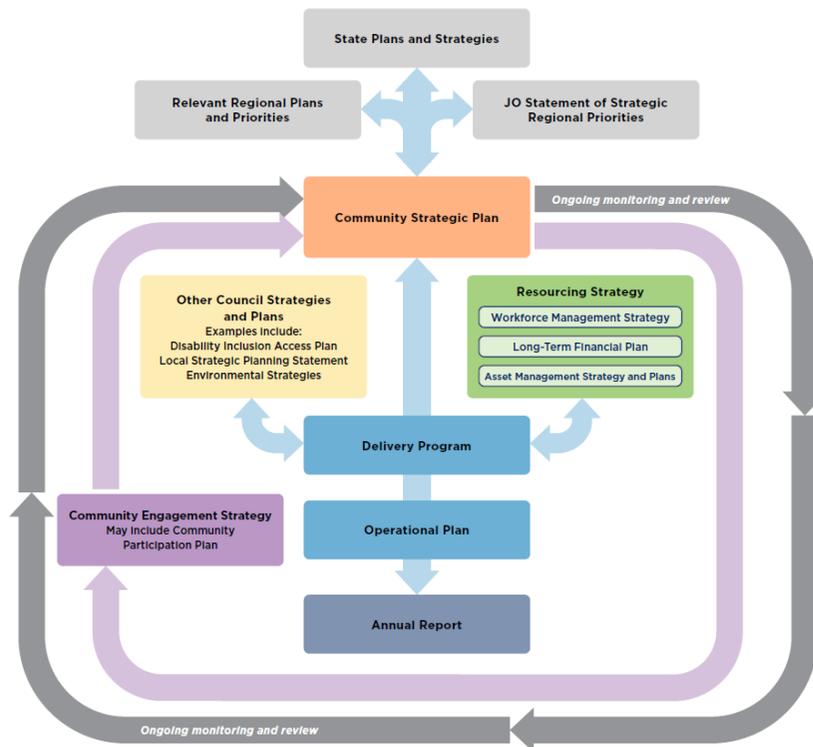
The 2020 Local Government election was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the new Council elected in December 2021. This Delivery Program has been developed with the newly appointed Council in early 2022 and is Council's commitment to the community about what they will deliver during their term of Council.

Council's ongoing commitment to these priorities is supported by an annual Operational Plan.

Integrated Planning and Reporting

10 Year Community Strategic Plan

Leading the Council's planning hierarchy, the Community Strategic Plan captures the community's vision, aspirations, and expectations for the future. It identifies key social, economic, and environmental priorities and long-term strategies to achieve these goals over the next 10 years.



10 Year Resourcing Strategy

The resourcing strategy addresses the sustainable long-term financial, asset management, and workforce planning requirements. This is the point where Council assists the community by sorting out who is responsible for what, in terms of the issues identified in the Community Strategic Plan.

4 Year Delivery Program

The delivery program translates the community strategic plan goals into actions. It is Council's commitment to the community, outlining what it intends to do toward achieving the goals of the community strategic plan during its term of office. The Delivery Program is the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by Council. All plans, projects, activities, and funding allocations must be directly linked to the four year delivery program.

Annual Operational Plan

The Delivery Program is supported by an annual Operational Plan which details the individual projects and activities that will be undertaken each year to achieve the commitments of the Delivery Program. The Operational Plan is supported by a detailed budget and a statement of revenue policy, which also sets the fees and charges for that year.

Elected Representatives

Council has nine councillors and a popularly elected Mayor.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the NSW Local Government elections that were to be held in September 2020 were postponed to 4 December 2021.

Term of Council
December 2021 to
September 2024



Cr Sama Balson



Cr Cate Coorey



Mayor Michael Lyon



Cr Duncan Dey



Cr Alan Hunter



Cr Sarah Ndiaye



Cr Asren Pugh

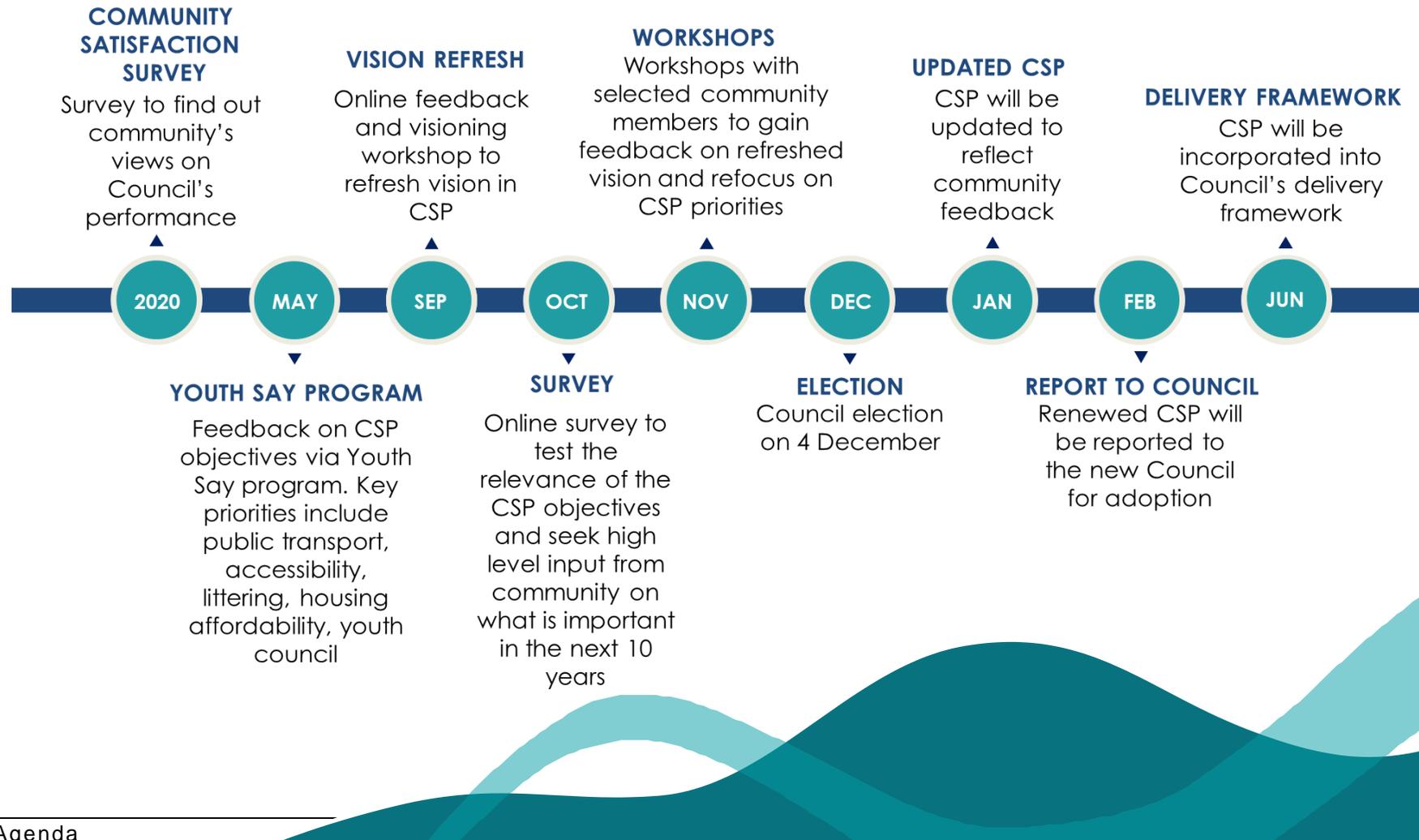


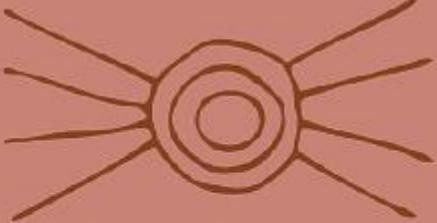
Cr Mark Swivel



Cr Peter Westheimer

Engagement timeline





Our Vision

Our Byron Shire is a 'meeting place':

Where all people can come together to connect, share, grow, inspire, and create positive change.

Our Community Objectives



Effective Leadership

We have effective decision making and community leadership that is open and informed



Inclusive Community

We have an inclusive and active community where diversity is embraced and everyone is valued



Nurtured Environment

We nurture and enhance our natural environment



Ethical Growth

We manage growth and change responsibly



Connected Infrastructure

We have connected infrastructure, transport, and facilities that are safe, accessible, and reliable.

Our Plan on a Page

Byron Shire Community Strategic Plan 2032

Byron Shire Community Strategic Plan 2032

Effective Leadership

We have effective decision making and community leadership that is open and informed



Enhance trust and accountability through open and transparent leadership

Engage and involve community in decision making

Ethical and efficient management of resources

Enhance organisation capability through innovative practices and regional partnerships

Empower community leadership through collaboration, capacity building, & cultivating community driven initiatives

Inclusive Community

We have an inclusive and active community where diversity is embraced and everyone is valued



Foster opportunities to express, celebrate and participate in arts and cultural activity

Enhance safety and contribute to the physical, mental, and spiritual health and wellbeing of our people

Respect Aboriginal culture, value cultural knowledge, and acknowledge history

Enrich lifelong learning and education and support services to help young people thrive

Create social impact and initiatives that address disadvantage

Nurtured Environment

We nurture and enhance our natural environment



Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology

Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment

Protect the health of our coastlines, estuaries, waterways, and catchments

Support and empower our community to adapt to, and mitigate our impact on climate change

Minimise waste and encourage recycling and resource recovery practices

Ethical Growth

We manage growth and change responsibly



Manage responsible development through effective place and space planning

Enable housing diversity and support people experiencing housing insecurity

Promote and support our local economy

Foster sustainable visitation and manage the impacts of tourism on the Shire

Support a resilient community that can adapt and respond to change

Connected Infrastructure

We have connected infrastructure, transport, and facilities that are safe, accessible, and reliable.



Provide a safe, reliable, and accessible transport network

Connect the Shire through integrated transport services

Invest in renewable energy and emerging technologies

Provide accessible community facilities and open spaces

Provide continuous and sustainable water and sewerage management



Strategies

- 1.1 Enhance trust and accountability through open and transparent leadership
- 1.2 Engage and involve community in decision making
- 1.3 Ethical and efficient management of resources
- 1.4 Enhance organisation capability through innovative practices and regional partnerships
- 1.5 Empower community leadership through collaboration, capacity building, and cultivating community driven initiatives

1.1 Enhance trust and accountability through open and transparent leadership



Delivery Program Priorities:

1.1.1 Leadership	1.1.2 Governance	1.1.3 Information management	1.1.4 Performance measurement & reporting	1.1.5 Risk management
Enhance leadership effectiveness, capacity, and ethical behaviour	Ensure legislative compliance and support Councillors to carry out their civic duties	Provide timely, accessible, and accurate information to the community	Embed a robust performance management system through the development of an outcomes measurement framework	Recognise risks and manage them proactively

Indicators:

- Code of Conduct Complaints
- Completion of Audit Plan and report actions
- Satisfaction with providing access to information
- Achievement of planned activities

1.2 Engage and involve community in decision making



Delivery Program Priorities:

	1.2.1 Community-led decision making	1.2.2 Communication	1.2.3 Customer Service	1.2.4 Advisory Committees
	Engage with community to inform Council decision making	Provide timely information to the community about Council projects and activities through traditional and digital media	Deliver efficient customer service consistent with our Customer Service Standards	Coordinate advisory committees to inform decision making on their areas of expertise

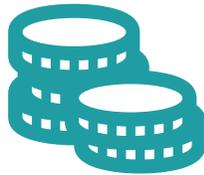
Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Community Engagement Policy](#)
- [Community Participation Plan](#)

Indicators:

- Satisfaction with opportunities to participate in Council decision making
- Satisfaction with community consultation/engagement
- Customer service satisfaction rating

1.3 Ethical and efficient management of resources



Delivery Program Priorities:

1.3.1 Financial management	1.3.2 Revenue Sources	1.3.3 Asset management	1.3.4 Procurement	1.3.5 Resourcing
Ensure the financial integrity and sustainability of Council through effective financial management	Identify and investigate additional revenue sources	Maximise asset service delivery potential and take a proactive approach to lifetime asset maintenance	Ensure Council's procurement framework is robust, efficient, and effective	Identify and investigate resourcing to meet future needs

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Resourcing Strategy](#)
 - Long Term Financial Plan
 - Workforce Management Plan
 - Asset Management Strategy/Plan

Indicators:

The 6 financial performance indicators:

- Own-source revenue
- Operating performance ratio
- Unrestricted current ratio
- Debt service cover ratio
- Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage
- Cash expensive cover ratio per annum (\$million) own source revenue

1.4 Enhance organisation capability through innovative practices and regional partnerships



Delivery Program Priorities:

1.4.1 Inter-governmental relationships

Develop and maintain effective relationships with other levels of government to advocate for the needs of the community

1.4.2 Continuous improvement and innovation

Use business insights and strategic corporate planning to continuously improve and innovate

1.4.3 Regional networks

Collaborate with regional partners to establish and contribute positively to regional goals and priorities

1.4.4 Workforce culture, leadership, and wellbeing

Increase employee engagement and implement strategies that improve satisfaction, culture, health, and wellbeing

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Workforce Management Plan](#)

Indicators:

- Resident satisfaction with overall performance
- Organisational culture and effectiveness
- Workforce safety

1.5 Empower community leadership through collaboration, capacity building, and cultivating community driven initiatives



Delivery Program Priorities:

1.5.1 Community grant programs	1.5.2 Collaboration and capacity building	1.5.3 s355 Committees	1.5.4 Volunteers
Provide financial assistance and grants to empower community groups and organisations to deliver priority projects	Collaborate with stakeholders to build community capacity	Support the management of community halls to delegated s355 committees	Provide meaningful and inclusive opportunities for volunteering

Indicators:

- Value of grants awarded by Council
- Community leadership and collaboration
- Volunteering rates and hours
- Satisfaction with support

IN FOCUS: Repurposing the old Byron Hospital

In May 2019, Council purchased the former Byron Hospital site from the NSW Government following a proposal from a Community Steering Committee to return the site to the local community.

The proposal is to re-purpose the site into the Byron Community Hub, providing vital and currently lacking welfare, social, cultural and educational services in the centre of Byron Bay.

Council is working with the local community to develop detailed architectural plans to re-purpose the building into the Byron Community Hub.

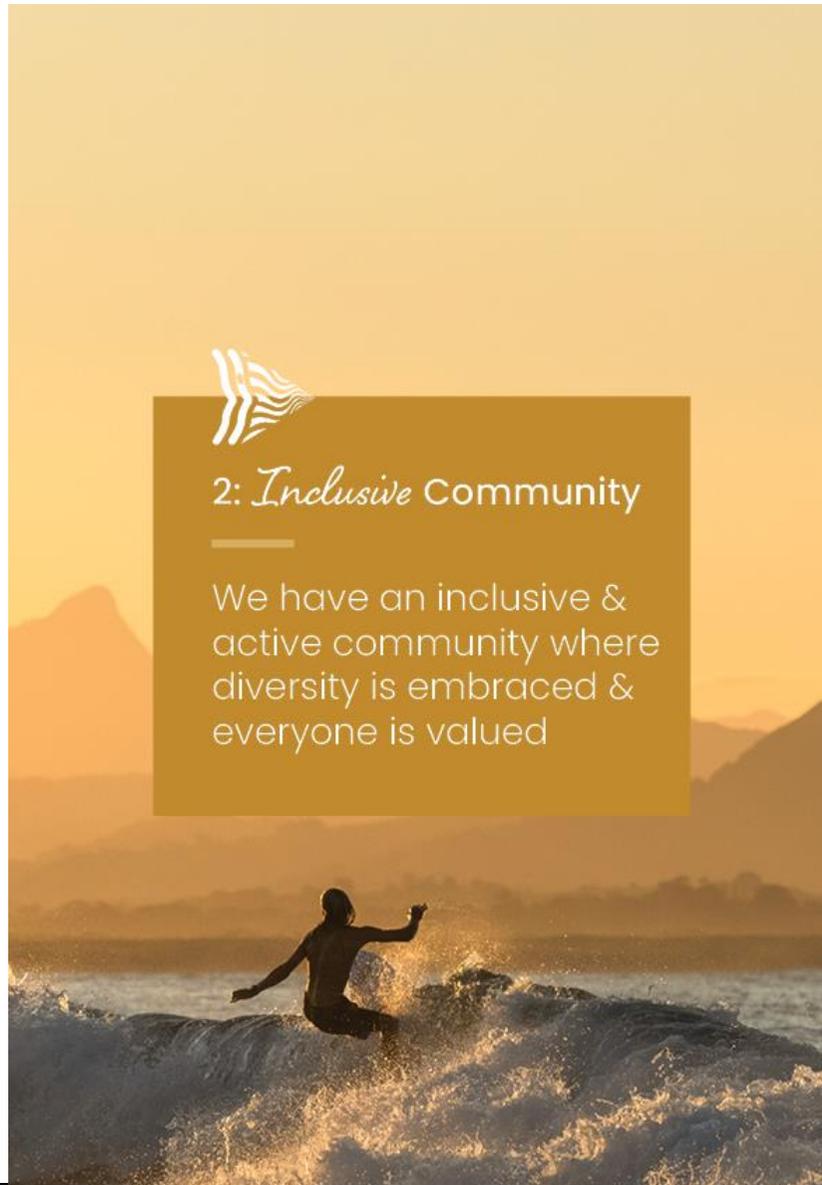


Byron Community Hub

Currently, community service providers are forced to operate in more affordable locations outside of Byron Bay. This means that the most disadvantaged Byron residents and those that are most in need of such services face significant barriers in accessing them. These barriers include distance, travel costs and lack of public transport.

The project will bring these vital community services to the heart of Byron Bay, improving social cohesion and connectivity. By co-locating service providers in a centralised 'hub', recipients of a single service will receive exposure to the wrap-around services, such as health and education, with the potential to accelerate their independence.

There is also a desire to reuse the previous hospital kitchen as a commercial kitchen available for hire and the existing cafe/kiosk would be retained as a cafe, to service students and other site users.



Strategies

- 2.1 Foster opportunities to express, celebrate and participate in arts and cultural activity
- 2.2 Enhance safety and contribute to the physical, mental, and spiritual health and wellbeing of our people
- 2.3 Respect Aboriginal culture, value cultural knowledge, and acknowledge history
- 2.4 Enrich lifelong learning and education and support services to help young people thrive
- 2.5 Create social impact and initiatives that address disadvantage

2.1 Foster opportunities to express, celebrate and participate in arts and cultural activity



Delivery Program Priorities:

	2.1.1 Public art	2.1.2 Lone Goat Gallery	2.1.3 Events and festivals	2.1.4 Artistic and creative industries	2.1.5 Identity and Heritage
	Increase creativity in public spaces and build public art opportunities	Provide professional presentation space for artists and community at the Lone Goat Gallery	Support and enable arts & cultural activity, festivals, projects, and events	Build, support, and advocate for the artistic and creative industries of the Shire to inspire a thriving and sustainable arts community	Share and celebrate our diverse stories, identities, and histories

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Public Art Strategy](#)
- Draft Arts and Cultural Strategy
- [Heritage Strategy](#)

Indicators:

- Satisfaction with Public Art
- Satisfaction with festival and event management

2.2 Enhance safety and contribute to the physical, mental, and spiritual health and wellbeing of our people



Delivery Program Priorities:

<p>2.2.1 Safety initiatives</p>	<p>2.2.2 Public health</p>	<p>2.2.3 Regulatory controls and compliance</p>	<p>2.2.4 Companion Animals</p>
<p>Support community driven safety initiatives</p>	<p>Protect, promote and control risks to public health</p>	<p>Enhance public safety, health and liveability through the use of Council's regulatory controls and services</p>	<p>Promote awareness of the requirements of the Companion Animals Act with respect to the ownership of companion animals</p>

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Dogs in Public Spaces Strategy](#)

Indicators:

- Crime rates (against person)
- Crime rates (property)
- Perceptions of safety
- Satisfaction with public health and safety management program
- Satisfaction with the management and control of companion animals

2.3 Respect Aboriginal culture, value cultural knowledge, and acknowledge history



Delivery Program Priorities:

<p>2.3.1 Aboriginal community and First Nations People</p>	<p>2.3.2 Aboriginal cultural expression</p>	<p>2.3.3 Caring for Country and Aboriginal custodianship</p>	<p>2.3.4 Aboriginal history</p>	<p>2.3.5 Cultural and Economic Development</p>
<p>Develop strong and productive relationships that empower the Aboriginal community</p>	<p>Support First Nations cultural expression</p>	<p>Support initiatives that maintain cultural connection to country and foster opportunities for Aboriginal people to live and work on country</p>	<p>Recognise and acknowledge the importance of valuing Aboriginal history and cultural knowledge</p>	<p>Increase the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities</p>

Related Strategies and Plans:

- Arakwal MOU

Indicators:

- First Nations peoples
- First Nations peoples' input on strategies and decision making

2.4 Enrich lifelong learning and education and support services to help young people thrive



Delivery Program Priorities:

2.4.1 Libraries	2.4.2 Youth	2.4.3 Children's services	2.4.4 Vocational training	2.4.5 Education
Provide modern library services in partnership with Richmond Tweed Regional Library services	Increase engagement with young people and support and encourage programs that offer mentoring, leadership, and pathways to education and employment	Provide high quality early childhood education and activities through Sandhills Early Childhood Centre and Out of School Hours Care services	Support development of a vocational training precinct to provide high quality educational and vocational training in the Byron Shire	Develop partnerships with educational institutions across all stages of the learning spectrum to ensure that lifelong learning is available to the community

Related Strategies and Plans:

- Children's Services Quality Improvement Plan

Indicators:

- Children enrolled in preschool
- Children developmentally on track
- Satisfaction with childcare services
- Young people in employment, education or training
- Post-school qualifications

IN FOCUS: Lot 12 Bayshore Drive

Lot 12 Bayshore Drive, Byron Bay, is a Council-owned 5.8 hectare block of land in the Byron Arts and Industry Estate, opposite the Sunrise Shopping Centre.

This is set to change as Council proceeds with its vision of turning Lot 12 into an innovation precinct, a place to learn, collaborate and connect. This aligns with the recommendations of the [Byron Arts and Industry Estate Precinct Plan](#).

Concept Masterplan

Council has endorsed a Masterplan for Lot 12 to be used as the basis for the next planning and governance steps.

View the [Lot 12 Subdivision Concept Plan online](#).

Where are we now?

Creative Capital was the successful applicant from an Expression of Interest process.

The next step is to divide Lot 12 into three parcels with one block to be sold to Creative Capital.

Council will use the revenue from the sale of that block to develop its 1.3 hectare site which will include a new TAFE Connected Learning Centre alongside other major tenants.



2.5 Create social impact and initiatives that address disadvantage



Delivery Program Priorities:

2.5.1
Access and inclusion

Improve access and inclusion for all community members, including people with disability

2.5.2
Advocacy

Advocate for services and funding to enhance social outcomes across the Shire

2.5.3
Rough sleeping

Work in partnership to reduce and end rough sleeping through community action

Related Strategies and Plans:

- Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Indicators:

- Built environment accessibility
- Equity and inclusion
- Social cohesion
- Rough sleeping

IN FOCUS: Access and Inclusion

Byron Shire Council is committed to co-creating an equitable, accessible, and inclusive community. Access and inclusion are important aspects of ensuring that everyone can participate in our community. In line with Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031, our vision is an inclusive society that ensures people with disability can fulfill their potential, as equal members of the community. We endorse the guiding values of respect, inclusion, and equality.

The *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (NSW) provides the legislative framework to guide state and local government disability inclusion and access planning. The Act supports people with disability to access:

- the same human rights as other members of the community.
- independence and social and economic inclusion within the community; and
- choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports and services.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP 2022-26) sets out the key strategies and actions Council will deliver to support people with disability and co-create meaningful change toward the goals of the State Disability Inclusion Plan in the four key areas.

Attitudes and Behaviours

The attitudes and behaviours of the general community towards people with disability have been described as the single greatest barrier to full access and inclusion.

- **AB-1** Ensure all staff, including leaders, are trained in prioritising access and inclusion.
- **AB-2** Improve education and enforcement of the rules relating to mobility parking.
- **AB-3** Encourage and support local businesses to increase access and inclusion, including tourism opportunities.
- **AB-4** Include people with disability in the design of communications and awareness campaigns.
- **AB-5** Increase the number of public awareness campaigns to celebrate people with both visible and invisible disabilities.
- **AB-6** Acknowledge that fixing access issues demonstrates commitment and action to support inclusion.

All Welcome
Access and inclusion for everyone



Byron Shire

Liveable Communities

Access is a fundamentally important aspect of community participation and inclusion and a key part of creating liveable communities.

- **LC-1** Deliver access ramp and footpath upgrade and renewal program shire wide.
- **LC-2** Improve beach accessibility for a range of mobility needs.
- **LC-3** Increase and improve accessible transport options including accessible parking and public transport.
- **LC-4** Work alongside the business community to improve access, in particular to essential services such as medical practices and banking services, but also to increase tourism opportunities.
- **LC-5** Consider and accommodate a range of visible and invisible disabilities during public events, including physical access, low energy, hearing and vision related considerations.
- **LC-6** Increase and improve accessible parks, playgrounds and recreation facilities, including adequate seating accessible play equipment.
- **LC-7** Improve access to Council-owned buildings and public facilities and amenities.

Meaningful Employment

Employment contributes to feelings of self-worth, social interaction and mental health, and increases opportunities to support individual choice and control.

- **ME-1** Encourage local businesses to increase employment opportunities for people with disability, including accessible recruitment processes for both visible and invisible disability.
- **ME-2** Increase training around both visible and invisible disability in the workplace.
- **ME-3** Support and encourage local businesses with training and awareness-raising activities.
- **ME-4** Encourage inclusion by improving accessibility of work sites (both Administration building and the Depot).
- **ME-5** Provide more guidance and training on inclusive language.
- **ME-6** Improve and increase the availability of accessible meeting rooms.
- **ME-7** Consider and accommodate visible and invisible disability access requirements for Council events and processes such as community engagement.

Systems and Processes

A common issue for people with disability is the difficulty in navigating systems and processes to access the services and supports they need in the community.

- **SP-1** Continue to improve the accessibility of Council meetings, such as with live captioning or Auslan signing.
- **SP-2** Ensure diversity of representation on the ACWG and across other consultation processes such as Place Planning Collectives.
- **SP-3** Introduce sitting fees/compensation for lived experience advisory groups.
- **SP-4** Ensure a diversity of communication strategies that consider and accommodate a range of visible and invisible disability.
- **SP-5** Improve staff understanding of invisible disability and how to assist community in navigating Council processes.
- **SP-6** Continue to improve accessibility of online information and systems, including effective search function.

IN FOCUS: Ending Rough Sleeping in Byron Shire

Byron Shire is the first area in NSW, outside Sydney, to trial a worldwide project aimed at reducing and ending rough sleeping through community action. It is called the Ending Rough Sleeping Byron Shire Project.

The Project brings together:

- people with lived experience of homelessness
- local community groups
- not-for-profits
- service providers
- donors
- government

This group forms the Ending Rough Sleeping Byron Shire Collaboration. The End Street Sleeping Collaboration is a sector-led entity that holds the By Name List data on behalf of local services providers.

Council's role is to provide staff who support and help the work of the group, and advocate for positive change.

This initiative is also part of the NSW Premier's Priority Commitment to reduce rough sleeping by 50% by 2025 and end rough sleeping by 2030 – a target now shared by the Byron Shire.

The By Name List (BNL) records information about each person who is currently sleeping rough or living in crisis accommodation at the time of the survey.

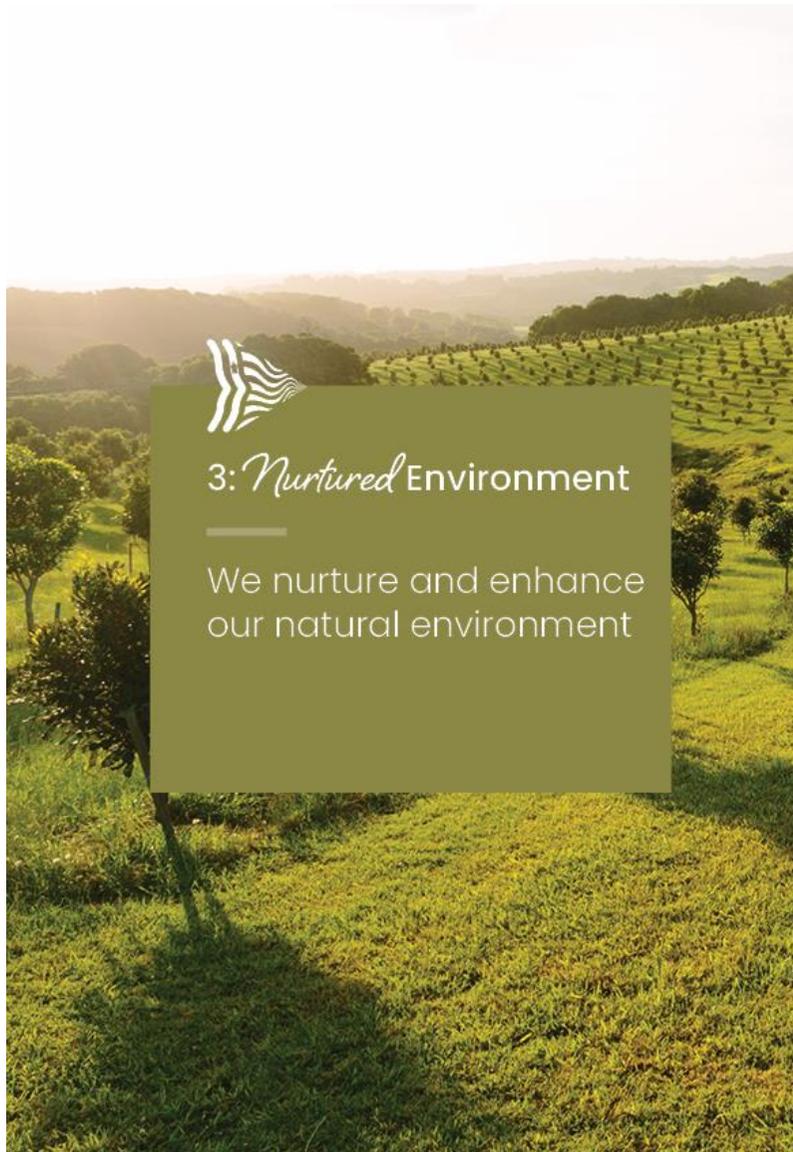
Organisations can use the collective, de-identified data to advocate for the change and resources needed to end homelessness in our community. The information collected will be used as evidence to support policy and systems changes to better help those who sleep rough, and to reduce the number of people sleeping rough in the future.

Understanding this information enables a community to respond in real time. As well as helping individuals access the right housing, health care and other supports, the information collected will help the sector develop better policies and programs.

Our aim is to make positive changes and prevent people from ever having to sleep rough in our community.



ending rough sleeping
Byron Shire



Strategies

- 3.1 Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology
- 3.2 Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment
- 3.3 Protect the health of our coastlines, estuaries, waterways, and catchments
- 3.4 Support and empower our community to adapt to, and mitigate our impact on climate change
- 3.5 Minimise waste and encourage recycling and resource recovery practices

3.1 Partner to nurture and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems, and ecology



Delivery Program Priorities:

3.1.1 Native species	3.1.2 Pest and weed management	3.1.3 Habitat restoration	3.1.4 Biodiversity
Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity	Continue best practice Integrated Pest Management on council owned and managed land	Restore degraded areas that provide high environmental or community value	Use best practice land management to improve ecological resilience and reduce threats to biodiversity

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Byron Shire Integrated Pest Management Strategy](#)
- [Biodiversity Conservation Strategy](#)
- [Flying Fox Camp Management Plan](#)
- [Pest Animal Management Plan](#)
- [Koala Plan of Management](#)

Indicators:

- Bush Regeneration
- Participation in Land for Wildlife program

3.2 Deliver initiatives and education programs to encourage protection of our environment



Delivery Program Priorities:

3.2.1 Compliance	3.2.2 Environmental education and awareness	3.2.3 Planning	3.2.4 Sustainability projects
Encourage compliance with environmental planning regulations	Coordinate and support environmental education to the community	Plan to improve the quality of the natural environment	Support community led environmental and sustainability projects

Indicators:

- Engagement in education programs
- Landcare volunteering

3.3 Protect the health of our coastline, estuaries, waterways, and catchments



Delivery Program Priorities:

3.3.1 Coastal Management Program	3.3.2 Floodplain management	3.3.3 Catchment health
Undertake Coastal Management Program planning and implementation	Mitigate the impact of flooding on private and public property	Investigate and support catchment health improvement initiatives

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Water Sensitive Urban Design Policy \(and Strategy\) 2020](#)
- Coastal Management Programs
 - [Northern Coastline](#)
 - [Southern Coastline](#)
 - [Richmond River](#)

Indicators:

- Condition assessment of catchment health
- Satisfaction with the management of waterways and beaches, including creeks and wetlands

3.4 Support and empower our community to adapt to, and mitigate our impact on climate change



Delivery Program Priorities:

<p>3.4.1 Climate change mitigation</p>	<p>3.4.2 Climate change adaptation</p>	<p>3.4.3 Monitoring and reporting</p>	<p>3.4.4 Net Zero Emissions</p>
<p>Mitigate the risk of climate impacts through actions within Council's control</p>	<p>Enhance community resilience and ability to adapt before, during, and after climate events</p>	<p>Monitor and report on actions that aim to address climate change</p>	<p>Work towards achieving Council's 100% net zero-emissions target</p>

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Net Zero Emissions Strategy & Action Plan](#)
- [Climate Change Adaptation Plan](#)

Indicators:

- Renewable energy
- Net council carbon emissions

3.5 Minimise waste and encourage recycling and resource recovery practices



Delivery Program Priorities:

<p>3.5.1 Towards Zero Waste</p>	<p>3.5.2 Recycling and circular economy</p>	<p>3.5.3 Waste collection and landfill</p>	<p>3.5.4 Education</p>	<p>3.5.5 Facilities and Services</p>
<p>Implement Integrated Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy - Towards Zero</p>	<p>Work with business and tourism sector to reduce waste to landfill</p>	<p>Maintain and enhance solutions to recover / treat / dispose of residual waste</p>	<p>Empower the community to increase avoidance, reuse, and recycling activities</p>	<p>Provide resource recovery facilities and services that meet statutory requirements</p>

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Towards Zero Integrated Waste Strategy 2019 to 2029](#)

Indicators:

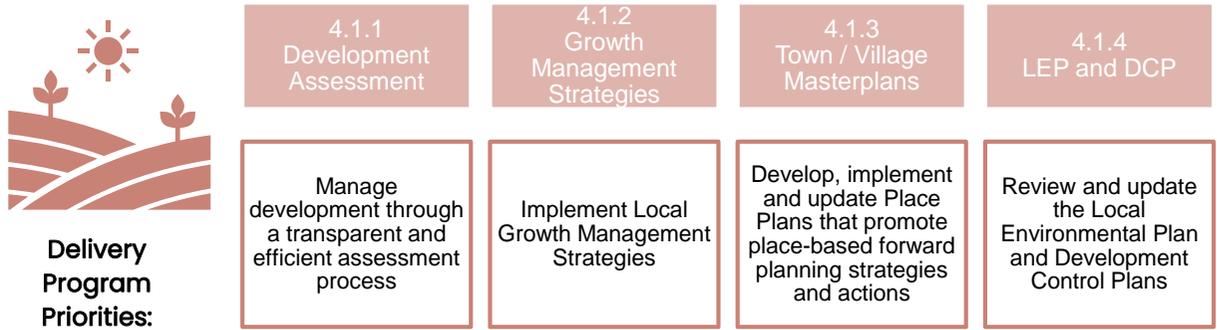
- Waste diversion rate
- Recycling rate
- Residual waste
- Illegal dumping
- Licence compliance



Strategies

- 4.1 Manage responsible development through effective place and space planning
- 4.2 Enable housing diversity and support people experiencing housing insecurity
- 4.3 Promote and support our local economy
- 4.4 Foster sustainable visitation and manage the impacts of tourism on the Shire
- 4.5 Support a resilient community that can adapt and respond to change

4.1 Manage responsible development through effective place and space planning



Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Byron Bay Masterplan](#)
- Local Growth Management Strategies:
 - [Rural Land Use Strategy](#)
 - [Residential Strategy](#)
 - [Business and Employment Lands](#)
- [Local Strategic Planning Statement](#)
- [Our Mullumbimby Masterplan](#)
- [Bangalow Village Plan](#)
- [Byron Arts & Industry Estate](#)
- [Federal Village Masterplan](#)

Indicators:

- Development applications
- Satisfaction with development application processing
- Satisfaction with planning for the development of the area

4.2 Enable housing diversity and support people experiencing housing insecurity



Delivery Program Priorities:

4.2.1
Housing insecurity

Seek opportunities that provide fair, appropriate, and affordable housing for people experiencing housing insecurity

4.2.2
Partnerships and pilots to address housing needs

Investigate partnerships and pilots that deliver an innovative and affordable housing model for the Shire

4.2.3
Legislation changes

Establish planning mechanisms and advocate for changes to legislation to support housing that meets the needs of our community

Indicators:

- Housing availability
- Satisfaction with housing type, tenure, and price in new development

IN FOCUS: Temporary Emergency Accommodation

In response to the 2022 flood events, Council has been working with the state government to support our flood affected communities to accommodate those displaced and or left homeless.

Temporary emergency accommodation options have been explored and enabled by the state government through legislative changes.

On privately owned land these options include:

- Extended stays in caravan parks or camping grounds.
- Installing a movable dwelling.
- Extension of the two-year exemption period for moveable dwellings.
- Councils can modify conditions for camping grounds.

Further information is available [online](#).



Pop-up villages

Across the Northern Rivers 17+ sites have been identified for temporary housing for 2000+ households.

These pop-up villages will be sited on approved council and crown land sites. The 'modular homes' are proposed to be in place for up to three years while the community rebuilds. The sites will be managed by Resilience NSW and a community housing provider for the time of their use.

Byron Shire has three sites identified as suitable for pop-up village use.

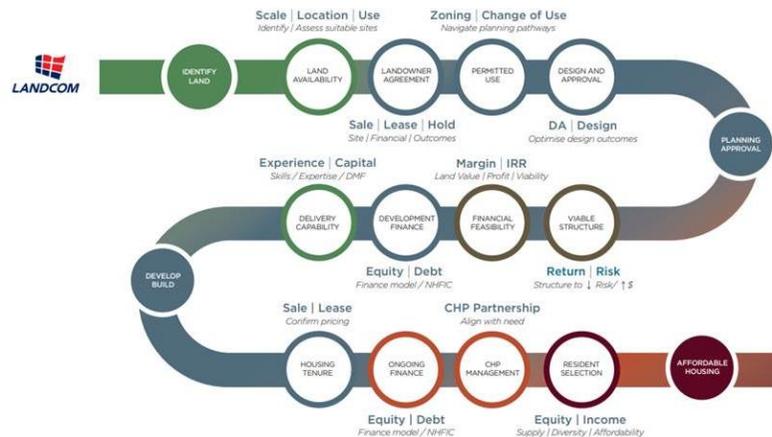
IN FOCUS: Partnership to deliver affordable housing

Council will be working with Landcom, the NSW Government’s development agency in the development of up to 29 studios, one and two-bedroom units on a Council-owned carpark at 57 Station Street, Mullumbimby.

The project seeks to deliver an affordable housing development for people on low – moderate incomes.

Using a 12-step process, Landcom partners with Council to select a Community Housing Provider delivery partner and work collaboratively to optimise the planning, design, financing and housing delivery outcomes for all stakeholders.

Affordable Housing: 12 steps to delivery



Project Objectives

The objectives underpinning the project are:

- Develop the optimum amount of affordable housing that meets the community’s needs
- Long-term tenure of the property as affordable housing
- Council to retain ownership (freehold or 99-year lease) of the car park
- Council contributes land only, with no additional funds required
- Landcom to perform its obligations on a “cost recovery” basis

Project Benefits

The benefits of project agreements (to both parties) can include:

- Greater levels of trust, respect and understanding between the parties.
- Enhanced planning processes for community development and the delivery of dynamic programs, activities and services involving the broader community.
- Increased knowledge, information, and resource sharing between the parties.
- Achievement of mutually desired outcomes.

4.3 Promote and support our local economy



Delivery Program Priorities:

<p>4.3.1 Diverse economy</p>	<p>4.3.2 Social enterprise</p>	<p>4.3.3 Business advice and support</p>	<p>4.3.4 Employment</p>	<p>4.3.5 Food production and regenerative agriculture</p>
<p>Develop a Business and Visitor Economy Strategy to support a resilient and diverse economy</p>	<p>Support social enterprise and local procurement where appropriate</p>	<p>Support, participate, and advocate for sustainable business</p>	<p>Support business initiatives that create local jobs</p>	<p>Develop and implement strategies to support regenerative agriculture, agri-business and farmers</p>

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Business and visitor economy strategy](#)
- Enterprising Byron

Indicators:

- Active businesses
- Rates of employment
- Satisfaction with support for local businesses
- Value of the local economy

4.4 Foster sustainable visitation and manage the impacts of tourism on the Shire



Delivery Program Priorities:

<p>4.4.1 Destination management</p>	<p>4.4.2 Short term holiday letting</p>	<p>4.4.3 Sustainable visitation</p>
<p>Encourage visitation that aligns with our culture and values</p>	<p>Lobby State Government to amend legislation to better manage short term holiday letting</p>	<p>Investigate opportunities to mitigate peak tourist demands on local amenity and infrastructure</p>

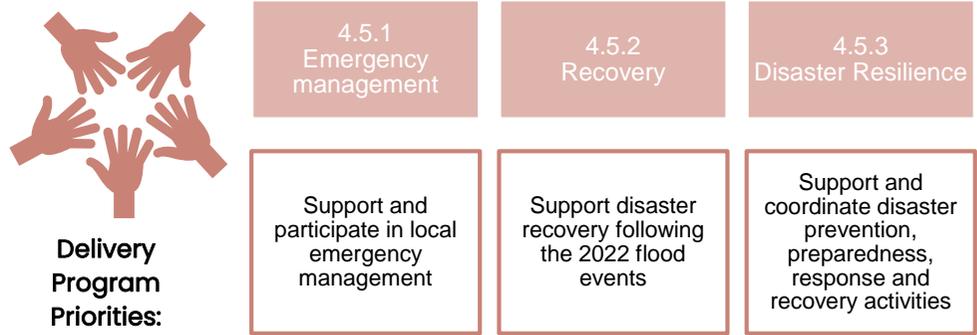
Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Business and visitor economy strategy](#)
- [Byron Shire Events Guide](#)

Indicators:

- Satisfaction with tourism management
- Value of visitor economy

4.5 Support a resilient community that can adapt and respond to change

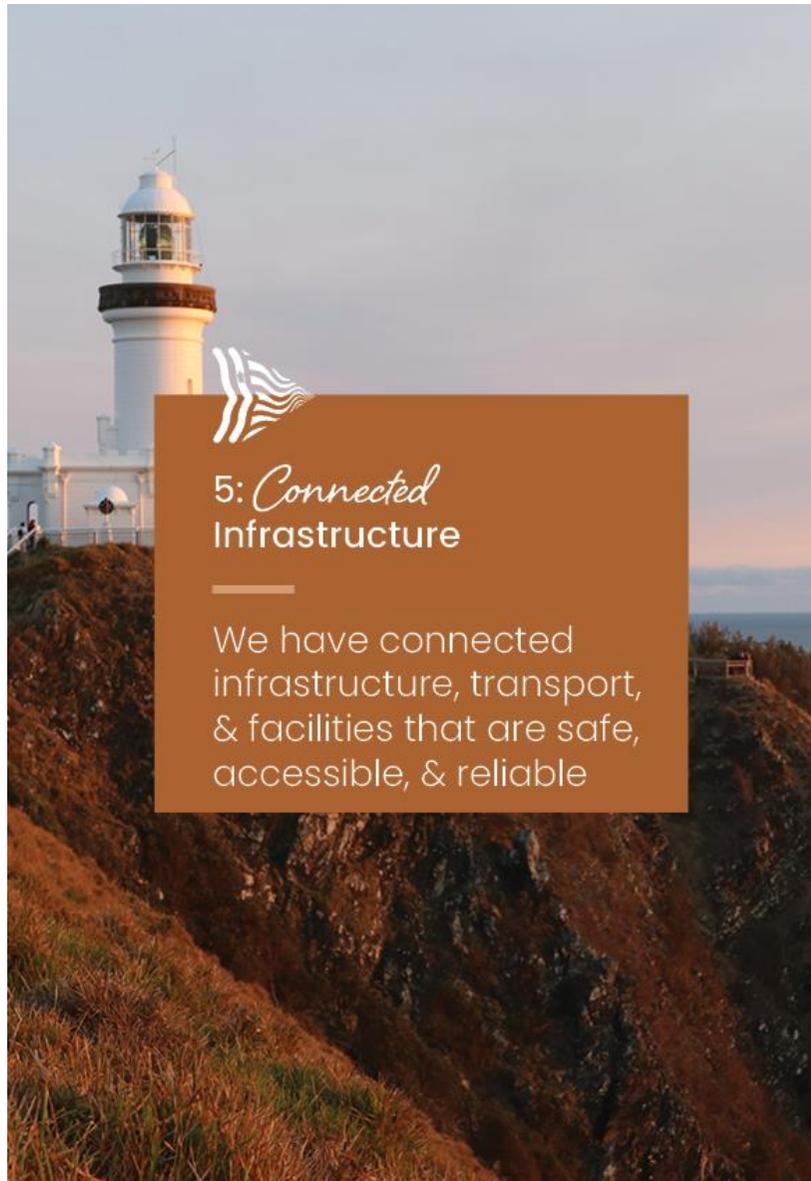


Related Strategies and Plans:

- Local Emergency Management Plan
- Local Recovery Plan

Indicators:

- Progress with delivery of the Flood Recovery Action Plan



5: *Connected*
Infrastructure

We have connected infrastructure, transport, & facilities that are safe, accessible, & reliable

Strategies

- 5.1 Provide a safe, reliable, and accessible transport network
- 5.2 Connect the Shire through integrated transport services
- 5.3 Invest in renewable energy and emerging technologies
- 5.4 Provide accessible community facilities and open spaces
- 5.5 Provide continuous and sustainable water and sewerage management

5.1 Provide a safe, reliable, and accessible transport network



Delivery Program Priorities:

<p>5.1.1 Road maintenance</p>	<p>5.1.2 Road renewal and upgrades</p>	<p>5.1.3 Active transport - pedestrians and cycleways</p>	<p>5.1.4 Multi-Use Rail Corridor</p>	<p>5.1.5 Restore road network</p>
<p>Undertake road and transport network maintenance to meet the standards identified in the Asset Management Plan</p>	<p>Deliver road renewal and upgrade capital works program</p>	<p>Deliver the actions identified in the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and Bike Plan</p>	<p>Activate the rail corridor for multi-use that provides expanded active and shared transport options catering to visitors and residents</p>	<p>Restore the affected parts of the road network that were impacted by the 2022 flood events</p>

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan](#)
- [Bike Plan](#)
- [Moving Byron](#)

Indicators:

- Condition of sealed and unsealed roads
- Satisfaction with local roads
- Delivery of capital work program
- Expansion of shared path/cycle network
- Satisfaction with bikeways and bicycle facilities
- Progress with delivery of Road Infrastructure Flood Recovery Action Sub Plan

IN FOCUS: Byron Shire Community Solutions Panel

In early 2018, Council undertook a bold new democratic exercise and ran a Community Solutions Panel to hear directly from a representative group of Byron Shire residents. The panel came up with a set of considerations, values, a decision making framework and infrastructure categories weighted by values to inform Council's priorities. The panel also outlined potential revenue options and how the community should continue to be involved in Council activities and decisions.

Their considerations were:

- We aim to be proactive, not reactive.
- We recognise there are different needs in different places.
- We support investing in renewal when it is practical and necessary to do so.
- We encourage, support, and facilitate shared ownership of community issues.
- We recognise that the development of transport alternatives to cars is essential.
- We support investment into infrastructure that generates a return.
- We endorse innovative approaches and efficiency in processes.
- We require organisational and individual responsibility, accountability, and transparency.

Their values were:

- Safety
- Community wellbeing
- Connectivity
- Equity
- Environmental consciousness
- Excellence in design

How the Panel's recommendations contributed to the Delivery Program

The Delivery Program was developed in consideration of the Panel's decision making framework. Many of the Panel's recommendations are put into practice every day, for example risk and safety is always the main concern when performing actions, regardless of what we're working on.

The Panel's full report which includes the Panel's vision, values, considerations and recommendations can be found [online](#).



5.2 Connect the Shire through integrated transport services



Delivery Program Priorities:

5.2.1 Regional transport links

Lead, engage and partner to develop a sustainable regional transport network that supports local roads to deliver services to our community

5.2.2 Public Transport

Advocate for public transport services across Byron Shire that are convenient, regular, and easy to access

5.2.3 Traffic management & reduced car dependence

Develop transport infrastructure and services that are accessible to all and meet a diverse range of needs and community expectations

5.2.4 Parking

Manage parking through effective controls that support Movement and Place Plans and are coordinated with other initiatives such as park and ride

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan](#)
- [Bike Plan](#)
- [Moving Byron](#)

Indicators:

- Satisfaction with public transport, traffic planning and management, and parking

5.3 Invest in renewable energy and emerging technologies



**Delivery
Program
Priorities:**

5.3.1 Future needs	5.3.2 Electrification opportunities	5.3.3 Green energy	5.3.4 Telecommunication
Plan for the infrastructure needs of the current and future population	Explore electrification opportunities as they arise	Invest in green energy initiatives	Advocate for more disaster resilient communication networks

Indicators:

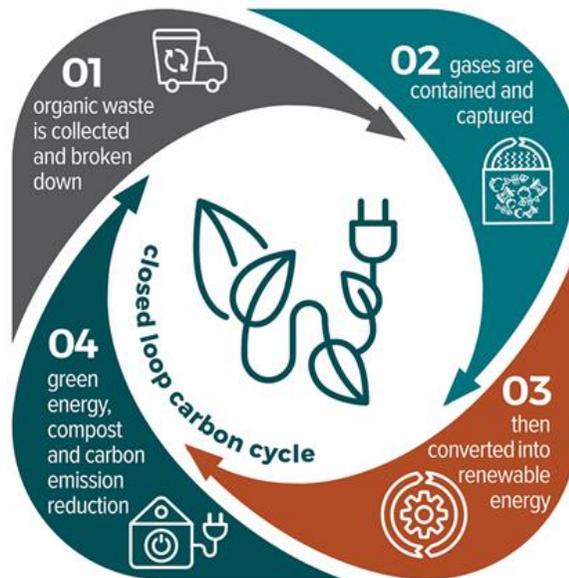
- Renewable energy

IN FOCUS: Bioenergy Facility

We are looking at the feasibility of a bioenergy facility in the Byron Shire. A smarter, local waste solution to convert organic green waste into renewable energy and a compost product.

The proposed location for the bioenergy facility is on Council land at the Byron Sewage Treatment Plant.

If successful, the Byron Bioenergy Facility would be the first of its kind in Australia.



What is bioenergy?

Bioenergy is converting organic waste into clean and green renewable energy. It's known as a closed-loop carbon cycle, because the carbon created will end up as plant matter and stays within the system.

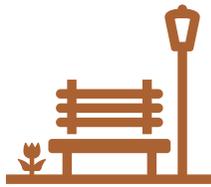
Dry anaerobic digestion uses oxygen-free conditions to break down organic matter inside a contained facility. The resulting biogas is converted into energy.

These are the steps in the bio-energy process.

1. Organic waste is collected and broken down.
2. Gases are contained and captured.
3. Then the gases are converted into renewable energy.
4. This results in green energy, a compost product and carbon emission reduction.
5. Dry anaerobic digestion DOES NOT use burning, incineration or combustion-based technology.
6. The Byron Bioenergy Facility would NOT USE forestry waste.

The infographic (left) steps out this process.

5.4 Provide accessible community facilities and open spaces



**Delivery Program
Priorities:**

<p>5.4.1 Community buildings</p>	<p>5.4.2 Parks and open spaces</p>	<p>5.4.3 Public amenities</p>	<p>5.4.4 Sporting facilities and swimming pools</p>	<p>5.4.5 Commercial facilities</p>
<p>Ongoing maintenance and capital upgrades of community buildings with a focus on increasing accessibility</p>	<p>Provide and maintain active and passive recreational community space that is accessible and inclusive for all</p>	<p>Provide safe and clean public amenities compliant to accessible standards</p>	<p>Ensure ongoing maintenance and upgrade of inclusive sporting facilities and swimming pools</p>	<p>Effectively manage Council owned commercial properties including holiday parks and Tyagarah airfield</p>

Related Strategies and Plans:

- [Recreation Needs Assessment and Action Plan](#)
- [Plans of Management for Council Lands](#)

Indicators:

- Public Open Space
- Satisfaction with community halls, parks and playgrounds, public toilets, and town centres and public spaces

IN FOCUS: Byron Bay Skate Park and Recreation Precinct

From June 2022 we are upgrading the Sandhills area in Byron Bay to make it a vibrant public space that recognises the important cultural values of the site.

The first stage of the project is a skate park and recreation hub that will:

- Provide a high quality skate and recreation space connecting the town centre, environmental zones and existing facilities such as the Byron Youth Activities centre and the library.
- Protect and enhance the cultural values of the traditional owners of the site.
- Activate an area that is currently under-utilised.
- Discourage anti-social behaviour.



Funding

The State Government announced \$25 million for projects in the Byron Shire as part of the NSW Government Road and Infrastructure Election Commitment. \$2.05 million is allocated for the Sandhills Estate activation including a new skatepark and recreation precinct.

Related Information

- [Byron Bay Skate Park and Recreation Precinct - Final Concept Design and Consultation Storyboard](#)
- [Sandhills Estate Skate Park and Recreation Hub Concept Plans - March 2020](#)

5.5 Provide continuous and sustainable water and sewerage management



Delivery Program Priorities:

<p>5.5.1 Water supply</p>	<p>5.5.2 Wastewater management</p>	<p>5.5.3 Stormwater</p>	<p>5.5.4 Water sensitive urban design</p>
<p>Provide a continuous water supply that is maintained in accordance with NSW Health guidelines</p>	<p>Manage effluent in an ecologically sustainable way that ensures public health and protects and enhances the natural environment</p>	<p>Provide stormwater infrastructure to manage flood mitigation and improve social and environmental outcomes</p>	<p>Improve Council's planning, processes and capacity to integrate water sensitive urban design into Council works and address catchment based priorities</p>

Related Strategies and Plans:

- Strategic Business Plan for Water and Sewerage
- [Byron Shire Recycled Water Management Strategy 2017-2027](#)
- Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan
- [Water Sensitive Urban Design Policy and Strategy](#)

Indicators:

- Satisfaction with water supply
- Water expenditure
- Main breaks
- Satisfaction with sewerage management services
- Sewer expenditure
- Breaks and chokes to sewerage mains
- Recycled water consumption



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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**Report No. 4.2 Review Constitution of Biodiversity
Advisory Committee**

5 **Directorate:** Sustainable Environment and Economy
Report Author: Arika McElroy, Project Support Officer
File No: I2022/471

Summary:

10 Attached is the Constitution for the Biodiversity Advisory Committee, for the Committee’s review and recommendation for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:

15 **That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee recommends to Council to adopt the constitution at Attachment 1 (E2021/147945)**

Attachments:

1 DRAFT Biodiversity Advisory Committee Constitution 2022, E2021/147945 , page 68 [↓](#)
20

Report

The constitution is attached for the Committee’s review and endorsement.

5 Future meetings have been scheduled for 15 September and 17 November 2022 at 9:00am.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 5: We have community led decision making which is open and inclusive	5.2: Create a culture of trust with the community by being open, genuine and transparent	5.2.4: Support Councillors to carry out their civic duties	5.2.4.5	Implement and manage Code of Conduct training programs for Councillors, staff, and committee members

Recent Resolutions

- 22-026

10 Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

Not applicable.

Financial Considerations

Not applicable.

Consultation and Engagement

15 Not applicable.



BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL
BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DRAFT CONSTITUTION

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

(INTERNAL USE ONLY)

Date Adopted by Council	TBC	Resolution No.	TBC
Responsibility	Director Sustainable Environment and Economy		
Review Timeframe	Each Term of Council		
Last Review Date:	December 2021	Next Scheduled Review Date	December 2024

Document History

Doc No.	Date Amended	Details Comments eg Resolution No.
E2018/2233	30 January 2018	Draft to be reported to 22 Feb 2018 meeting (see Res 17-611)
E2018/36203	19 April 2018	Adopted Res 18-224 & Res 18-226
E2018/66646	2 August 2018	Res 18-486 – community members confirmed
E2021/147945	February 2022	Draft to Biodiversity Advisory Committee for adoption.

Further Document Information and Relationships

Related Legislation	Section 355, Local Government Act (1993)
Related Policies	Code of Conduct 2016 Work Health Safety Policy Code of Meeting Practice Guide to Operations – Advisory Committee and Panels (E2016/85075)
Related Procedures/ Protocols, Statements, documents	

Constitution: Biodiversity Advisory Committee

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Constitution: Biodiversity Advisory Committee

1. Preamble

The Biodiversity Advisory Committee is an advisory Committee of the Council and does not have executive power or authority to implement actions.

The role of the Committee is to report to Council and provide appropriate advice and recommendations on matters relevant to this Constitution.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee is:

1. To assist Council in the development, implementation and review of relevant biodiversity plans and policies such as: Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Integrated Pest Management Plan, Flying Fox Camp Management Plan, Coastal Koala Plan of Management, Pest Animal Management Plan.
2. To support our Agricultural Action Plan's goal to improve productivity and sustainable land use practices on rural lands in Byron Shire
3. To identify and report biodiversity (terrestrial and coastal) and sustainable/regenerative agriculture matters to Council including, but not limited to: issues and concerns; community or collaborative opportunities; grant funding opportunities; special events; consultation and community engagement ideas; government policy; best practice or improved guidelines/guidance.

It is proposed that meetings can target specific issues related to biodiversity (terrestrial and coastal) and sustainable agriculture and that in order for the Committee to understand the issue and identify opportunities, experts on the subject can be invited to contribute.

It is also proposed that meetings can be held outside the Council building within environments that are relevant to that meeting's theme. For example, different formats could be used such as field days and workshops.

**Note: Strategic coastal planning and preparation of Coastal Management Programs will be reported directly to Council*

3. Timeframe for Committee

The lifespan of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee is for the term of Council 2022-2024.

4. Responsible Directorate

This Committee is administered by the Sustainable Environment and Economy Directorate. The Director or their delegate will attend these meetings and minutes will be taken by a member of their staff.

5. Membership

Council must appoint all advisory Committee members. Appointment must take place prior to a member being conferred the responsibilities and rights as set out in this document.

Constitution: Biodiversity Advisory Committee

Council may release individual members from the advisory Committee at any time by a resolution of council. Council may also appoint any new members to a Committee at any time by a resolution of council.

Membership is to include:

- 3 Councillors
- 6 relevantly qualified community representatives (1 with coastal expertise and 1 farmer/rural landholder)
- 1 Brunswick Valley Landcare representative
- Byron Shire Council General Manager (or staff member delegate)

Note: Staff members participating on the Committee do not have any voting entitlements.

6. Induction

All members will be required to participate in an induction process at the establishment of a new Committee, and at any time a replacement voting member joins a Committee. The induction will be scheduled prior to the first meeting of the Committee and will cover topics such as this Constitution, the Code of Meeting Practice, Conflicts of Interest and Code of Conduct.

Replacement voting members will be inducted by experienced Committee members at, or prior to, their first meeting.

7. Quorum

A quorum is to constitute at least half the number of members plus one (resulting half numbers go down), one of which is to be a Councillor. The General Manager or delegate, who must be a member of staff, is to attend the Advisory Committee meeting and is not counted in the quorum for the meeting.

8. Confidentiality

Members of the Committee will, in those circumstances where confidential matters are subject to deliberation, maintain confidentiality.

9. Election of Chairperson

The position of Chairperson is to be elected from Councillors comprising the Committee but only in circumstances where the Mayor elects not to assume the position of Chairperson.

10. Voting

- a) Each member of the Committee (with the exception of staff members) is to have one vote, with the Chairperson to have a casting vote in addition to a deliberative vote.

Constitution: Biodiversity Advisory Committee

- b) Members of the Committee who are not Councillors may abstain from voting in any circumstances without such abstention being recorded in the negative.

11. Majority Decision

A majority decision of the Committee requires a majority of elected members to be present and voting on any item subject to the requirements of a quorum being met at the meeting.

12. Convening Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly. An annual timetable of meetings will be prepared in advance and adopted by Council for the following 12 months.

A meeting of the Committee may be convened in response to either the direction of the Mayor (or in the Mayor's absence the Deputy Mayor) in written form to the General Manager; or two Councillors in written form to the General Manager, or by resolution of the Council.

13. Agenda Preparation

It is the responsibility of the chairperson to prepare the agenda in consultation with the relevant Director, setting out the terms of business to be considered.

The agenda is an organised list of the business, in order, that will be transacted at the meeting. An agenda for each meeting, containing a brief report on each item, is to be provided to Committee members and available on Council's website at least 7 days prior to the meeting being held.

Each item of business to discuss at the meeting is required to be listed on the agenda and in written form. Verbal reports at the meeting are not an acceptable practice.

For some matters, it will be necessary to attach other relevant information to the agenda to inform and direct discussion. Such information is to be circulated with the agenda.

Committee members may request items for inclusion in future agendas, through the Chair.

14. Conduct of Business

Each item of business is discussed in the order in which it appears on the agenda. No new matters will be introduced at the meeting. New items of business may be included in a future agenda as noted in clause 13 above.

15. Records of meetings

- a) The minutes of meetings are to be circulated to members of the group within 7 days of the meeting so that members can provide feedback through the Chair on the draft unconfirmed minutes.
- b) Minutes of Committee meetings will be kept and presented to Council at its next meeting via a report of the Committee meeting.

16. Absence from Committee Meetings

All Committee members are required to advise the chair when they are unable to attend Committee meetings. The absence of Committee members from the meeting is to be recorded in the minutes. A Committee member (other than the Mayor) ceases to be a member of a Committee if the member:

- a) has been absent from three consecutive meetings of the Committee without having given reasons acceptable to the Committee for the member's absence, or
- b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the Committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the Committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

17. Project Reference Groups

Project Reference Groups may be established by Council at the recommendation of the Committee to address issues clearly identified by the Committee.

Project Reference Groups operate in accordance with Council's adopted Constitution template for Project Reference Groups.

18. Section 377 Delegation

The Committee does not have any delegated functions pursuant to section 377 of the Local Government Act (1993) and does not have the power to direct staff.

19. Meeting Practice

Meetings are to be conducted in accordance with this Constitution and, where required, reference to Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

20. Miscellaneous

- a) **Insurance:** All group members are covered by the public liability policy of Council. This insurance does not preclude the Advisory Committee from due diligence and all Council policies must be adhered to.
- b) **Code of Conduct:** All group members to abide by Council's adopted Code of Conduct at all times.
- c) **Pecuniary Interest:** Pecuniary Interest may be defined as an interest that a person has in a matter, as a group member or employee of a company or other body, because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person, or another person with whom the person is associated. Such other person includes the spouse or de-facto partner or relative of the group member.

Section 446 of the Local Government Act states that "a member of a council Committee, other than a Committee that is wholly advisory, must disclose pecuniary interests..."

Constitution: Biodiversity Advisory Committee

Even though the Local Government Act provides an exemption to disclose pecuniary interests Council's preference is for all members to declare pecuniary interests where applicable.

- d) **Work Health Safety:** All group members are required to comply with the "Worker Responsibilities" as prescribed in the Work Health Safety Policy.

Report No. 4.3 Regenerative Agriculture

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Lizabeth Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

File No: I2022/189

5 **Summary:**

This report explains the process of regenerative agriculture and the role of regenerative agriculture in improving soil health, soil carbon, water storage and biodiversity to create a more sustainable resilient healthier local environment.

10 The report outlines work done so far to promote and encourage regenerative agriculture, and some of the progress that has been made by our local landholders.

RECOMMENDATION:

15 **That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes this report and that regenerative agriculture principals will continue to be encouraged and promoted in line with Council’s Agriculture Action Plan, Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and other land management plans and strategies.**

Attachments:

20

1 Rural land ownership change Byron Shire, E2022/38011 , page 81 [↓](#)

Report

5 This report outlines the role of regenerative agriculture in sustainable land management in Byron Shire and summarises the work that Council is doing to support and promote regenerative agriculture.

What is Regenerative Agriculture?

10 Regenerative agriculture has an array of definitions. Put simply, it means working with nature, not against it, to manage land to produce food. This means managing land using principles that work with biological processes to improve soil health, which makes the land more productive and more resilient to environmental pressures.

15 Regenerative agriculture has significant potential to help mitigate climate change and increase ecosystem health. As well as improving soil fertility, biodiversity and productivity, regenerative agriculture also draws down carbon out of the atmosphere and stores it into our soil. Soil carbon in turn increases soil water holding capacity - every 1% of soil carbon increase allows that soil to store an extra 88,000 litres of water/acre. Improved water storage builds drought resilience and reduces stormwater run-off during flood events.

20 In Byron Shire, cattle grazing represents 88% of our agricultural land use, cropping 3% and horticulture 9% (Attachment 1). Historically, much grazing land has not been managed in a sustainable way, so one of our biggest opportunities to improve landscape resilience and carbon storage is to implement regenerative agriculture practices on cattle grazing land. This is done through a process known as rotational grazing, where fencing is used to divide a farm into multiple small paddocks, and cattle are moved between paddocks every few days, acting as tools that build the soil. This process mimics the ecological pattern seen in natural grassland systems (e.g. in the African savannahs and American prairies), where large herds of grazing animals move rapidly through the landscape, grazing and defecating intensively for a short period of time and then allowing the landscape to rest as they migrate. By giving paddocks time to rest, rather than continually grazing them, grasses grow higher, photosynthesise more, and put down larger roots systems. These natural processes put more energy into the soil and build organic matter and carbon.

30 The following links provide more information on regenerative agriculture processes and how these are being adopted globally to improve our natural environment and mitigate climate change:

- Local Byron Shire Resident and Advocate of Regenerative Agriculture –
[Damon Gameau talks about the power of regenerative agriculture - YouTube](#)
- 35 • Australian Regenerative Agriculture pioneer Charles Massey - ['From the Ground Up – Regenerative Agriculture' - YouTube](#)

Regenerative Agriculture in Byron Shire

We have some great farmers in our region that have been following regenerative agriculture principles. In some instances, local farmers have increased their soil carbon

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.3

from 3% to 14% over a 5-year period. In Australia, this level of soil carbon increase is exceptional - generally an increase of 1-2% soil carbon over 5 years is considered very good. In Byron Shire the high rainfall and nearly 365 days a year growing season enable much greater opportunities for soil carbon storage.

5 At a recent field day at a local organic vegetable farm in Goonengerry, land managers Liz and Bob Gray advised that the carbon sequestration in their garden beds was 20% higher than the highest current rating, due to regenerative farming methods as well as rebuilding native wildlife habitat, all without the use of chemicals. Byron Shire needs more farmers like these. [You can view the field day on Youtube.](#)

10 However, there are many landowners in the region that simply don't know what is required to implement regenerative farming practices, or lack the knowledge or resources to get started.

15 Council's Agricultural Extension Officer is working with local farmers to help support and promote regenerative agriculture in Byron Shire, through projects such as the Combatting Pests and Weeds Project and the Smart Farms Small Grants Project. Extension activities include:

- Establishment of a 300+ member farmers data base. Regular emails (over 50 to date) have been sent out round this network, with advice and information relating to regenerative agriculture.
- 20 • 79 on-site consultations providing expert advice and support to local farmers regarding regenerative agriculture.
- Grant funding for 6 local farmers to implement rotation grazing to manage weeds on 204ha of farmland through the Combating Pests and Weeds Project.
- 25 • Regenerative agriculture mentoring program for farmers, in collaboration with Southern Cross University.
- 14 field days, workshops and events promoting sustainable agriculture.
- Development of a collaborative network with 10 local organisations and businesses interested in being involved with the rural economy and sustainable local food production.
- 30 • Collaboration with Carbon 8 Which enabled 88 of our farmers receive two free books of their choice on Regenerative Agriculture with plans for more collaboration in the future.
- 4 radio appearances and 5 newspaper articles supporting regenerative agriculture and encouraging farmers to seek advice from council.

35

Next steps

5 To develop a resilient landscape, increase soil biodiversity and protect our food security, we need to continue to educate and inspire our community to support and implement regenerative agriculture. This means building a culture of custodianship rather than landownership, where what we, as landholders, “own” is the responsibility to look after country and ensure it is there for future generations.

10 To do this we can continue to educate and inspire our landholders to contribute positively to their landscape and community. We can connect new farmers with other farmers who are like minded and those that have a wealth of knowledge to share. We can connect landowners with limited farming capacity with people who don’t own land but want to farm sustainably. We can continue to grow the Byron Farmers Network, connecting farmers to the wealth of resources that are out there from workshops, to grants to inspirational information and webinars. We can provide farmers with advice on current carbon credit schemes that allows them to receive income from increasing their carbon. We also need to encourage those who live in urban areas to support and encourage regenerative farming practices, by purchasing their food from local sustainable growers, for example through farmers markets.

20 Most farmers don’t have a big budget and it is easy to get overwhelmed with the information available. Byron Shire Council’s agriculture extension service has been extremely valuable for landholders to get expert advice and help with figuring out their next steps. Some simple guidance, together with networks and support, can make all the difference. We also need to seek ways to continue to incentivise and reward land holders who commit to regenerative practices.

25 If the BAC is interested in learning more, there are several local farmers who would be happy to demonstrate the work they are doing on their farms. Staff have also worked with regenerative agriculture educator [Glen Chapman](#), who would be happy to spend some time with any committee/council members to help educate on this further. Glen is currently running a mentor program with some local farmers, funded by the SmartFarms project.

Strategic Considerations

30 **Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan**

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.1: Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	3.1.1: Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.11	Deliver the 'Drought Pests and Weeds' grant funded project
Community Objective 3: We protect	3.4: Support and secure our	3.4.1: Develop and implement strategies to	3.4.1.1	Continue implementation of the Agriculture

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.3

and enhance our natural environment	farming future	support agriculture, agri-business and farmers		Action Plan
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.1: Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	3.1.1: Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.1	Seek funding to implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Coastal Koala Plan of Management and Flying Fox Camp Management Plan (Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.32)

Recent Resolutions

21-149

Resolved that Council adopts the Byron Shire Agricultural Action Plan 2020-2025 with the following change to the Aim in the plan.

- 5 AIM
1. To arrest the trending decline in the economic performance of the agriculture sector by the end of 2023.
 2. To increase the annual value of primary production in the shire by \$20 mil by the end of 2025
 - 10 3. To have a database of 300 landowners aware of and practicing some form of conservation land management by 2025Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

Financial Considerations

N/A

15



Rural land ownership change in Byron Shire LGA

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ARC Linkage Project LP170101125

What are the impacts of land ownership change for social
and economic transformations in rural Australia?

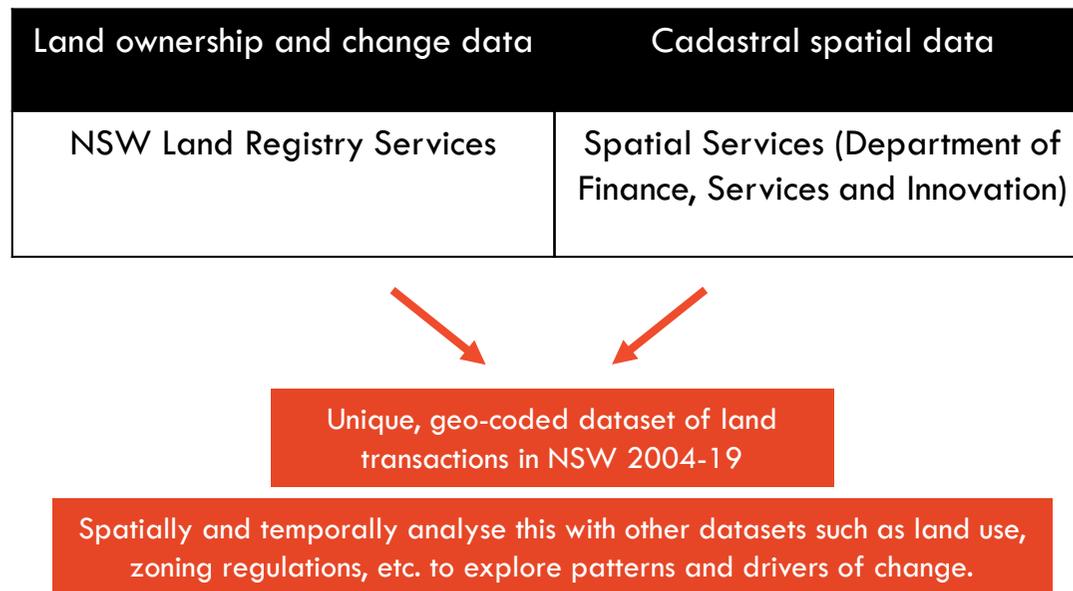
Partner: NSW Department of Primary Industries



Theme	Research question
1. Agricultural commodities	How do the incidence and characteristics of land-ownership change differ across agricultural-commodity systems and how can this information help policy formulation that seeks to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of the agricultural economy?
2. Corporate agriculture and the 'family farm'	To what extent are declining numbers of farms explained via processes of consolidation, particularly associated with the acquisition of 'family farms' by larger agri-corporate entities?
3. Water sensitivity	How responsive are the incidence and characteristics of land-ownership change to the effects of water scarcity? Do more farms change hands during drought?
4. The effects of planning decisions	How do planning rules relating to the subdivision of rural land affect ownership and land use patterns, with particular reference to: (a) conversion of farm land to non-farm uses; (b) changes in average farm property size, and (c) any correlation between the construction of a dwelling on a property and its use for productive agricultural purposes?
5. The economic impacts of farm subdivision	How does subdivision of farms, if it replaces traditional agriculture with rural residential land-uses, impact on the economies of local towns? How is this related to potential land use conflicts arising from this process, especially in relation to nuisance complaints?

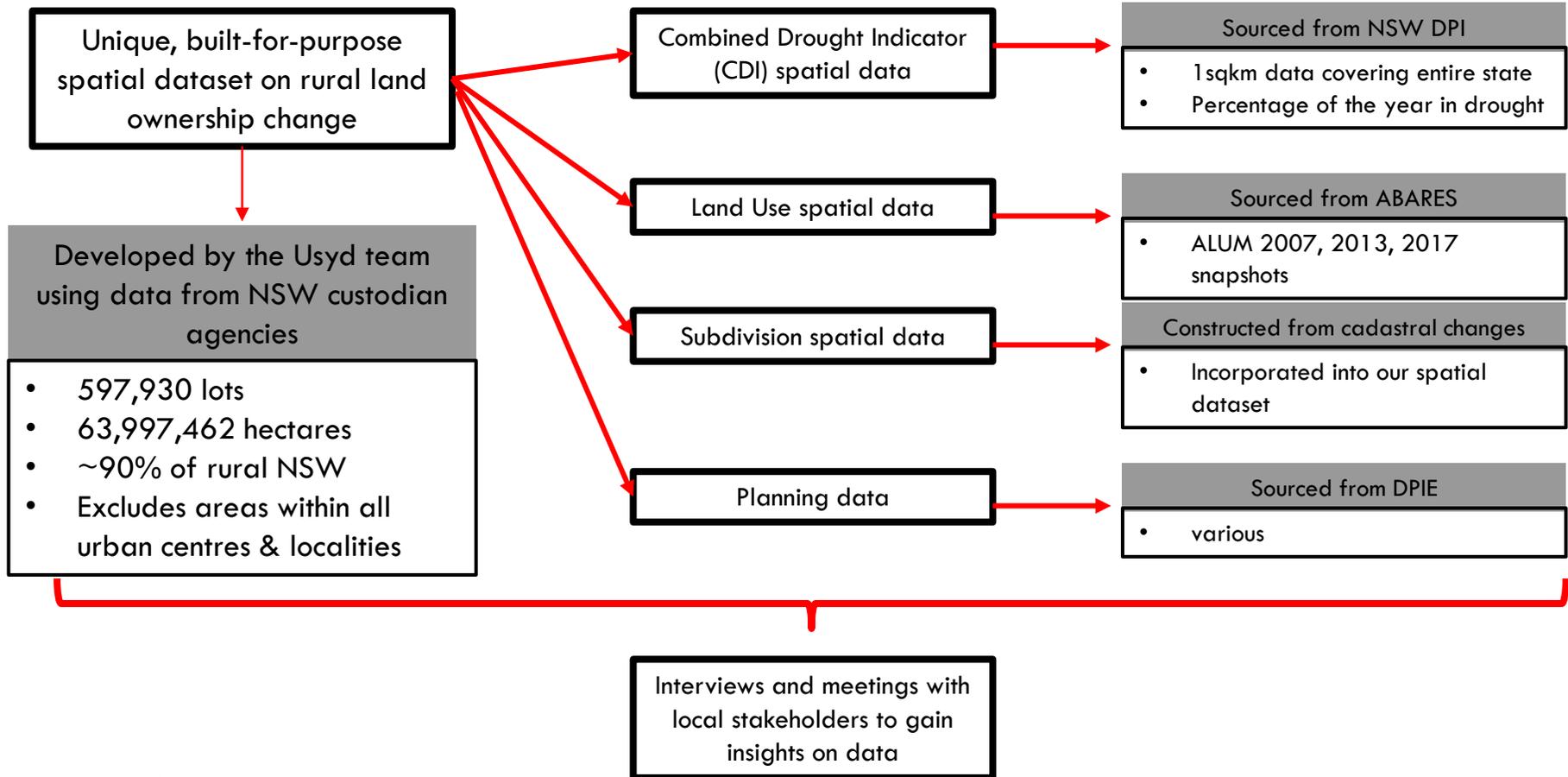
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Construct a research-ready database of all land transactions in rural NSW 2004-2019



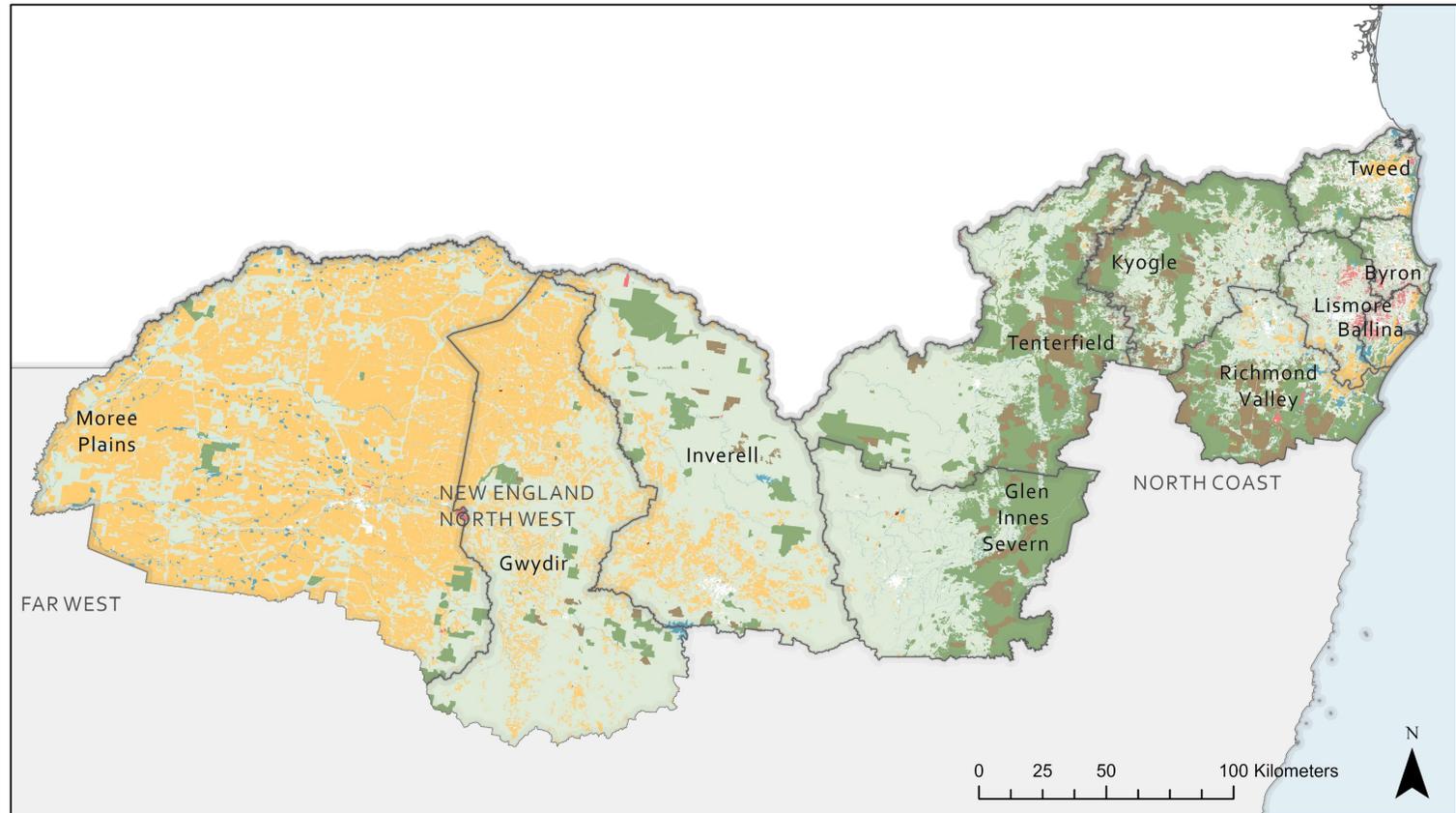
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Data



The University of Sydney

Northern NSW Transect



Northern NSW Transect Study Area
NSW Land Use 2017 (ALUM)

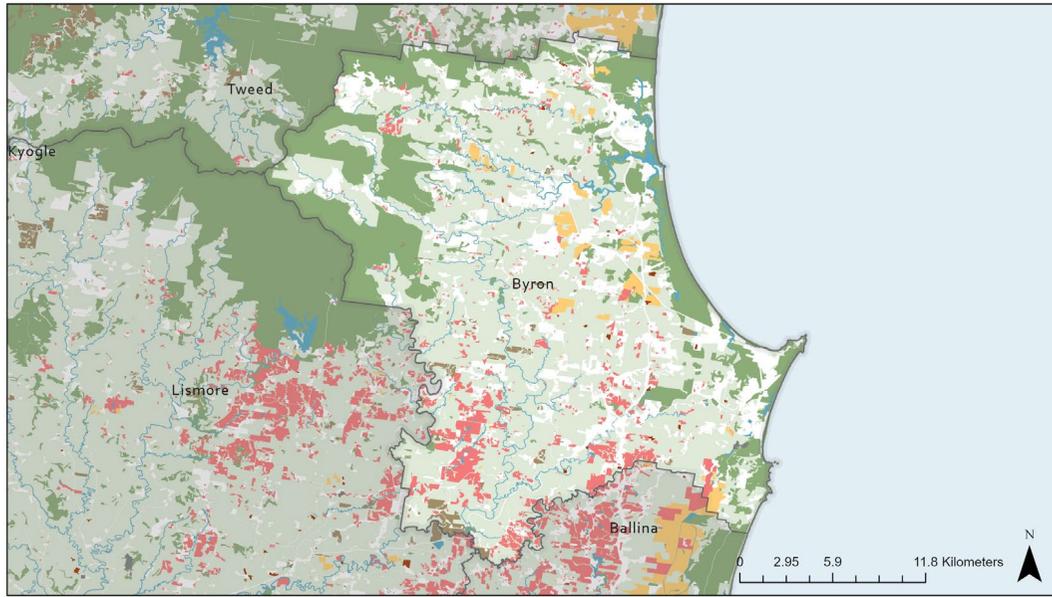
- Cropping
- Grazing
- Intensive Animal Production
- Horticulture
- Plantations & Forestry
- Conservation
- Water
- Mining
- Local Government Area Boundary

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2. Overview Byron Shire LGA

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Agricultural land uses



Primary Agricultural Activity	% of Total Agricultural Land (Area)
Grazing	88%
Cropping	3%
Horticulture	9%

Byron LGA
ALUM Map

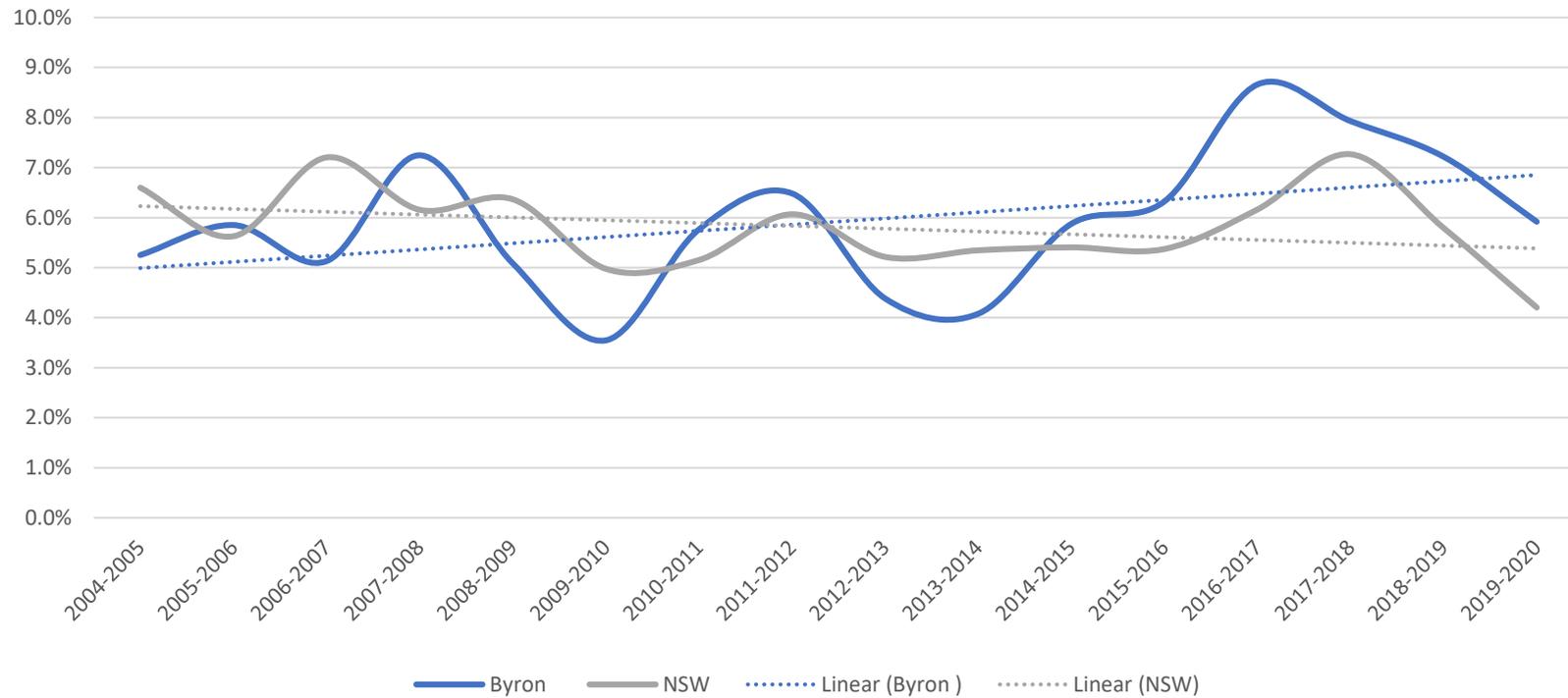
- Cropping
- Intensive Animal Production
- Water
- Grazing
- Plantations & Forestry
- Mining
- Horticulture
- Conservation
- Local Government Area Boundary

Source: 2017 Australian Land use and Management Classification Version 8

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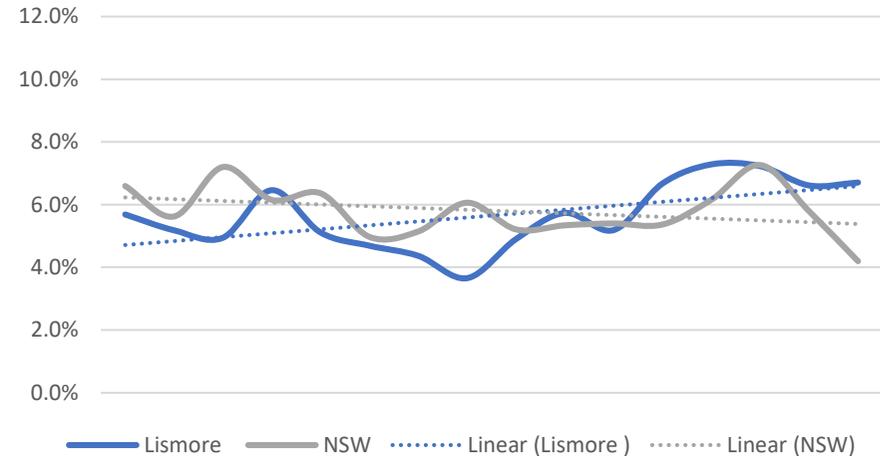
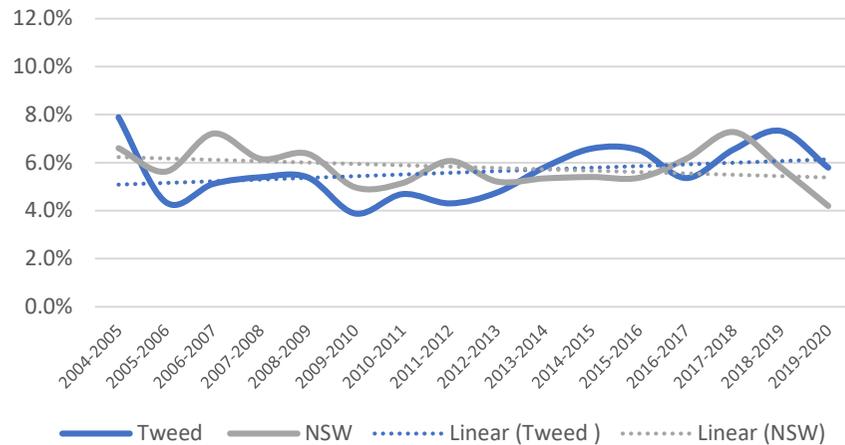
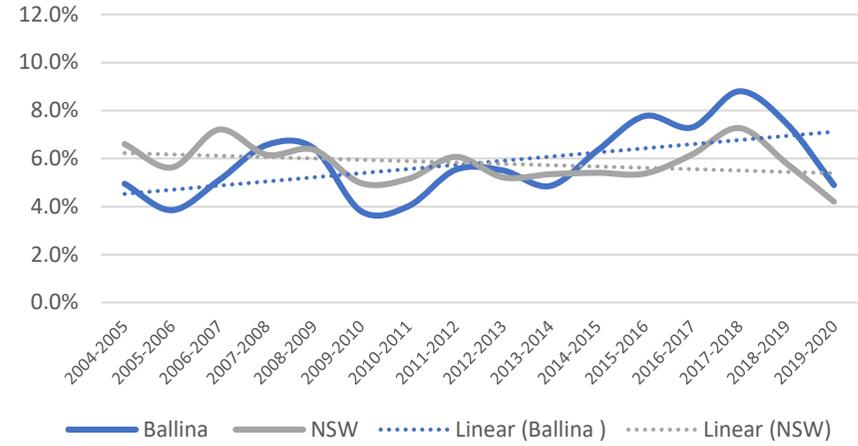
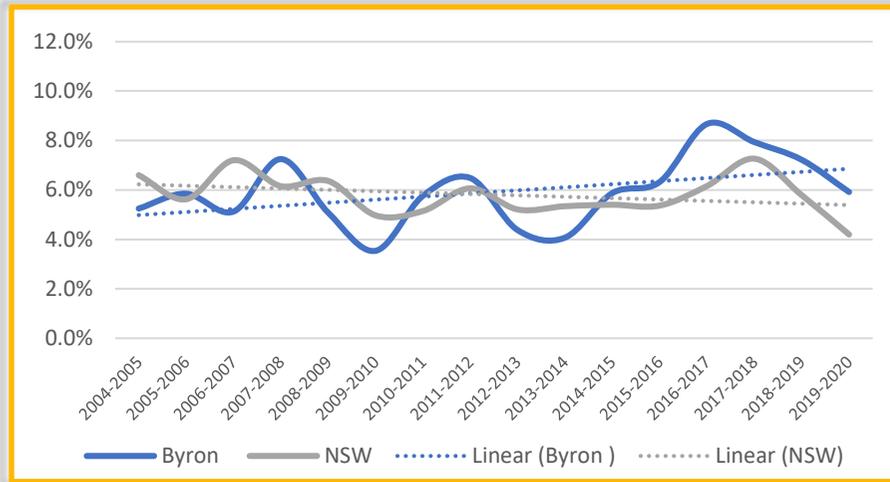
Page 7

Incidence of land ownership change (% of total area) in Byron LGA

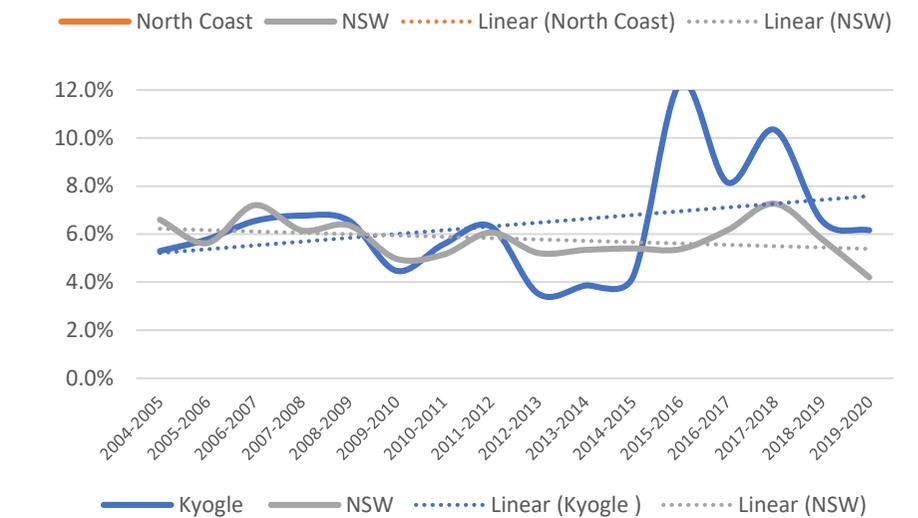
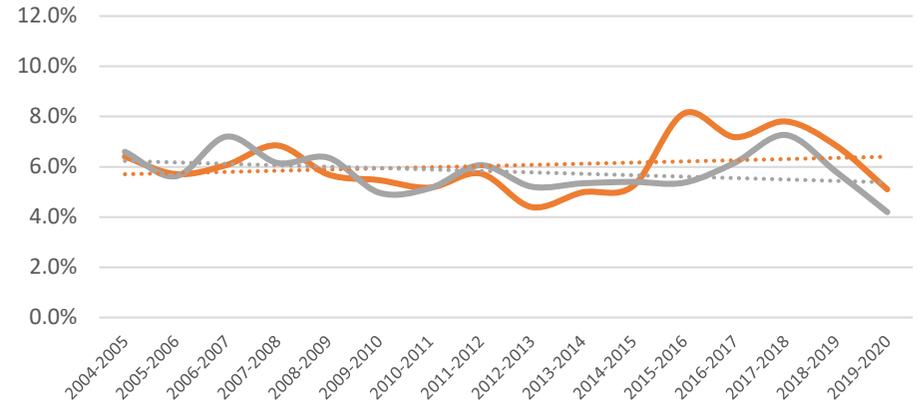
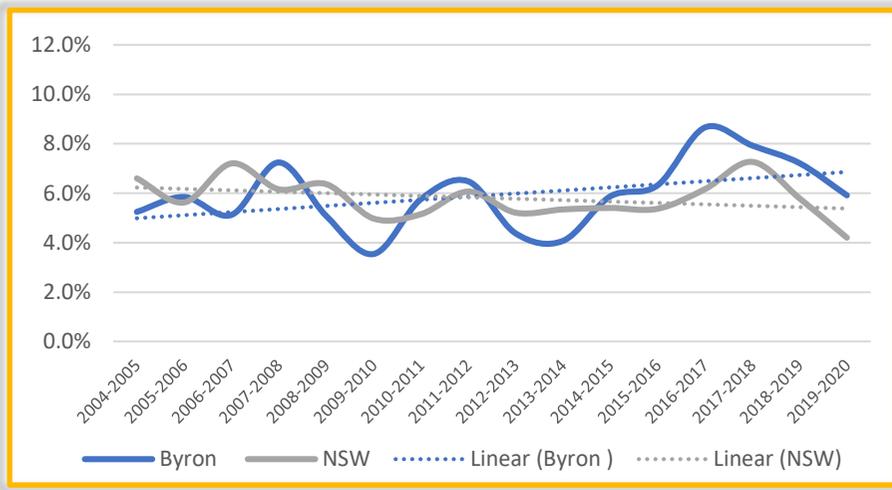


Rate of Change Average for LGA = 5.9%
 (North Coast Region 6.1%; NSW 5.8%)

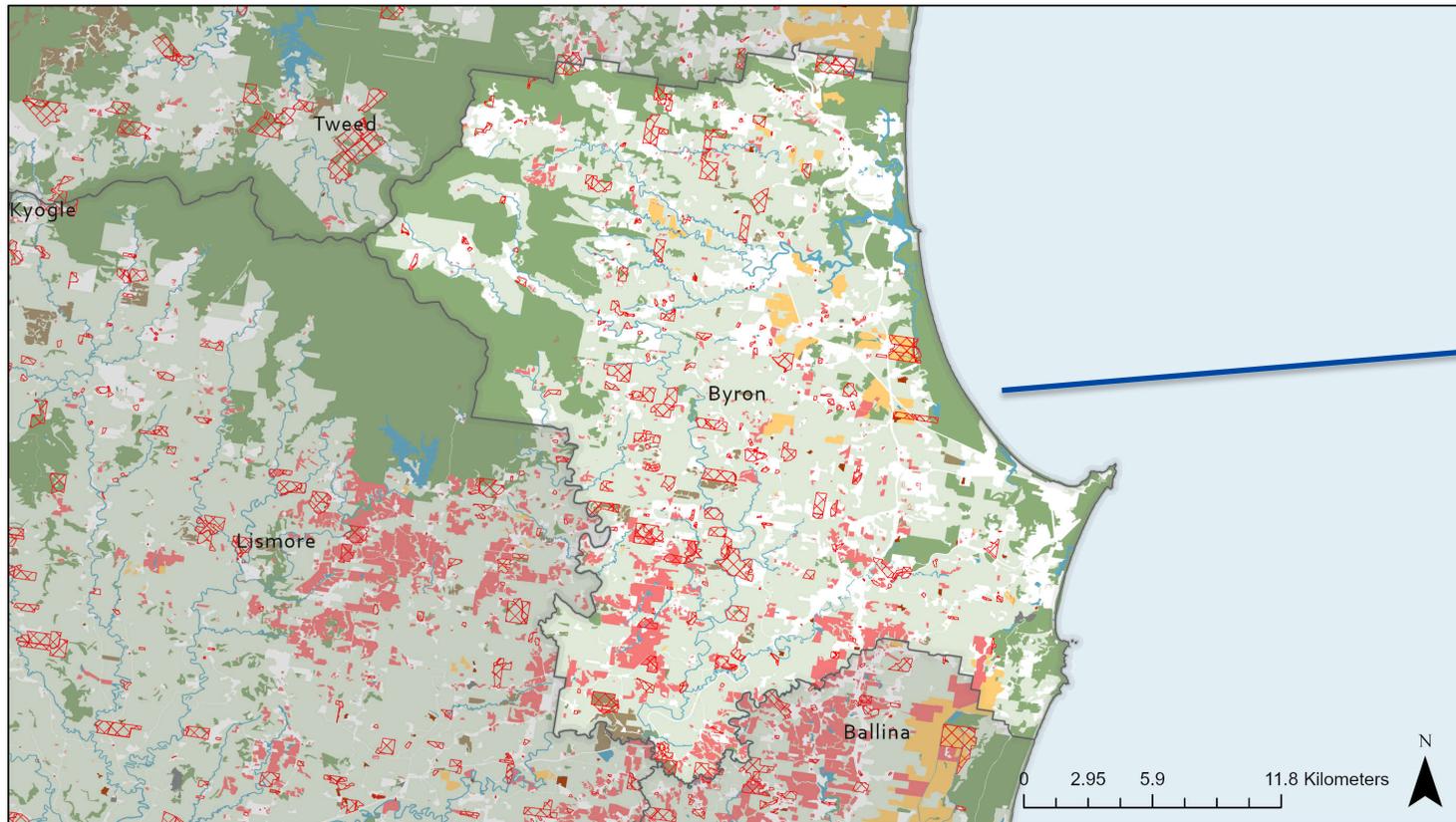
Incidence of land ownership change (% of total area)



Incidence of land ownership change (% of total area)



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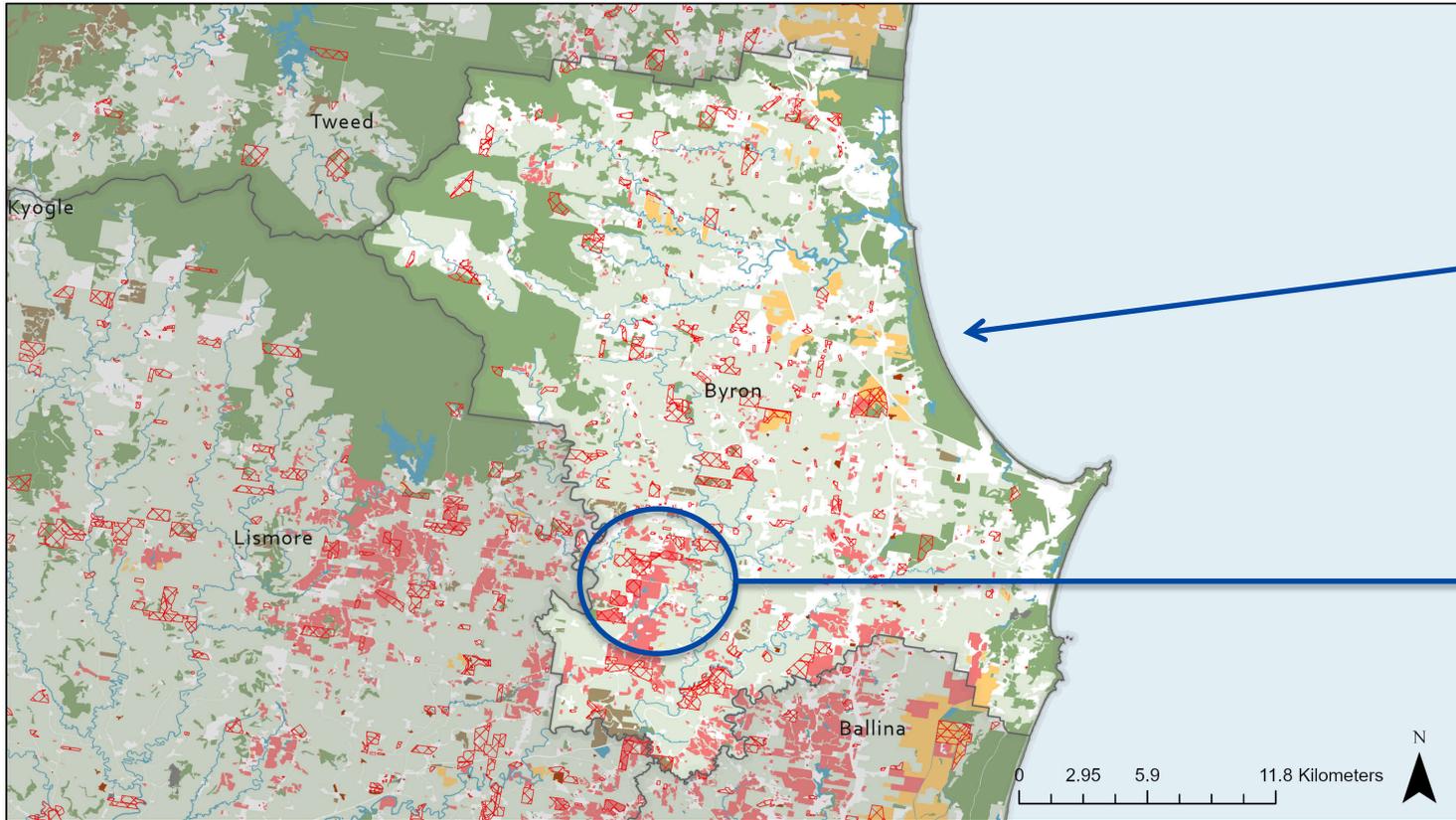


Multiple types of transactions:
- Mostly individual-to-individual

Byron LGA
2007



BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL



Multiple types of transactions:
- Mostly individual-to-individual

Cluster of corporate transactions associated with horticulture

Byron LGA 2016



Preliminary findings for Byron Shire LGA

- Consistent churn with some volatility
- Sharp increase in rate of change 2016-2019.
- Compared to state trends, rate of change is increasingly steadily. State-wide we are seeing a recent decline.
- Compared to neighbouring LGAs:
 - Higher than Tweed,
 - Lower than Lismore, Ballina
 - Consistent with upward regional trends

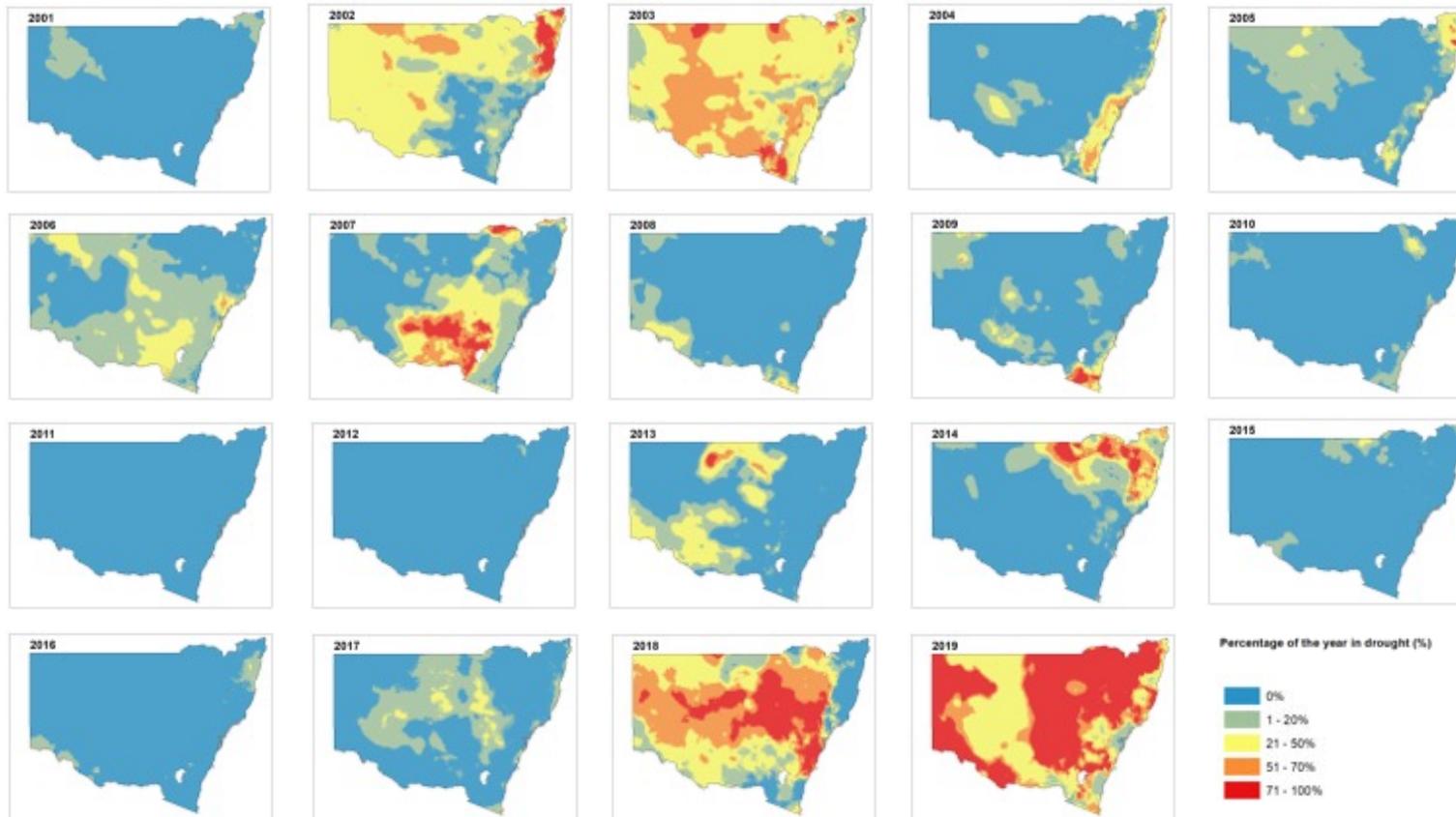
3. Themes for discussion

- 1. Agricultural commodities and drought**
2. Corporatisation of agriculture and the 'family farm'
3. Planning and sub-divisions

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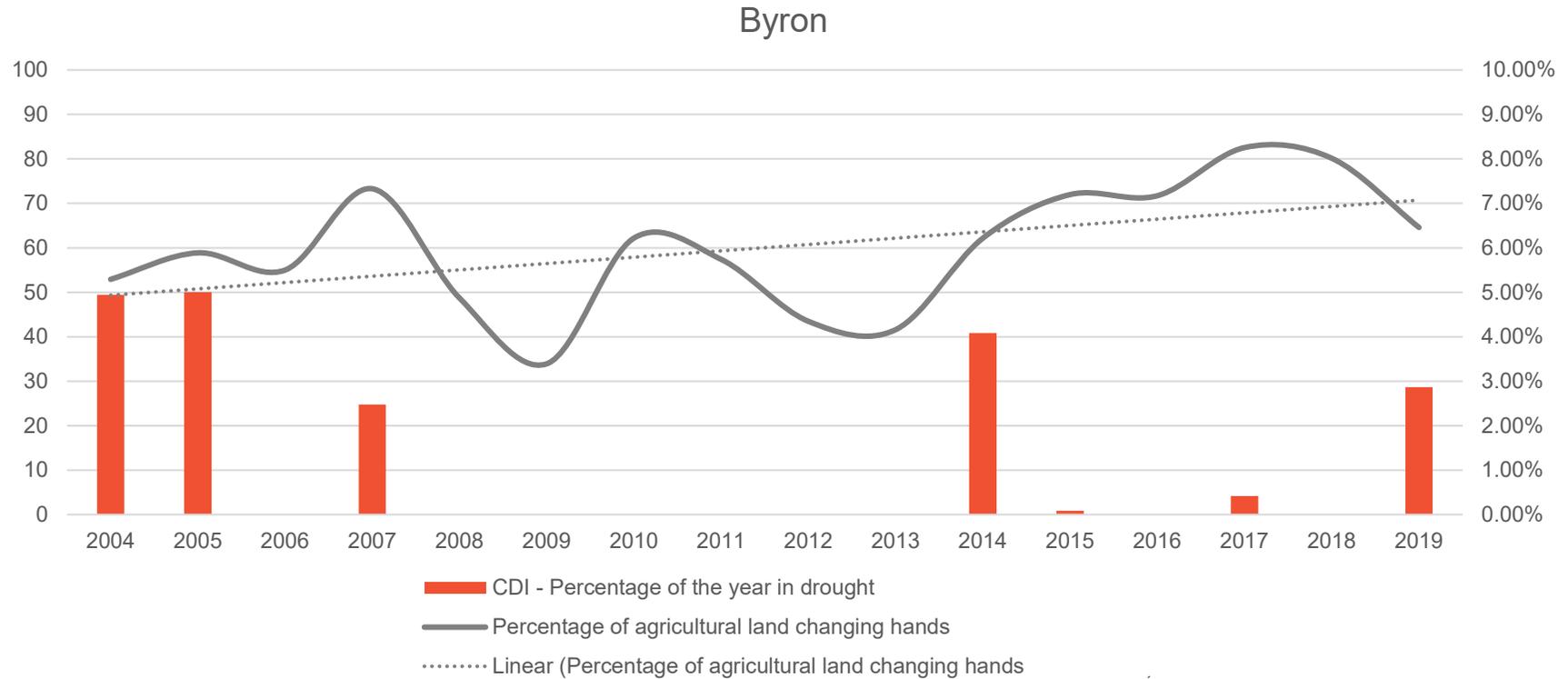
Percentage of the year in drought (2001-19)

NSW DPI Combined Drought Indicator



The University of Sydney

Drought and agricultural land changing hands



LGA Average (Agricultural land): 6.1% per year

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Theme 1: Agricultural commodities and drought

- **The rate of change of agricultural land in the LGA peaked in 2018 (8%) and troughed in 2009 & 2013 (4%)**
 - Moderate upward trend in rate of change for agricultural land, despite drops at the end of each drought.
 - How have the Millennium and 2018-2020 droughts impacted agricultural production in the LGA?
- **By land area, Grazing makes up over 88%, Cropping 3% and Horticulture 9% of the agricultural land in the LGA**
 - What are key themes in the way these sectors are changing?
 - What factors drive investment in these sectors?
 - What other sectors (new/emerging) are shaping sales of agricultural land?

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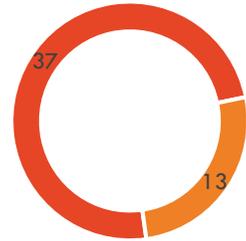
3. Themes for discussion

1. Agricultural commodities and drought
2. **Corporatisation of agriculture and the 'family farm'**
3. Planning and sub-divisions

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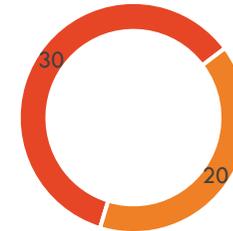
Largest 50 Private Landholders, 2004 & 2019

Breakdown of 2004 Largest 50 Landholders



■ Individual ■ Corporate

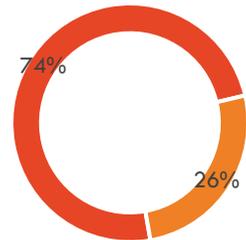
Breakdown of 2019 Largest 50 Landholders



■ Individual ■ Corporate

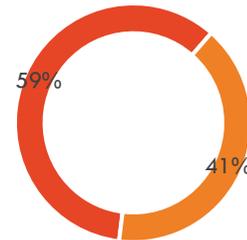
2019 Largest 50 landholders occupy 14% of study area in Byron

Area % of 2004 Largest 50 Landholders



■ Individual ■ Corporate

Area % of 2019 Largest 50 Landholders



■ Individual ■ Corporate

2004 Largest 50 landholders occupy 14% of study area in Byron

The University of Sydney

Profile of the current 15 largest private landholders in Byron

2019 Rank	2019 Area (ha)	Type of owner	Rank in 2004	2004 Area (ha)	Change in holding %	Comment
#1	197	Corporate	-	0	NEW	Developer
#2	186	Individual	Outside Top50	1	18505%	
#3	175	Individual	-	0	NEW	
#4	167	Corporate	-	0	NEW	Developer (Ex-farmland)
#5	165	Corporate	#5	165	0%	Company with strong ties to spiritual movement
#6	164	Individual	#6	164	0%	
#7	158	Individual	-	0	NEW	Founder of international wellness social enterprise
#8	145	Corporate	#10	145	0%	Multiple Occupancy Group
#9	141	Individual	-	0	NEW	
#10	132	Corporate	-	0	NEW	
#11	131	Individual	#13	131	0%	Banana grower
#12	127	Individual	#15	127	0%	
#13	123	Corporate	Outside Top50	16	669%	
#14	122	Individual	#18	122	0%	
#15	121	Individual	#19	121	0%	

Current (2019) Individual: 9 Corporate: 6 Largest 15 landholders occupy 5.5% of study area within Byron. By area, 41% of this is corporate owned and 59% is individually owned.

Baseline (2004) Individual: 10 Corporate: 5 Largest 15 landholders occupy 5.8% of study area within Byron. By area, 33% of this is corporate owned and 67% is individually owned.

The University of Sydney

Page 22

Theme 2: Corporatisation and family farming

- Small increase in the % of large landholders with corporate names (not necessarily farms).
- Largest holders of land (by aggregation) are getting smaller. Moderate churn of large landholders since 2004 (compared to Tweed).
- No evidence of land aggregation, likely fragmentation.

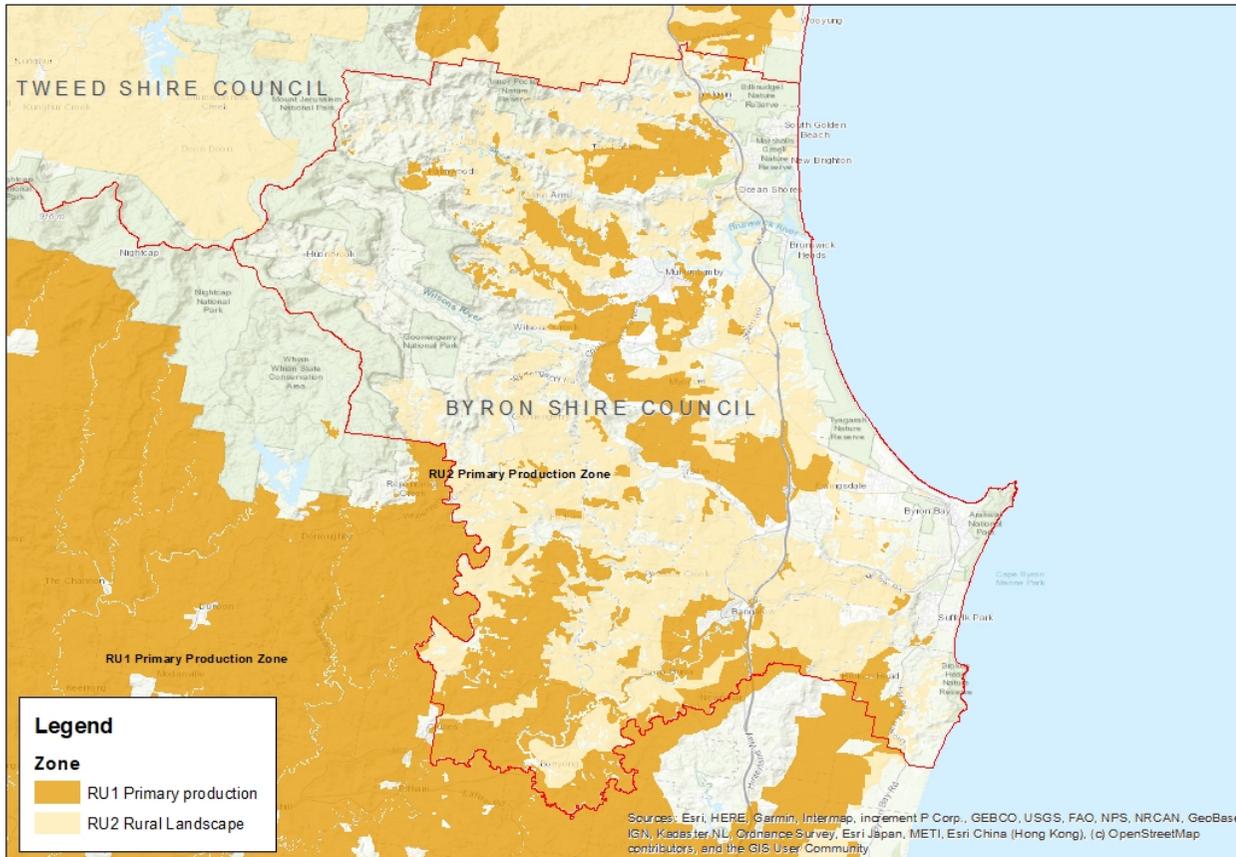
- **In what ways is the composition of farm ownership changing in Byron Shire?**
 - Individual owners (family farming)
 - Corporate owners (of differing scales)
 - Local or non-local landowners
- **Are different types of farms more likely to be bought or sold?**
 - Ownership structure
 - Size
 - Sector
 - Commodity type

3. Themes for discussion

1. Agricultural commodities and drought
2. Corporatisation of agriculture and the 'family farm'
- 3. Planning and sub-divisions**

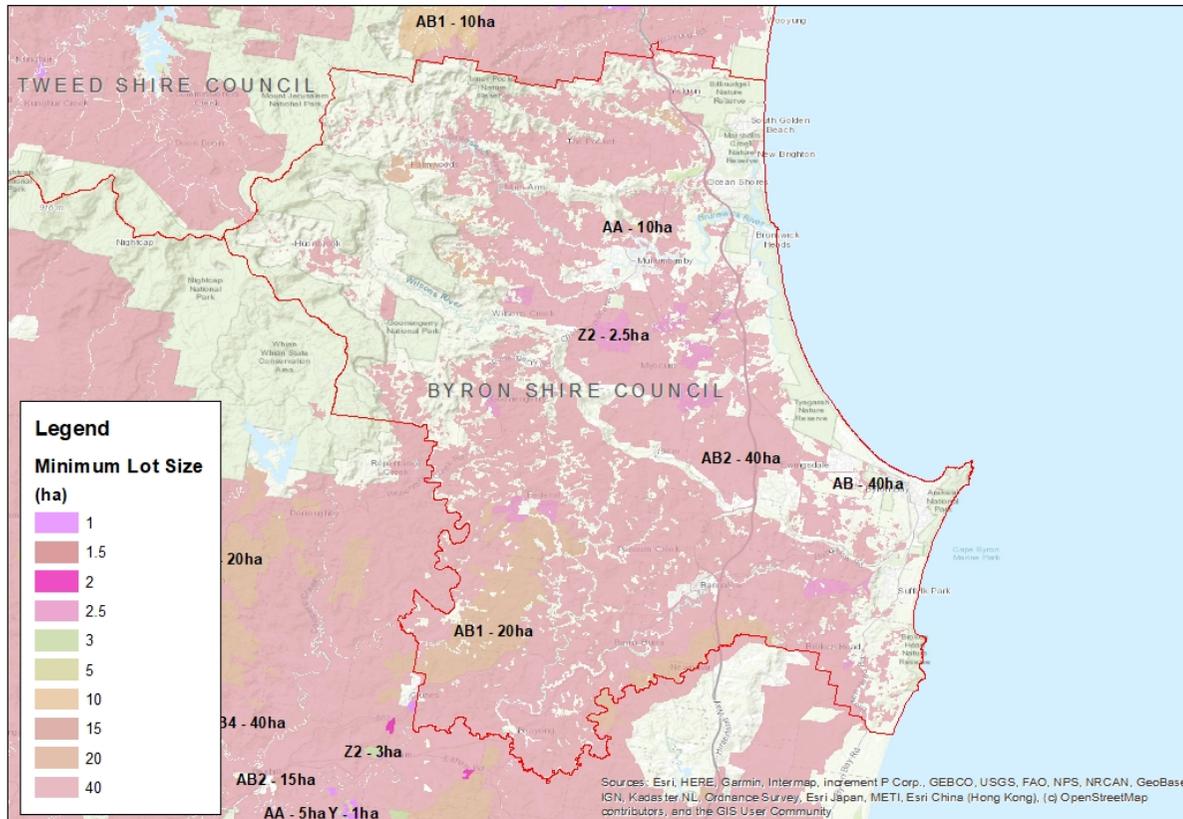
The University of Sydney

Rural Zoning



- What are the major trends and challenges affecting the protection of agricultural land in the LGA?
- What are the major local planning control changes in the last 16 years affecting the protection of productive land?

Minimum Lot Size (MLS)



- What are the key challenges in achieving the intent of the minimum lot size rules in the LEP?
- Has cl 4.2 of the standard instrument LEP which provides flexibility for the subdivision of rural land achieved its purpose of protecting agricultural land?
- Do you have knowledge of new dwellings being build under this clause that have been sold and converted into solely residential use?

Byron Local Environmental Plan 2014

▸ Part 4 Principal development standards

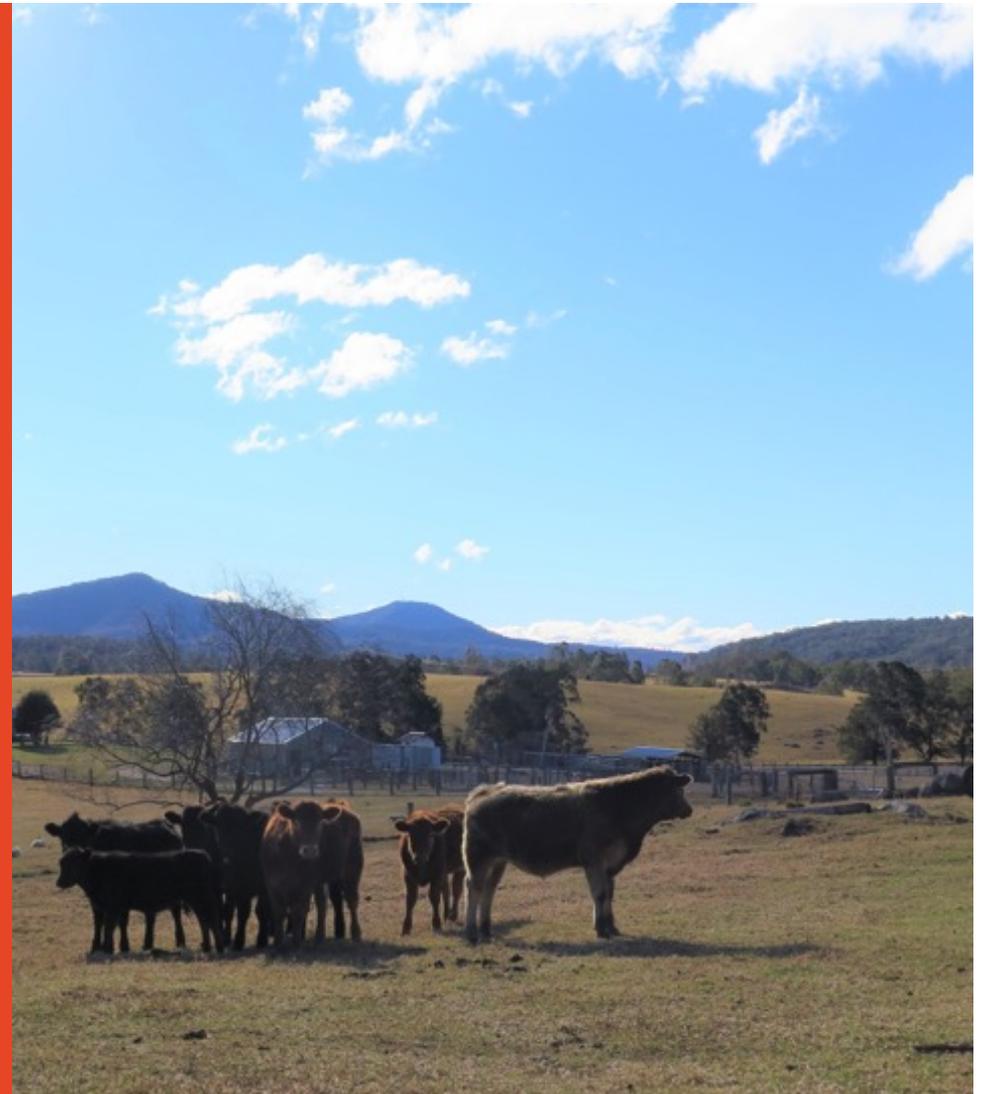
- 4.1 Minimum subdivision lot size
 - 4.1A Minimum subdivision lot size for strata plan schemes in certain rural and residential zones
 - 4.1AA Minimum subdivision lot size for community title schemes
 - 4.1B Minimum subdivision lot size for multiple occupancy or rural community title developments
 - 4.1C Minimum subdivision lot size for boundary adjustments in certain rural and residential zones
 - 4.1D Exceptions to minimum subdivision lot sizes for certain split zones
 - 4.1E Minimum lot sizes for dual occupancies, manor houses, multi dwelling housing and residential flat buildings
 - 4.1F Exceptions to minimum lot sizes for certain rural subdivisions
- 4.2 Rural subdivision
 - 4.2A Erection of dwelling houses and dual occupancies on land in certain rural zones
 - 4.2B Maximum number of dwelling houses or dual occupancies on multiple occupancy or rural landsharing community developments
 - 4.2C Erection of rural workers' dwellings on land in Zones RU1 and RU2
 - 4.2D Erection of dual occupancies (detached) and secondary dwellings in Zones RU1 and RU2

- What has the impact of subdivision/new dwelling clauses been on:
 - a) the conversion of farmland to non-farm uses
 - b) changes in average farm property size
 - c) construction of new dwellings for non-agricultural purposes

Other questions

1. What are the major trends and planning policy challenges affecting the protection of agricultural land in the LGA, particularly in relation to the sale of rural land for residential and non-agricultural purposes?
2. How did the concessional lots policy affect the fragmentation of rural land in the LGA prior to 2008. Did this change after 2008 with the introduction of the Rural Lands SEPP? Have there been other any major local planning control changes in the last 16 years affecting the protection of productive land?
3. How do the existing LEP zoning and minimum lot size rules (especially flexible subdivision/new dwelling clauses in Part 4 of the LEP such as cl 4.2) affect the following:
 - the conversion of farmland to non-farm uses (especially residential uses)
 - changes in average farm property size
 - construction of new dwellings for non-agricultural purposes.
4. Do you have any data / insights into the construction of new dwellings in RU1 (primary production) land in the LGA that you could share with the Sydney University Research Team?

Thank you!



Report No. 4.4 Brunswick Valley Landcare Support Officer quarterly reports June to December 2021

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Arika McElroy, Project Support Officer

5 **File No:** I2021/1757

Summary:

This report tables the activities of the Landcare Support Officer quarterly reports, from June to December 2021.

10

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the report.

Attachments:

15

- 1 Landcare Support Officer report June to September 2021, E2021/133613 , page 110 [↓](#)
- 2 Landcare Support Officer Interim Report December 2021, E2022/30519 , page 113 [↓](#)

20

Report

5 Council provided an allocation of funds in the 2021/22 budget to continue to support the Brunswick Valley Landcare, Landcare Support Officer position for 1 day per week to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and respond to customer enquiries.

Attached are the quarterly reports, June to September and October to December 2021, from the Landcare Support Officer for the Committee’s reference.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	L2	CSP Strategy	L3	DP Action	L4	OP Activity
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.2: Strive to become a sustainable community	3.2.2: Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.5	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries	Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.2: Strive to become a sustainable community

10 **Recent Resolutions**

N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

N/A

Financial Considerations

15 Funding allocated in 2021/22 budget.

Consultation and Engagement

N/A



Landcare Support Officer Report for Byron Shire Council

1st July - 30th September 2021

LFW

Total of 143 properties registered in Byron Shire

81 registered by BVL, 62 registered by BSC

Site Assessments and Properties registered:

- 46 Beech Lane, Wilsons Creek.
- 470 Main Arm Road
- 25 Prior Drive, Coopers Shoot
- 50 Tristran Parade Mullumbimby Creek NSW 2482
- 19 Mill Road, Huonbrook NSW 2482

LANDCARE GROUPS

- 23 BVL locality groups – 16 working on council owned land (one has become inactive due to illness of coordinator, council regen team now manage this site)
- 3 BVL special interest groups
- 10 Incorporated Landcare groups working in Byron Shire (not under BVL's umbrella)

PROJECTS

- **BVL Landcare Led Bushfire Recovery Funding – Glider project** \$50K community grant for glider habitat solutions. Nestbox installations have started in Main Arm, Myocum and Goonengerry.
- **NCRLN Landcare Led Bushfire Recovery Funding** North Coast Regional Landcare Network regional nest box project – \$13,587 for monitoring our existing nest boxes plus some hollow augmentations using the [Hollow Hog](#) tool. Plus a field day. Other networks in the region have funding for boxes, hollows and an ecologist to analyse all the monitoring data.
- **Main Arm Fish Habitat** – DPI Fisheries grant \$17,519 complementing Bringing Back the Bruns projects by carrying out 1.2ha of weed control and 750 trees planted on 2 private properties on the Brunswick River, Main Arm adjacent to Sherrys Bridge.
- **ET Ridge to River: Mooibal Spur Corridor Restoration Stage 1** \$99,873 working on council road reserve and private properties between Tallow wood Ridge Estate and Tristran Drive, Mullumbimby Creek. Year 2 complete with on ground work on track. Signage installed at the gathering tree and at the start of the walking track. Planned community planting rescheduled for March 2022 wet season. Nest box monitoring complete 9 of the 10 nest boxes were inhabited. See [BVL's October newsletter](#) for photos of the inhabitants of the planting and sign installation.
- **ET Broken Head Coastal Corridor** \$99,970 working on 8 private properties in Broken Head. Project completed with final report submitted 1st September 2021. BVL has applied for Stage 3 funding of \$170,000 over 4 years to continue the corridor from Broken Head up to Coopers Shoot including Hogans Bluff Big Scrub remnant – will know the result of the funding application in mid 2022.
- **IRCC grant** \$29,894 "Adapting to climate variability—a planting guide for the Northern Rivers region, NSW" to be delivered by 31st March 2022. To research and audit past plantings, data presented in a report to guide future plantings, 1000 Climate resilient land scape guide distributed to community, 2 workshops education on Climate resilient landscapes, 1 Demonstration site as Heritage Park with 350 plants + signs. Guide in draft with printing to be done by the end of the year.
- **Fish Habitat Planting** – funded through Ozfish and ZEB and 1 landholder, 464 & 466 Main Arm Road. 375 plants over 0.2 ha plus regen along the main arm of the Bruns River. Planting completed on 25th November 2020. Maintenance for 3 years included in project.
- **Working Together** \$2000 to have aboriginal traditional owners attend our Smart Farms and Seeds of Hope events.

26 October 2021 Report by Alison Ratcliffe

COUNCIL

- **Smart Farms workshops** – workshops have been on hold due to COVID restrictions.
- Met with Liz Caddick to review what books we have available – she is updating the council website.
- Met with Liz re the new Wildlife Corridor mapping and BVL's engagement

BVL PROJECT OFFICER

- Rochelle is now working mainly working from home 1 day per week on a flexible basis. In addition to this Rochelle has also been working with council on pest animal projects. 95 Indian mynas trapped to date. Funding and trapping to continue 2021 – 2022.

26 October 2021 Report by Alison Ratcliffe

ENQUIRY TOPICS/ ISSUES

Phone	Email	Website	Social Media	Walk in	In Person
10 x Advice re grant	8 x maps	2 x Grants for private property			Grants for PP
6 x contacts	5 x LLS funding	contacts			
5 x Grants for Private property	4 x Grants for private property	nestboxes			
3 x Contacts	5 x contacts	student			
2 x Native plant nurseries	2 x LfW	membership			
2 x Support for event / project	2 x books	MLNG			
2 x Plant ID	2 x Support for project				
Weed Control methods	Grants for planting				
Salvinia Weevils	Nest box build them yourself plans				
Native landscape guidelines – recommended plants	Native nurseries				
Horses in creek	Camphor laurel control				
Regen contractors list	LfW				
LfW	Grants for planting				
Wetland plants	Bush regen list				
Site visits for Landcare conference 2022					
Weed ID work					
Riparian restoration					
Indian myna project in Canberra					
Idea for project					
Plants for a dam					
RSPCA cat project					
Cats					
46	35	7			1
TOTAL					89

26 October 2021 Report by Alison Ratcliffe



Landcare Support Officer Report for Byron Shire Council

1st October – 31st December 2021

*Please note this period includes unexpected personal leave by Alison
22nd November – 22nd December*

LFW

Total of 145 properties registered in Byron Shire

81 registered by BVL, 64 registered by BSC

- Paperwork submitted for
 - 1101 The Pocket Road, The Pocket
 - 131 Parmenters Road, Wilsons Creek

Site visits were postponed due to local covid outbreaks and lockdowns. There are several applications waiting for site visits:

- 90 Lizray Road, Federal
- 107 Risleys Hill Road, Federal
- 1156 Main Arm Rd, Upper Main Arm

LANDCARE GROUPS

- 23 BVL locality groups – 16 working on council owned land (one has become inactive due to illness of coordinator, council regen team now manage this site)
- 3 BVL special interest groups
- 10 Incorporated Landcare groups working in Byron Shire (not under BVL's umbrella)

PROJECTS

- **BVL Landcare Led Bushfire Recovery Funding – Glider project** \$50K community grant for glider habitat solutions. Nestbox installations in Main Arm, Myocum and Goonengerry. Rapid results. Squirrel gliders have been found in the Myocum nestbox. A female and juvenile Greater Glider *Petauroides Volans* have been confirmed on a private landholding adjacent to the Mt Jerusalem National Park as part of this project. This is the first recording (BioNet Atlas) of Greater Gliders in the Byron Shire for 19 years!
- **Landcare Led Bushfire Recovery Funding - NCRNLN North Coast Regional Landcare Network regional nest box project** – \$13,587 for monitoring our existing nest boxes plus some hollow augmentations using the [Hollow Hog](#) tool. Training in Hollow Hog at Whian Whian on 25th October. We will do 15 carved hollows as part of this project. Plus a field day. Other networks in the region have funding for boxes, hollows and an ecologist to analyse all the monitoring data. We are also trialing these 3D printed boxes made from recycled plastics.
- **Main Arm Fish Habitat** – DPI Fisheries grant \$17,519 complementing Bringing Back the Bruns projects by carrying out 1.2ha of weed control and 750 trees planted on 2 private properties on the Brunswick River, Main Arm adjacent to Sherrys Bridge.
- **ET Ridge to River: Mooibal Spur Corridor Restoration Stage 1** \$99,873 working on council road reserve and private properties between Tallow wood Ridge Estate and Tristran Drive, Mullumbimby Creek. Year 2 complete with on ground work on track. Signage installed at the gathering tree and at the start of



31 March 2022 Report by Alison Ratcliffe

the walking track. Planned community planting rescheduled for March 2022 wet season. Nest box monitoring complete 9 of the 10 nest boxes were inhabited. See [BVL's October newsletter](#) for photos of the inhabitants of the planting and sign installation.

- **ET Broken Head Coastal Corridor** stage 2 completed and application for stage 3 submitted for \$170,000 over 4 years. Results expected June 2022.
- **IRCC grant** \$29,894 “Adapting to climate variability—a planting guide for the Northern Rivers region, NSW” to be delivered by 31st March 2022. To research and audit past plantings, data presented in a report to guide future plantings, 1000 Climate resilient land scape guide distributed to community, 2 workshops education on Climate resilient landscapes, 1 Demonstration site as Heritage Park with 350 plants + signs. Draft of guide is complete and quotes from graphic designers and printers have been obtained.
- **Fish Habitat Planting** – funded through Ozfish and ZEB and 1 landholder, 464 & 466 Main Arm Road. 375 plants over 0.2 ha plus regen along the main arm of the Bruns River. Planting completed on 25th November 2020. Maintenance for 3 years included in project.
- **Working Together** \$2000 to have aboriginal traditional owners attend our Smart Farms and Seeds of Hope events.

COUNCIL

- **Smart Farms workshops** – workshops have been on hold due to COVID restrictions.
- Bought some of the new [Weeds of the North Coast booklets](#) that can given out to members of the public – in a box under my desk.
- Liaised with Cesar Giraldo, Tyagarah Landcare group and WildBNB wildlife habitat about salvaging the trees that were being taken down as part of the Greys Lane roadworks. These trunks were salvaged and made into “Hunks of Trunk” and installed for wildlife habitat. I then attend the Infrastructure Planning team meeting to talk about salvaging trunks to create hollows when trees are taken down as part of roadworks and all the other work BVL does including compensatory plantings. The big ones are over one metre deep and will be installed as part of a Large Forest Owl Research project to learn more about the threatened Owl species in the Byron Shire including Powerful, Sooty and Masked. The open topped ones are specifically designed for Glossy Black Cockatoos – but the Yellow Tails loved them too! This Yellow Tail is inspecting one installed as part of the Mooibal Spur project on council road reserve at Tallowood.



- Submitted a quote and was accepted for compensatory planting at Gondwana. Scheduled for March 2022.

31 March 2022 Report by Alison Ratcliffe

BVL PROJECT OFFICER

- Rochelle is now working mainly working from home 1 day per week on a flexible basis. In addition to this Rochelle has also been working with council on pest animal projects. 95 Indian mynas trapped to date. Funding and trapping to continue 2021 – 2022.

ENQUIRY TOPICS/ ISSUES

Phone	Email	Website	Social Media	Walk in	In Person
Trees being cut down as part of roadworks	Membership x 2	Help on private property	Plant ID		Weed ID
Bush regenerers list map					
Free wire tree guards					
Corporate volunteers looking for activity					
2 x support for project					
Funding for fauna fencing					
Advice re DGR					
9	2	1	1		1
TOTAL					14

31 March 2022 Report by Alison Ratcliffe

Report No. 4.5 Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Lizabeth Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

5 **File No:** I2022/392

Summary:

This report provides the Biodiversity Advisory Committee with an update on current projects and programs being undertaken by the Biodiversity team, including:

- 10 • Wildlife corridor mapping
- Mapping restoration sites
- Mitchell's Rainforest Snail habitat likelihood mapping
- Updates to vegetation and HEV mapping
- Recently funded biodiversity projects
- NSW Koala Strategy
- 15 • 2021 Koala activity study
- Koala vehicle strike
- Koala habitat restoration
- Pest animal management (wild dogs, feral deer)
- Bringing Back the Bruns
- 20 • Keeping Cats Safe at Home project
- Smart Farms project
- Combating Pests and Weeds project

25

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the update on current projects and programmes being undertaken by Council staff.

30

Report

Wildlife Corridor Mapping

Landmark Ecological have developed draft wildlife corridor mapping for the shire, which is currently being peer reviewed by local ecological experts.

- 5 The wildlife corridor map is aimed at protecting core habitat and dispersal opportunities for key threatened species (flora and fauna) in the shire – i.e. those species that have core habitat in the shire, and the most limited dispersal capability. The methodology takes into consideration current and historic species records, existing land use constraints and connections (e.g. highway underpasses), mapped corridors in adjacent shires, and the likely impacts of climate change (through consideration of flood prone land, south facing slopes, riparian habitats etc.).

The intent of the wildlife corridor mapping is to:

- 15 • Support Council, environmental groups, and landholders to strategically focus their restoration activities to where they can have the greatest biodiversity benefit. For example, by buffering and linking areas of intact vegetation and refugia to facilitate the movement of plant and animal species with poor dispersal capabilities, and reduce the impacts of anthropogenic climate change and other key threatening processes.
- 20 • To support Council and environmental groups in seeking grant funding for key strategic biodiversity conservation projects.
- 25 • To support the implementation of Council's Biodiversity DCP (Chapter B1) during the development assessment process, by supporting planning decisions that best protect and enhance our biodiversity, while continuing to facilitate permitted land uses, e.g. on rural or residential zoned land.
- To incentivise the community, in both rural and suburban corridors, to take steps to help create and maintain wildlife connectivity in their backyards, through showing people a bigger picture view of the importance of their backyard habitat in the overall landscape.

30 The draft wildlife corridor map was presented to Councillors at a Strategic Planning Workshop on 7 November 2021, to local expert stakeholders through an Expert Stakeholder Workshop on 26 November 2021, and to Council's Agriculture Cluster Group on 9 November 2021.

Some housekeeping amendments will be required to the Biodiversity DCP to:

- 35 • Ensure that the definition of a wildlife corridor in the DCP reflects the new mapping,
- Ensure that management intent is clear for both corridors in rural and built-up areas.
- Ensure that management intent is clear for both vegetated and cleared parts of corridors.

The draft wildlife corridor map will be presented to Council within the next few months, seeking support for public exhibition and minor amendments to the Biodiversity DCP. Staff are currently developing an interactive map for Council's website, to encourage community interest and engagement in the corridor map.

5 **Other Mapping Projects**

A number of mapping projects identified as key actions in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy have been progressed this financial year, including:

Mapping restoration sites

10 Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.20: Map areas that have been revegetated: a) using public funds, and b) for conservation purposes.

15 Council has engaged Ascent Ecology to develop a GIS database that shows restoration sites in Byron Shire, including planting and restoration projects done by Council, and those done on private land by groups such as Landcare (where landholders permission has been obtained). This dataset is currently being finalised. This information has also been used by DPE to help develop the Koala Habitat Restoration Archive, an on-line database listing all koala habitat restoration sites in the Northern Rivers. This project has been funded by the NSW Koala Strategy and contractors have been engaged to add Byron Shire sites to the database.

20 These datasets will help Council and other organisations to strategically plan future restoration sites, to identify restoration investment priorities, and in the long term to monitor the effectiveness of different restoration activities.

25 Following the recent flood events in February and March, Council has also received support from DPE to monitor flood-impacted koala habitat restoration sites. Contractors are currently surveying sites in Byron Shire for immediate impacts, and repeat surveys are planned 6 and 12 months after the flood.

Mitchell's Rainforest Snail habitat likelihood mapping

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.25: Map potential habitat areas for Mitchell's Rainforest Snail.

30 Earthscapes Consulting have developed a draft habitat likelihood map for Mitchell's Rainforest Snail (MRS), based on current records and knowledge of MRS habitat preferences. The map has been peer reviewed by MRS expert Dr. Jonathan Parkyn, and is currently being finalised. The map will be used to guide Council as to when further searches for MRS may be required as part of land development, as well as to encourage the community to conserve MRS habitat and report MRS sightings.

35 Updates to Vegetation and HEV mapping

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.14: Update and maintain Council's vegetation and HEV mapping with revised Plant Community Types (PCTs) and current aerial photography.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.5

5 Council's 2017 High Environmental Value (HEV) and Vegetation mapping have been updated to reflect ground truthing of approximately 250 sites carried out as part of the C-Zone review. This updates also include integrating other recent vegetation mapping surveys and known koala habitat restoration sites into the mapping and updating remnant boundaries using NearMaps aerial photography. Database attribute fields were also updated with more user-friendly text instead of numbers. 1274 vegetation polygons were reviewed as part of the update process, covering a total area of 3,809 Ha. These updates will shortly be available on Council's GIS.

10 Updates to Byron Shire Threatened Species Lists

Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action 1.11: Conduct a review of Byron Shire's biodiversity values as a baseline for ongoing biodiversity monitoring. Including updated Byron Shire flora and fauna lists and Status of threatened flora and fauna.

15 Landmark Ecological Services are updating the threatened species lists that were included in the 2004 Byron Shire Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. These lists will be made available on Council's website. They will provide a useful resource to anyone wanting to find out more about the Shire's threatened flora and fauna and, because they are in digital format, it will be easy to update them where status changes occur.

Recently funded Biodiversity Projects

20 In March this year, more than \$70,000 in funding from the NSW Government was received to support delivery of actions in Council's Biodiversity Strategy. The funding will be spread across four projects:

Budget	Project	Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Action
\$24,000	Updating vegetation and high environmental value mapping.	1.14 Update and maintain Council's vegetation and HEV mapping with revised Plant Community Types (PCTs) and current aerial photography. 1.19 Update vegetation mapping to clearly identify recently listed threatened ecological communities e.g. Coastal Swamp Oak (<i>Casuarina glauca</i>) Woodland.
\$11,000	Identifying and mapping open forest ecosystems that will benefit from the reintroduction of ecological fire management.	4.4 Identify priority open forest ecosystems requiring restoration through the reintroduction of fire.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.5

\$8,800	Auditing threatened plant species along Council roads.	4.28 Audit and renew roadside threatened vegetation mapping.
\$30,000	Studying the impact of recreational use on coastal biodiversity, wildlife, and habitats	1.30 Continue development of Coastal Management Programs for the Shire's coastline and estuaries, ensuring CMPs are consistent with the intent of this Biodiversity Strategy.

All projects will begin shortly and need to be completed by end March 2023.

Koalas

NSW Koala Strategy

- 5 The new NSW Koala Strategy has been released, backed by a \$193.3 million investment. This is the largest government commitment ever made to single species in Australia. [NSW Koala Strategy | NSW Environment and Heritage](#)

10 The new five-year strategy includes:

- 15 • \$107.1 million to conserve koala habitat - funding the protection, restoration, and improved management of more than 47,000 hectares of koala habitat
- 20 • \$19.6 million to support local communities to conserve koalas - funding community-led initiatives and a range of partnerships with non-government organisations (NGOs), councils, landholders, and Aboriginal groups
- 25 • \$23.2 million to improve koala safety and health – funding wildlife care, rehabilitation, and emergency response, establishing a translocation program, and addressing threats such as vehicle strike
- 30 • \$43.4 million to build our knowledge of koalas – funding ongoing monitoring and research to inform conservation actions and better manage diseases and other threatening processes

The strategy builds on the groundwork and achievements of the previous \$44.7 million NSW Koala Strategy. The NSW government has stated that partnerships, both existing and new, are critical to the success of the new program of work, and that the NSW Government will work in partnerships, strategically and across land tenures, to get the best outcomes for koalas and their habitat.

Byron Shire Council is already involved in one or these partnerships, through the Northern Rivers Regional Koala Group and Regional Koala Partnership. This partnership was developed under the previous NSW Koala Strategy, and we will be continuing to work with

this group of Northern Rivers Councils and Friends of the Koala to deliver koala conservation outcomes throughout the region.

Koala Activity Study

5 Council's coastal koala activity monitoring program for 2021 is now complete, funded with a \$20,000 grant from the NSW 2018-2021 Koala Strategy. This round of monitoring repeats surveys done in the coastal Koala Plan of Management (KPOM) area in 2011 and 2016 and uses the Spot Assessment Technique (SAT) to assess changes in koala activity. The surveys involved repeat monitoring of sites for koala scats (droppings), which are
10 used as an indicator of koala presence/absence and activity.

In 2021, 58 sites were surveyed in the coastal part of Byron Shire on public and private land. The results showed 40% of all sites recorded koala activity, the majority between Brunswick Heads and Broken Head. The highest koala activity levels were recorded at sites at Suffolk Park, Byron Bay and Skinners Shoot. Low to no koala activity was
15 recorded at most (81%) of the sites, therefore only 19% of all sites currently show evidence of supporting a resident population of koalas. When compared with previous surveys over the last 10 years, koala activity level has decreased by 53%, although the number of active sites has increased by 22%. The majority of koala activity uptake sites (78%) were in the southern third of the Shire between Byron Bay and Broken Head. These
20 results are currently being interpreted, but perhaps suggest a decreased population of koalas in the northern half of the coastal zone, an increase in koala activity in the southern area of the Shire, and generally a more transient and fragmented population of koalas now compared with 10 years ago.

As well as providing us with updated information on koala activity in the shire, the project
25 has been a great opportunity to talk with landowners in the CKPOM areas about koala conservation on their land and what they can do to help. Byron Shire staff are currently comparing their results with Tweed and Lismore Councils' survey results to interpret the data and the implications for koalas in the Northern Rivers. The full results and interpretations will be reported to the September Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting.

30 Koala Vehicle Strike Project

In February, staff met with DPE and Transport for NSW to discuss opportunities to mitigate koala vehicle road strike in Byron Shire. Over the next few weeks we will be seeking input from local wildlife carers and Infrastructure Services staff to identify high priority hotspots in Byron Shire. A feasibility and vehicle strike mitigation options assessment will then be
35 completed for two high priority sites. Funding for the feasibility assessments will be provided by the NSW Koala Strategy.

Koala Habitat Restoration

The NSW Koala Strategy is co-funding a new koala habitat restoration project, which aims to plant 6 ha and restore 2 ha koala habitat on six private properties in the shire.
40 Landholders will be contributing to costs of fencing and plant maintenance.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

4.5

Other recent koala habitat restoration projects in Byron Shire are now largely complete, with some follow up maintenance extending over the next few months. Achievements of these projects are summarised below:

Project	Budget	Achievements
North-East Hinterland Koala Conservation Project	\$45,000 + \$9,000/year for 3 years from Council	15 sites, totalling 16.5 ha planted with over 2000 trees.
Koala Food for the Future Project	\$18,750	11 sites, totalling 9.6 ha planted with 996 trees.

- 5 All koala habitat restoration projects are being added to the Koala Habitat Restoration Archive, developed by DPE to catalogue koala habitat restoration across the region.

Pest Animal Management Plan

Wild Dogs, Cats and Foxes

- 10 Trapping is on-going on Council lands through our contractor- JR Trapping. A new contract for 8 trapping weeks has just begun, and JR Trapping was also engaged by Council to trap on private land in the Shire for 15 weeks under the Australian Government Drought Pest and Weeds project. Wild dogs, foxes and cats are targeted through this program, using soft-jaw trapping.

Feral Deer

- 15 Feral deer are a relatively new issue in Byron Shire and can cause significant environmental damage, including grazing rainforest trees and ring-barking trees with their antlers, grazing ground covers, including mosses and lichens to expose soil, making it more vulnerable to soil erosion, fouling waterways and spreading weeds. Deer also compete with livestock for grass and grain, damage orchard crops by ring barking, damage fences and spread both livestock diseases and agriculture weeds.

- 20 There have been several recent sightings of feral deer in the shire. Sightings are reported to LLS and council's trapping contractor is engaged to control deer where possible.

Next financial year Council will be partnering with other regional councils to support Feral Deer Coordinator hosted by Tweed Shire Council. This officer will engage the community in the Byron Shire relating to deer sightings, control etc.

- 25 For more information about deer and the campaign in the Northern Rivers go to www.feraldeeralert.com.au.

Bringing Back the Bruns

Fish Habitat Restoration Program – work commencing Winter 2022

5 The *Bringing Back the Bruns* project on the Brunswick River in Mullumbimby is progressing with permitting and approvals currently being sought by project partners North Coast Local Land Services. Pending suitable weather, erosion control works by Soil Conservation Service are expected to commence in Winter 2022. Riparian revegetation will subsequently be carried out in Spring with the help of Ozfish and the Brunswick Heads Angling and Deep Sea Fishing Club.

Keeping Cats Safe at Home' Project - RSPCA NSW

10 Keeping Cats Safe at Home is a 4-year behaviour change project aiming to reduce the impacts of pet cats on wildlife. The project encourages cat owners to keep their cats safe at home either exclusively indoors or indoors and outdoors using cat enclosures or modified fencing.

15 This project has been assisted by the NSW Government through its Environmental Trust. The project is being led by RSPCA NSW, in partnership with several NSW local councils. In Byron Shire, Council compliance are supporting the project by engaging their local communities, disseminating project messaging, and assisting with local project activities.

20 The project will develop tailored behaviour change strategies for subgroups of cat owners within Byron Shire based on extensive consultation with all stakeholder groups, especially cat owners. The data collection phase of the project has just been completed – gathering information about cat impacts, specific to each Council. The RSPCA are now preparing a Council specific project proposal (for the 4 year period) with aim of changing behaviour to reduce the impacts of cats on wildlife in the Byron Shire.

Sustainable Agriculture

25 SmartFarms

The handbook for aspiring farmers - *Starting Out! - An introductory Guide to Farming in the Byron Shire* has been reprinted to allow for broader distribution, for example to local real estate agents that have contact with new landholders in the area.

SmartFarms workshops have commenced with 4 workshop co-hosted by BVL:

- 30
- You and your land – planning what to do.
 - Soils our national capital with BVL and Casino Food Co Op.
 - Integrated pest management on macadamia farms.
 - Trees for your Land.

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Two more workshops are planned over the next few months. Due to the impact of COVID-10, an extension of time to deliver the workshops has been granted by the Federal Government.

5 As part of the SmartFarms Mentoring Program, Council has partnered with Southern Cross University to deliver a Regenerative Agriculture mentoring workshop, and four field days have also been delivered:

- Misty Creek Agroforestry Farm Tour.
- Rotational grazing to reduce pasture weeds at Dingo Lane Farms.
- 10 • Organic vegetable and flower growing, hosted by Liz and Bob in Goonengerry which was filmed for a video to get out on Social media and beyond.
- Field day at The Farm.

Combating Pests and Weeds Grant (Commonwealth) 2020 - Agricultural advice, weed and pest animal control in Byron Shire

This project finishes in April 2022. Key achievements include:

- 15 • Engagement an Agricultural Extension Officer provided best practice farming information and advice to local farmers regarding drought preparation, business profitability, biosecurity, and natural resource management. A focus on regenerative farming has been a key feature of the extension as it achieves all the objectives sought. Since November 2022 the Agricultural Extension Officer has communicated
- 20 with rural land managers through 5 newspaper articles, 3 newspaper advertisements, 4 radio appearances, 31 social media posts, over 700 letters/emails to targeted landholders, 79 on-farm consultations, 14 field days/workshops/events and 7 presentations as well as developing partnerships and collaborations with 10 local organisations or businesses involved in the rural
- 25 economy.
- Development of the Byron Shire Farmers Network, which now has over 300 members signed up. This database enables targeting of information dissemination, consultation and expressions of interests to farmers of all types in the Shire including grazing, horticulture and orchards, and will continue to be a critical
- 30 resource for Council to support our rural land managers.
- A local pest animal trapper worked with local farmers trapping wild dogs, foxes and feral cats on private lands. 29 wild dogs, 18 foxes and 2 feral cats were trapped on primary production lands within Byron Shire.
- 35 • Local weeds authority, Rous County Council, controlled over 5ha of Tropical Soda Apple (the known extent of the weed) in the Byron Shire. Tropical Soda Apple was controlled at 28 properties and monitored more than 850ha of land on each of the 4 treatment runs.

- 5 • Local bush regenerators carried out strategic environmental weed control in 19.4 ha of riparian and high biodiversity areas on local farms. Weeds targeted and site selection was guided by the North Coast Strategic Weed Management Plan. Final sites were selected through expression of interest, with landholders at suitable sites committed to maintain restoration areas for a minimum of 3 years after treatment, to ensure long-term environmental and productivity benefits. Over 10 species of woody environmental weeds as well as annual weeds and exotic grasses controlled.
- 10 • Weed management was also addressed through a program that supported farmers to manage weeds using rotational grazing. Following an expression of interest process, the grant provided funds for 8 farmers to attend a site planning workshop, and for 6 farmers to purchase and install infrastructure to transition their business from conventional to rotational grazing. As a result, an additional 204ha of farmland in Byron Shire is being managed using rotational grazing.

15 **Strategic Considerations**

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 2: We cultivate and celebrate our diverse cultures, lifestyle and sense of community	Enhance community safety and amenity while respecting our shared values	Enhance public safety, health and liveability through the use of council's regulatory controls and services	2.4.3.6	Facilitate companion animals education
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.1	Implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.2	Revise Wildlife Corridor Mapping (Biodiversity Conservation Strategy action)
Community	Partner to	Protect and	3.1.1.6	Investigate

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Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	enhance our natural environment and biodiversity		opportunities for Council to provide incentives for landholders to conduct restoration works on their properties that will assist with long term biodiversity conservation. (Biodiversity Conservation Strategy action)
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.9	Implement the Flying Fox Camp Management Plan
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.10	Continue to undertake the Flying Fox National Census
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.11	Implement the Koala Plan of Management
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.12	Partner with key stakeholders on koala research and management projects, including - NE Hinterland Koala Conservation Project - North Coast Koala Linkage and - Maximising outcomes for koalas on private land project.

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				(Koala Plan of Management action)
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.13	Deliver and report on feral animal projects (Action in Pest Animal Management Plan)
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.14	Deliver the pests and weeds grant funded project
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.1	Provide coastal, environmental and sustainability information and encourage and support community activities and groups
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.2	Participate in regional sustainability and environmental working groups and initiatives.
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.4	Support Friends of the Koala, Bangalow Koalas and Wires through the Regional Koala Communications Group.
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.5	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries

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Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance the health of the Shire's coastlines, estuaries, waterways and catchments	Implement Coastal Management Program	3.3.1.3	Continue Bringing Back the Brunswick River Project
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance the health of the Shire's coastlines, estuaries, waterways and catchments	Implement Coastal Management Program	3.3.1.1	Continue preparing a Coastal Management Program (CMP) in accordance with the staged process for Cape Byron to South Golden Beach
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance the health of the Shire's coastlines, estuaries, waterways and catchments	Implement Coastal Management Program	3.3.1.4	Continue preparing a Coastal Management Program (CMP) in accordance with the staged process for Cape Byron Southern Coastline (including Tallow and Belongil Creek Catchment)
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Support and secure our farming future	Develop and implement strategies to support agriculture, agri-business and farmers	3.4.1.1	Finalise and commence implementation of the Agriculture Action Plan
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our	Support and secure our farming future	Develop and implement strategies to support	3.4.1.2	Continue to deliver Smart Farms – Small Grants

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natural environment		agriculture, agri-business and farmers		project
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Support and secure our farming future	Develop and implement strategies to support agriculture, agri-business and farmers	3.4.1.3	Continue to convene Agricultural Cluster Group Meetings

Recent Resolutions

N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

5 N/A

Financial Considerations

Where relevant, budgets for specific projects noted above.

Consultation and Engagement

N/A

**Report No. 4.6 Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road
Avifauna Survey 2021**

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

Report Author: Lizabeth Caddick, Biodiversity Officer

5 **File No:** I2022/415

Summary:

Byron Bird Buddies are contracted by Council to conduct regular monitoring of the avifauna (birds) inhabiting Council managed utilities sites at West Byron STP Wetlands and Vallances Rd STP. The 2021 report is presented here.

10

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the report at Attachment 1 (E2022/36650).

15

Attachments:

1 Summary report Byron Wetlands and Vallances road Avifauna 2021 - Final 22/4/22, E2022/36650 , page 135 [↓](#)

20

Report

Byron Bird Buddies (BBB) is a not-for-profit organisation that undertakes community avifauna education, monitoring and conservation activities within Byron Shire and extends the education program into surrounding shires as required.

- 5 Byron Bird Buddies (BBB) have supplied Byron Shire Council (BSC) with avifauna monitoring reports since 2008. This 2021 Summary Report continues to document the results of monitoring the avifauna populations at Byron Wetlands (Byron Bay) and Vallances Road STP (Mullumbimby) so as to observe the trends in bird diversity and populations at both sites. Key objectives of the monitoring include:
- 10
- To identify all known bird species utilising the study sites
 - To count waterbird and shorebird numbers
 - To identify avifauna species in the NSW Threatened Species conservation Act (1995)
 - To identify shorebirds covered by International Agreements, such as the JAMBA, CAMBA & ROKAMBA agreement with Japan, China & Korea
- 15
- To identify breeding activity.

The construction of the West Byron Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) commenced in 2001. Prior to construction, the site was typically low lying coastal plain comprising paperbark swamp forests, sedge and fern lands. The wetlands now comprise a number of settling ponds with one pond (Cell H) set aside specifically for threatened avifauna species, migratory waders and regionally significant species. Byron Shire Council purchased land at Vallances Road in 2006 for the development of the Mullumbimby Sewage Treatment Plant. Since purchase, BSC have extensively re-vegetated the site with native plant species and regular weed management is being undertaken.

20

25 Results

Byron Wetlands

A total of 122 bird species were identified between 09/02/2021 & 07/12/2021. This is 38 species fewer than the year 2020 and 45 species fewer than 2019. Three threatened species were recorded from a total of 23 recorded for the site.

- 30 Reasons for the decline in bird numbers over this reporting period are likely to be a complex interaction of several factors. Lower water bird numbers were also recorded at neighbouring wildlife sanctuary, Seapeace, and the high rainfall this year may have contributed to this – with many birds moving to breed in inland areas that aren't always in suitable environmental condition. Water levels in all ponds have also been too high for shorebirds to feed. The 2019 drought and fire may also have had an impact on local bird numbers, as may significant water weed cover, which is currently being managed by Utilities staff. Ongoing monitoring is critical to identify any key trends and issues.
- 35

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

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4.6

Vallances Road

5 A total of 132 bird species were identified between 11/01/2021 & 17/11/2021. This is 17 species more than the year 2020, and 13 species more than 2019. This is the greatest number of avifauna species recorded at the site since 2007. Three new species recorded this year include the Painted Button Quail, Yellow-billed Spoonbill and Yellow-rumped Thornbill. Four threatened species were recorded from a total of 12 known for the site.

Next steps

10 Byron Bird Buddies meet annually with Utilities and Biodiversity staff to discuss issues relating to the management of these sites. Council is currently developing an Operational Environmental Management Plan for West Byron Wetlands and will be carrying out further ecological studies and consulting with BBB as development of this plan progresses.

Strategic Considerations

Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Partner to protect and enhance our biodiversity, ecosystems and ecology	Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	3.1.1.1	Implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	Strive to become a sustainable community	Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.2	Participate in regional sustainability and environmental working groups and initiatives.
Community Objective 1: We have infrastructure, transport and services which meet our expectations	1.5: Provide continuous urban water and sewerage services within the Shire	1.5.6: Protect and enhance our natural environment and biodiversity	1.5.6.5	Develop Environmental Management System for Utilities Department

Recent Resolutions

- N/A

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

N/A

5 Financial Considerations

N/A

Consultation and Engagement

N/A

Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road Avifauna Survey



Black-necked Stork, Byron Wetlands. Photo: Bruce McNaughton

Summary Report

2021

This report has been commissioned by Byron Shire Council.

Byron Bird Buddies Avifauna Report 2021



1

Prepared by Jan Olley & Vicki Sloane of Byron Bird Buddies.



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Acknowledgements

This Byron Wetlands & Vallances Road summary report for 2021 was prepared with input from members of Byron Bird Buddies (BBB). Byron Bird Buddies would like to especially thank Richmond Brunswick Birders (RBB) who contributed survey data. BBB are very grateful to Cary Lewis and Bruce McNaughton for the wonderful photographs.

For the base-line records of bird sightings, we thank David Stewart for the Byron Wetlands list and Dr Mark Fitzgerald for the Vallances Road list. Cameron Clark and Claudio Germany for their advice and assistance.



Marsh Sandpipers, Byron Wetlands. Photo: Bruce McNaughton

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1.0 Introduction

The Byron Bird Buddies (BBB) has supplied Byron Shire Council (BSC) with avifauna monitoring reports since 2008. As with the previous reports, this 2021 Summary continues to document the results of monitoring the avifauna populations at Byron Wetlands (Byron Bay) and Vallances Road STP (Mullumbimby) so as to observe the trends in bird diversity and populations at both sites. This Summary Report provides a brief breakdown of the BBB 2021 survey results only. Data collected from the surveys is recorded in Spreadsheet format. (See Spreadsheet pdf attached).

1.1 Background

Byron Bird Buddies (BBB) is a not-for-profit organisation and a locality group of Brunswick Valley Landcare Inc. BBB undertakes community avifauna education, monitoring and conservation activities within Byron Shire and extends the education program into surrounding shires as required.

1.2 Byron Wetlands

The construction of the West Byron Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) commenced in 2001. Prior to construction, the site was typically low lying coastal plain comprising paperbark swamp forests, sedge and fern lands. The wetlands now comprise a number of settling ponds with one pond (Cell H) set aside specifically for threatened avifauna species, migratory waders and regionally significant species. The legislated management requirements for Cell H were established to ameliorate ecological losses associated with the development of the STP. A variety of water levels, plant diversity and monitoring measures are required to maintain habitat diversity and address any deleterious changes in conditions of Cell H. The management of Cell H is outlined in West Byron Wetlands "Cell H" Management Plan Feb 2006.

1.3 Vallances Road

Byron Shire Council purchased land at Vallances Road in 2006 for the development of the Mullumbimby Sewage Treatment Plant. Since purchase, BSC have extensively re-vegetated the site with native plant species and regular weed management is being undertaken. The re-planted areas are now well established. Farmland at the site is agisted for cattle grazing, and the paddocks are managed by the leaseholder.

1.4 Objectives

As for the previous reports the objectives continue to be:

- To identify all known bird species utilising the study sites
- To count waterbird and shorebird numbers
- To identify avifauna species in the NSW Threatened Species conservation Act (1995)
- To identify shorebirds covered by International Agreements, such as the JAMBA, CAMBA & ROKAMBA agreement with Japan, China & Korea
- To identify breeding activity
- To record survey findings in spreadsheet format and provide reports to BSC.

2.0 Field Survey Methods

2.1 General - Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road

BBB conducted 6 surveys at both sites during 2021. The surveys commenced at Vallances Rd and Byron Wetlands in January and February consecutively. The surveys were divided into morning and afternoon monitoring, with an hour of nocturnal survey conducted at each site during two of the afternoon surveys. Survey duration was generally 4 hours. As with past surveys, observations were recorded by traversing the tracks marked on the maps. (See **Figures 1 and 2** on page 19).

Factors affecting access to routine survey paths meant that some surveys were only partial surveys. Reasons for limited access includes flooding of paths (Byron Wetlands), cattle grazing (Vallances Rd), and Covid-19 restrictions (Byron Wetlands).

Observations from RBB have also been included in the spreadsheet data, with permission.

Survey details are outlined in Table 1. (Byron Wetlands) and Table 2.(Vallances Road)

2.2 Date, time and total hours for 2021 Avifauna surveys.

Table 1. Byron Wetlands

Byron Wetlands Avifauna Surveys 2021 - Date, Time and Total hours summary								
Ref No.	Date	Time	Who	Survey Duration in hours				
				Diurnal	Nocturnal	Call back	Spotlight	Total hours
1	09/02/2021	16:00-20:00	BBB	3	1	No	No	4
2	20/04/2021	08:00-12:30	BBB	4h 30m				4h 30m
3	01/07/2021	14:00-18:30	BBB	3h 30m	1	Yes	Yes	4h 30m
4	03/08/2021	08:00-14:00	BBB	6				6
5	09/11/2021	14:00-19:00	BBB	5				5
6	20/11/2021	08:30-10:30	BBB / Snipe Count	2				2
7	07/12/2021	08:30-11:30	BBB	3				3
Total Hours				27	2			29

Table 2. Vallances Road

Vallances Road Avifauna Surveys 2021 - Date, Time and Total hours summary								
Ref No.	Date	Time	Who	Survey Duration in hours				
				Diurnal	Nocturnal	Call back	Spotlight	Total hours
1	11/01/2021	09:30-12:00	June Harris	2h 30m				2h 30m
2	12/01/2021	15:00-19:00	BBB	4				4
3	02/03/2021	07:00-11:00	BBB	4				4
4	18/05/2021	14:00-18:30	BBB	3h 30m	1	No	No	4h 30m
5	13/07/2021	08:00-13:30	BBB	5h 30m				5h 30m
6	28/09/2021	14:00-18:30	BBB	3h 30m	1	No	Yes	4h 30m
7	24/10/2021	09:00-12:00	BBB / Bird Week	3				3
8	02/11/2021	07:30-12:00	BBB	4h 30m				4h 30m
9	17/11/2021	08:00-13:00	RBB	5				5
Total Hours				35h 30m	2			37h 30m



Black-shouldered Kite, Vallances Road. Photo: Bruce McNaughton

3.0 Summary of Byron Wetlands Survey Results

3.1 General Observations

A total of 122 bird species were identified between 09/02/2021 & 07/12/2021. This is 38 species fewer than the year 2020 and 45 species fewer than 2019. In fact, the total avifauna species results for 2021 is the lowest number of species ever recorded at Byron Wetlands since survey data began to be collected by BBB in 2008. The recorded Total of Survey hours were fewer than the year 2021 compared with 2020 and 2019. (Which were 55.15 and 77 hours respectively). **The data recorded for the year 2021 was from the BBB survey results only. No other data, such as e-bird or RBB & BLNR findings were recorded.**

New Species: No new species identified.



Latham's Snipe, Byron Wetlands. Photo: Jan Olley



Azure Kingfisher, Byron Wetlands. Photo: Cary Lewis

Table 3. provides a breakdown of **avifauna species into family groups at Byron Wetlands.**
Previous years data is summarised and tabled.

Family Group No	Family	9/2/2021 - 7/12/2021	15/01/2020 - 29/12/2020	15/1/19 - 26/12/19	20/01/18 - 25/11/18	07/01/17 - 20/12/17	Total Species for site since 2000
1	Mound-Builders & Quails	1	1	1	3	2	4
2	Swans, Geese, Ducks & Grebes	6	9	11	9	11	17
3	Pigeons & Doves	5	9	7	5	9	12
4	Frogmouths, Nightjars & Swifts	1	2	2	3	3	4
6	Frigatebirds & Cormorants	4	5	5	4	5	7
7	Hérons, Ibis, Spoonbills & Allies	10	15	15	12	13	17
8	Birds of Prey	7	11	11	10	11	20
9	Brolgas	1	1	0	0	0	1
10	Crakes, Rails & Gallinules	4	8	8	6	7	11
11	Shorebirds	6	8	13	8	9	27
13	Gulls & Terns	1	2	6	2	3	8
14	Cockatoos & Parrots	5	10	8	7	6	12
15	Cuckoos	8	8	9	6	6	10
16	Owls	0	0	1	0	0	3
17	Kingfishers, Rollers & Bee-eaters	6	6	5	5	6	6
18	Pittas, Treecreepers	0	0	1			1
20	Fairy-wrens	3	3	3	3	3	3
21	Scrubwrens, Allies & Pardalotes	7	8	8	6	4	10
22	Honeyeaters	11	11	12	11	13	13
23	Quail-thrushes & Allies	1	1	1	1	1	1
24	Cuckoo-shrikes & Trillers	3	5	4	3	4	5
25	Whistlers & Shrike-thrushes	6	6	6	6	6	6
26	Woodswallows	1	1	1	2	1	3
27	Magpies & Butcherbirds	5	5	5	5	5	5
28	Fantails	3	3	2	2	3	3
29	Crow	1	1	1	1	1	1

30	Flycatchers & Monarchs	3	6	4	3	4	7
31	Robins, Old World Warblers & White-eyes	5	6	8	6	7	9
32	Swallows & Martins	3	3	3	3	3	3
33	Thrushes, Starlings, Mynas & Flowerpeckers	2	2	2	2	1	4
34	Finches, Mannikins & Sparrows	2	3	3	3	3	4
35	Pipits, Wagtails & Others	1	1	1	1	1	3
	Total Species	122	160	167	138	151	240
	Total No. of Family Groups = 32						
	No of Surveys per year *	7	16	23	12	19	

*NB: Surveys were recorded from eBird, U3A, BLNR & RBB, as well as individual birdwatchers during 2017, 2018, 2019 & 2020, but not 2021.



3.2 Observations of avifauna species at Byron Wetlands include terrestrial birds, shorebirds and water birds

Terrestrial avifauna species recorded during this period remain reasonably stable, although the records show a slight decline in some species, such as Birds of Prey.

Waterbird species observed at this site during the recorded period has declined when comparing with the records of 2020 and 2019.

Shorebird species Six shorebird species were observed at this site during the recorded period which is fewer than in previous years. Two of the six are migratory, and are regular visitors to the site. The numbers of Latham's Snipe were less than previous years, but relatively stable. A Pacific Golden Plover observed in Cell E in February 2021 is a welcome visitor and has been observed at the site in previous years. This species breeds in Siberia and Alaska, migrating to Australia during the Northern hemisphere winter. The other 4 species, Black-fronted Dotterel, Masked Lapwing, Black-winged Stilt and Comb-crested Jacana breed in Australia. The presence of juveniles of the Comb-crested Jacana, Black-winged Stilt and Masked Lapwing most likely indicate breeding at the Byron Wetlands site, although the nests have not been observed.

Nesting species & young-out-of-nest observed on site

Australian Figbird - nest observed

Fairy Martin - nest observed

White-breasted Woodswallow- building nest

Olive-backed Oriole - building nest

Chicks & young observed of:

Masked Lapwing

Black-winged Stilt

Comb-crested Jacana

Dusky Moorhen

Black Swan

Pacific Black Duck

Grey Butcherbird

3.3 Byron Wetlands Threatened Species: Results

Three threatened species were recorded from a total of 23 for the site. Fourteen were recorded in the period 2015-2020.

Byron Wetland Threatened Species				
Species	Date sited this report period	Last previous record	Grid/Cell location	Comments
Comb-crested Jacana <i>Irediparra gallinacea</i> (Vulnerable)	Recorded on all visits, from the beginning of the survey period on February 9, 2021 to the final survey on December 7, 2021.	Recorded on previous surveys during 2020 & 2019. Rarely absent from the site.	All cells	Recorded at each survey. Numbers range from 2 to 11; 11 being the greatest number recorded for the year 2021. The presence of chicks and immature Comb-crested Jacana would indicate successful breeding activity at the survey site. On February 9, 2021 3 chicks and 4 immature were observed. In December 7, 2021 chicks x 4 were observed in Cell I.
Black-necked Stork <i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i> (Endangered)	9/11/2021 & 20/11/2021	BBB did not record any sightings in 2020 but e-Bird records documented for 3/1/2020, 7/4/2020, 6/6/2020, 18/11/2020. Several sightings also in 2019	C3	A single bird was recorded by BBB during the two November surveys. Usually, only single birds will appear.
Rose-crowned Fruit Dove <i>Ptilinopus regina</i> (Vulnerable)	01/06/2021	Heard calling in May & June 2017 & again in May 2019	D2	One Rose-crowned Fruit Dove heard calling during June survey in swamp melaleuca forested area Grid location D2. Rarely observed.

4.0 Summary of Vallances Road Survey Results

4.1 General Observations

A total of 132 bird species were identified between 11/01/2021 & 17/11/2021. This is 17 species more than the year 2020, and 13 species more than 2019. This is the greatest number of avifauna species recorded at the site since 2007. Table 4. for Vallances Road shows the Total number of avifauna species by family group. Table 4.1 shows a comparison with previous years numbers.

New Species: Three new species were seen at Vallances Road survey site in 2021. That brings the total species number to 183 for this site.

1. Painted Button Quail. 3 birds were seen in the grassy paddock, Grid reference C6, on 28/09/2021.
2. Yellow-billed Spoonbill. 2 birds were seen flying over the site during an afternoon survey on 12/01/2021.
3. Yellow-rumped Thornbill. 2 birds seen (Grid E6) on 13/07/2021.



Red-backed Fairy wren, Vallances Road. Photo: Bruce McNaughton

Table 4. Avifauna Species by Family Group at Vallances Road

Family Group No.	Family	9/7/21 -7/12/ 21	9/05/20 -28/12/ 20	26/02/ 19 – 12/12/ 19	15/06/1 8-12/12/ 18	26/02/1 7-08/1 0/17	Maximum for site since 03/05/07
1	Mound Builders & Quail	2	3	1	2	0	3
2	Swans, Ducks & Grebes	5	3	6	5	4	8
3	Pigeons & Doves	10	8	10	7	10	11
4	Frogmouths, Nightjars & Swifts	1	0	1	0	0	4
6	Frigatebirds, Gannets & Cormorants	4	3	4	4	4	6
7	Hérons, Ibis, Spoonbills & Allies	13	10	10	9	11	15
8	Birds of Prey	10	9	9	10	10	16
9	Brolga	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Crakes & Rails	3	2	4	2	2	7
11	Shorebirds	1	1	2	3	4	8
12	Button-quail	1					1
14	Cockatoos & Parrots	8	7	6	7	7	9
15	Cuckoos	8	7	5	6	8	9
16	Owls	1	0	1	0	2	4
17	Kingfishers, Rollers & Bee-eaters	6	6	6	6	5	7
18	Pittas & Treecreepers	0	0	0	0	0	2
19	Bowerbirds	0	2	0	1	1	2
20	Fairy-wrens	3	3	3	3	3	3
21	Scrubwrens, Allies & Pardalotes	9	6	7	7	6	11
22	Honeyeaters	10	11	10	9	10	14
23	Quail-thrushes & Allies	1	1	1	1	1	1
24	Cuckoo-shrikes & Trillers	3	3	3	3	3	3
25	Whistlers, Shrike-thrushes, Figbirds & Orioles	6	6	6	6	5	6
26	Woodswallow	1	1	1	0	0	2
27	Magpies & Butcherbirds	5	5	5	5	5	5
28	Fantails	3	2	3	3	3	3

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29	Crows	1	1	1	1	1	1
30	Flycatchers & Monarchs	6	5	4	3	4	6
31	Robins, Old World Warblers & White-eyes	4	4	5	4	5	7
32	Swallows & Martins	2	2	2	2	2	3
33	Thrushes, Starlings & Mynas, Flowerpeckers	2	2	2	2	1	2
34	Finches, Mannikins Sparrows	2	2	1	1	1	3
35	Pipits, Wagtails & Others	1	0	0	1	0	1
	Total Species	132	115	119	113	117	183
Total No of Family Groups = 33							
	No of surveys per year	9	6	6	3	5	

4.2 Observations of avifauna species at Vallances Road include terrestrial birds, shorebirds and water birds

Terrestrial avifauna species recorded during this period remain stable and are increasing in diversity.

Waterbird species observed at this site during the recorded period remain consistent with previous years records from 2020 and 2019.

Shorebird species 1 Shorebird group has been recorded at the site and that is the Masked Lapwing. As outlined in the 'Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road Avifauna Survey Byron Bird Buddies Report 2015-2020', the Shorebird group numbers remain low. This group has been declining since 2007, since their habitat in the oxbow has seen an increase in mangroves. Unless mangroves are removed and more mudflats exposed, shorebirds are unlikely to return to the oxbow.

Nesting species & young-out-of-nest observed on site

Eastern Yellow Robin - adult observed on nest and second adult observed near nest. (Grid E6)

Noisy Friarbird - adult on nest (Grid F5)

Australian Magpie building nest (Grid C5)

Australian Brush-turkey - nest observed but no adult nearby. (Grid F5)

Nest observed at top of large hoop pine (Grid D4). Discussion by BBB surveying the site whether this is a nesting attempt or active nest of the Black-necked Stork that frequents the site. No Black-necked Stork young observed throughout the year so this is probably not an active nest.

Golden Whistler - juvenile bird observed.

Brush Cuckoo - juvenile bird observed

White-bellied Sea-Eagle- 2 x adults and 1 x juvenile bird observed 13/7/21 (flying over). White-bellied Sea-Eagles have nested along the Brunswick River near the Vallances Road STP site for many years. The nest is not visible from the survey site but the calls of the White-bellied Sea-Eagles are often heard during breeding season.

4.3 Vallances Road Threatened Species:Results

Four threatened species were recorded from a total of 12 for the site. Eight were recorded in the period 2015-2020.

Vallances Road Threatened Species				
Species	Date sited this report period	Last previous record	Grid/Cell location	Comments
Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove <i>Ptilinopus regina</i> (Vulnerable)	3 birds seen on 02/03/2021	No records for 2020, but last recorded sightings were 26/02/2019, 09/02/2019, 19/10/2019, 12/12/2019.	E6	Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove seen at this site most years. Records from 2008 onwards show the presence of this bird, with an absence in 2020, 2018, 2014 and 2011.
Black-necked Stork <i>Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus</i> (Endangered in NSW)	1 bird seen roosting in large Hoop pine 18/05/2021	20/03/2013 and 13/06/2015	D5	The farm manager agisting cattle at the Vallances Road site has informed BBB that he has observed Black-necked Storks feeding and roosting at the site. No dates supplied but Grid E2 given as a foraging site.
Eastern Osprey <i>Pandion cristatus</i> (Vulnerable)	12/01/2021 02/03/2021 18/05/2021 13/07/2021 28/09/2021	09/06/2019 18/08/2019 09/05/2020 23/09/2020 07/10/2020	D6 F5	A regular visitor. Observed each year on several surveys flying over the river. The Osprey nest along the Brunswick River but the actual nest site has not been observed.
White-eared Monarch <i>Monarcha leucotis</i> (Vulnerable)	13/07/2021	May, July 2020 & 24/11/2020	E4	The first record of this species at this site was in 2020. It has visited again in 2021, which is a very positive outcome. Birds were seen feeding in plantings along the Brunswick River. It is an altitudinal migratory species, moving to lower coastal areas during the winter months. Inhabits and breeds in lowland subtropical and littoral rainforest. Can also be found foraging in regrowth thickets, stream-side remnants like Camphor Laurel scrub and mangroves.

5.0 Conclusion

The 2021 Summary Report shows that both the Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road sites are valuable and dynamic ecosystems. However, the results from Byron Wetlands may be cause for concern. Shorebird numbers continue to decline, and the overall avifauna species groups visiting the site has declined in recent years. An in-depth analysis of the data is not part of this summary report, but brief observation of the records and the conditions of the wetlands over the 2021 period reveal changes to the environment that may contribute to the decline in avifauna species. La Nina has meant that water levels at the wetlands have been extremely high. Water levels in all ponds have been too high for shorebirds to feed. This still does not explain the decline in waterbirds. Increased rainfall throughout Australia may be attracting Waterbirds, and other avifauna species, to areas inland and away from their regular feeding grounds at the Byron Wetlands.

The weed cover that has overrun all the ponds may also be a contributing factor for low waterbird numbers. The water weed, *Salvinia* (*Salvinia molesta*), is covering the surface of many of the ponds. *Salvinia* is a “Weed of National Significance”. If not controlled, it will take over, smothering other plant life and reducing water quality. The growth and spread of *Salvinia* in the Byron Wetlands ponds has been increasing during the rainy season and may be causing problems for not only water quality, but for the water birds. Ducks and Dusky Moorhens, as well as the Black Swans and Coots may have difficulty moving through the heavy mat of *Salvinia*, thus limiting their foraging ability.

During 2021 extensive earth works have been carried out. The noise and heavy vehicle movements may disturb some birds that use the ponds nearby, thus contributing to a decline in avifauna numbers.

The filling of the western oxbow by mangroves at the Vallances Road survey site has resulted in the decline of both shorebird and waterbird species. The freshwater pond in Grid C5 provides habitat for freshwater waterbird and shorebird species. For terrestrial avifauna species, both sites provide suitable and important habitat. Terrestrial avifauna numbers are rising at the Vallances Road site, where plantings are now established.

Vallances Road is a different ecosystem from Byron Wetlands. Byron Wetlands is especially important during times of drought. The decline in shorebird and other avifauna species at this site is unsettling, and attention to appropriate management of the wetlands is necessary to ensure that this site remains a refuge for shorebirds and waterbirds.

6.0 Recommendations

The following recommendations are also outlined in BBB's Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road Avifauna Survey Annual Report 2015-2020.

6.01 Providing habitats that support avifauna population adds to biodiversity benefits and values for the shire through the provision of ecosystem services, such as seed dispersal, pollination, insect and rodent control, and scavenging and nutrient deposit. Avifauna are sensitive indicators of change in the environment and can provide early warnings of environmental problems. They also provide an economic service through nature-based tourism and add to cultural heritage through art and stories.

6.02 Continued monitoring of avifauna species is recommended on a regular basis to detect changes and to provide feedback to improve and modulate future management of both sites. This is an action that could be implemented under AIM 4 as identified in the recent Byron Shire Council Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2020-2030.

6.03 We recommend the production of another report in 2 years time. This is the 7th report BBB has provided on avifauna species. At both sites we consider that the majority of bird species have been identified. Allowing for migration and nomadic behaviors the populations would appear to be stable except for the shore and water avifauna, hence the need for additional biennial reports.

6.04 BBB members can continue to monitor the site and maintain Excel Spreadsheet records, however BSC may want to consider an independent report from this data.

6.05 Given the site's national importance (in terms of number of threatened species found), BBB recommends an 'Advisory Body' or 'Friends of the Wetlands' or some such group be established to oversee the management of both sites. Such a committee should have a representative from stakeholders active at both sites to disseminate information so all may be informed of the management issues where relevant. It is likely Byron Wetlands could meet a RAMSAR status if a nomination were to be placed.

6.06 We recommend that the impacts and threats stated above be incorporated in ongoing published management protocols and be distributed widely to Council employees.

6.07 Further, Council should provide adequate resources to ensure that responsible and informed oversight management of the wetlands is sustained into the future as an integral part of Council's ongoing Delivery Programs and Operational Plans reflected in Annual Reports.

Byron Wetlands

6.08 Re-vegetate, with appropriate species, along the common boundary fence between the Wetlands and Ewingsdale sports complex with trees and under-storey species for the control of light and noise pollution.

6.09 BBB has recommended, in previous reports, that the use of herbicide spraying and mowing of low vegetation at the edge of cells be reduced as far as practicable. A number of avifauna species utilise the edge vegetation for protection, especially the shy rails and crakes and also the migrating
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Latham's Snipe. Edge vegetation is also an important foraging habitat for scrub-wrens and fairy-wrens. Recent large-scale operations of this sort necessitates the reiteration of this recommendation and we urge Council to alter and moderate this behaviour, which has resulted in wide-scale habitat removal and poisoning, thus ignoring our past recommendations and agreements.

6.10 Suitable habitat for migrating shorebirds is not being maintained adequately in Cell H. BBB recommends that alternative cells continue to be managed to supply an appropriate habitat for shorebirds if this cannot be provided in Cell H. (eg: providing exposed muddy banks for shorebirds to feed).

6.11 Council should maintain and develop a diverse range of natural habitat opportunities with a view to increasing the area of protected habitat as urban development expands and impacts the environment. As recommended in our 2015-2020 report, maintaining appropriate habitats will be increasingly important as human populations and their associated activities from the new West Byron Urban Release area, the Bayshore Village development and North Beach development, Cavanbah sports field and the proposed Bioenergy Facility, come online. These developments will almost certainly destroy the amenity for shorebirds at the mouth of the Belongil Estuary. Our monitoring has shown that shorebirds will come if the habitat is right. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true.

6.12 In considering expansion of the wetlands, wherever possible within the operational plan requirements, we recommend further shorebird areas be created.

6.13 In our 2015-2020 report, BBB recommended a review of documents associated with the management of the Byron Wetlands. There are at least five documents that BBB is aware of: West Byron "Cell H" Management Plan 2006, West Byron Sewage Treatment Plant Weed Management Strategy 2005, Operational Environment Management Plan, West Byron Visitor Education and Impact Plan, and West Byron Monitoring and Impact Verification Plan which contain much replication and similar material. Even though we believe a review was being considered, we are not aware that this has taken place as of this date. BBB suggests for future management and simplification, these plans should be condensed into one strategic plan with the background material separated into a self-contained document. In so doing, this new plan could be less complicated, more relevant to the community, and more effective in meeting some of the objectives stated in the five documents. A review of the results of monitoring over the past 12 years is needed to drive the new actions for the future management of the area and also take into consideration knowledge associated with the effects of climate change and future impacts from population growth.

6.14 BBB is aware of, and supports the on-going fox control measures being conducted at Byron Wetlands, but effective fox control also needs to be implemented at Vallances Road.

6.15 There continues to be the potential for improved visitor experience, particularly education, at the Wetlands. Sadly, a number of actions in the West Byron Visitor Education and Impact Plan have yet to be implemented. BBB members are committed to monitoring, providing education and conducting one open day per year at the wetlands. However, BBB will have limited capacity to continue the open day for the public in the future. The Interpretive Centre at the Byron wetlands is a useful resource. However, due to its size numbers should be limited to 30 people. We recommend using the Cavanbah Centre if a larger space is required for community events or groups.

6.16 As part of a biodiversity program, a part-time education coordinator should be funded and tasked with specific educational opportunities.

6.17 Over the years, many trees have been brought down by strong winds at the Byron Wetlands and replacement planting is recommended. Where possible, and if funding is adequate, the dead trees in Cell I should be replaced. At least 3 such trees could be provided, to act as useful perching habitat for many bird species.

Vallances Road

6.18 In the long term, an opportunity exists at Vallances Road for public visitation similar to the arrangements at West Byron and we suggest that this be studied and implemented where minimal disturbance to the birds can be achieved.

6.19 We suggest rethinking the agisting of cattle on the property at Vallances Road. Are the rotation programs really beneficial or are they detrimental to the biodiversity values? For example, recent rains brought about dense stands of grass and with them large numbers of quail, including uncommon species. Within a week or two cattle were brought in and the structural integrity of the grassland was instantly destroyed. As a result, nearly all the quail vanished from the area. Vallances Road can provide outstanding and uncommon habitat for a wide range of grassland dependent birds, including quail, cisticolas, grassbirds, mannikins and finches if its management is right.

6.20 We recommend that more paddock trees be planted. These trees can be situated in small groves, as well as individual large specimens, at distances of no less than 50 metres from one another. Appropriate and varied local native species should be chosen to maximise habitat potential and structural diversity.

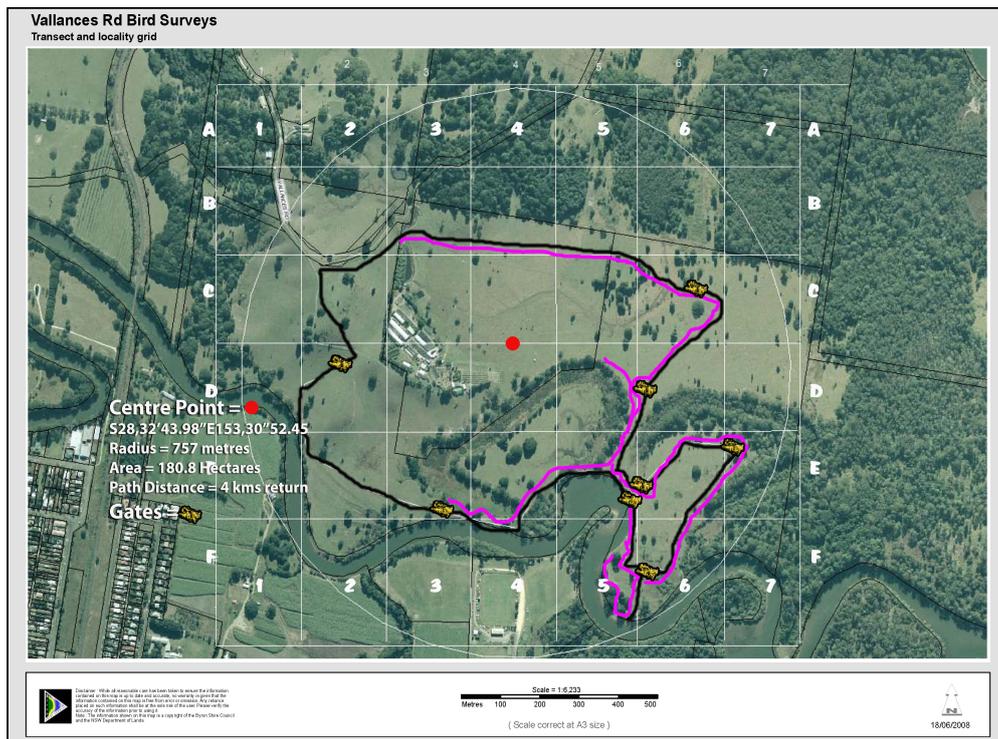
6.21 Limited and carefully overseen fire management of a small number of discreet grassland patches should be used experimentally with a view to determining impacts on natural biodiversity and resultant habitat change over time.

Climate Change

6.22 Climate change has been listed as a key threatening process under the Biodiversity Conservation Act. Projections of future changes in climate for New South Wales include higher temperatures, increasing sea levels and water temperatures, more intense but possibly reduced annual average rainfall, increased temperature extremes and higher evaporation. These changes are likely to lead to greater intensity and frequency of fires, more severe droughts and increased regional flooding. As a direct result we recommend research and the management of these areas to incorporate a diversity of habitat opportunities as well as floral diversity, with an eye to promoting an area more flexible and able to handle extreme changes of climate over time.

6.23 Byron Wetlands and Vallances Road, besides being water augmentation facilities, are highly significant biodiversity properties. They routinely provide among the greatest numbers of bird species observed within a given time period in relation to the great range of areas BBB and other birding groups have studied in the Northern Rivers. In short, these two areas cannot be underestimated in terms of their value to avifauna at local, national and international levels. They are also important linkage corridors for native species occupying and travelling between moist

coastal habitats to the western escarpments and beyond. In addition, the generally favourable and abundantly resourced nature of these areas, notwithstanding their limited size, provides highly significant refugia for many out-of-area species, magnifying their importance well beyond state and national significance.



Report No. 4.7 Renewal of MOU with Brunswick Valley Landcare

Directorate: Sustainable Environment and Economy

5 **Report Author:** Sharyn French, Manager Environmental and Economic Planning

File No: I2022/485

Summary:

Council has had a longstanding relationship with Brunswick Valley Landcare which is acknowledged through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

10 The MOU is considered for renewal every three years and is now due.

The MOU has been reviewed by both parties and an additional item has been included.

It is presented to the Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting for consideration.

15

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee recommends to Council that the Memorandum of Understanding between Brunswick Valley Landcare and Byron Shire Council (Attachment 1 – E2021/121393) be endorsed.

20 **Attachments:**

1 Brunswick Valley Landcare (BVL) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Template, E2021/121393 , page 161 [↓](#)

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Report

Council has a longstanding relationship with Brunswick Valley Landcare which is acknowledged and formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was originally entered into in 2013.

- 5 The MOU allows both organisations to recognise and value the role each party plays in raising the awareness of natural resource management within Byron Shire.

The MOU is considered for renewal every three years and is now due.

The MOU has been reviewed by both parties and the following has been included under Council's input:

- 10
- Provide BVL a designated space for storage of equipment within the Mullumbimby depot for as long as this activity is considered to fit within the designated use of the land and can be carried out without impact upon Council operational requirements.
 - In the event BVL is requested to relocate, Council will use its best endeavours to offer replacement storage facilities.
- 15 It is presented to the Biodiversity Advisory Committee meeting for consideration.

Next steps

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee recommends to Council that the MOU between Brunswick Valley Landcare and Council be endorsed.

Strategic Considerations

20 Community Strategic Plan and Operational Plan

CSP Objective	CSP Strategy	DP Action	Code	OP Activity
Community Objective 3: We protect and enhance our natural environment	3.2: Strive to become a sustainable community	3.2.2: Support community environmental and sustainability projects	3.2.2.5	Support Brunswick Valley Landcare to deliver the Land for Wildlife Program and biodiversity enquiries

Legal/Statutory/Policy Considerations

This MOU does not entitle any legally enforceable obligations between BSC and BVL.

Financial Considerations

Funds are provided for in the 2021/22 budget.

Consultation and Engagement

Council staff and Brunswick Valley Landcare staff were consulted in the preparation of this report.



Memorandum of Understanding

between

Byron Shire Council

and

Brunswick Valley Landcare Inc.



<DATE>

BSC Ref #E2021/121393



**MEMORANDUM of UNDERSTANDING
between
BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL
and
BRUNSWICK VALLEY LANDCARE Inc.**



PARTIES are BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL (BSC) and BRUNSWICK VALLEY LANDCARE Inc. (BVL)

Introduction

The parties have for many years had an informal and mutually beneficial association whereby natural resource management in the Byron Shire has gained prominence, The input of voluntary expertise, training, and efforts of BVL in raising community efforts and awareness on lands within the Shire has been vitally augmented by BSC via the provision of administrative support and the expertise and efforts of its own natural resource management and bush regeneration staff.

This MOU sets this association in a written context, whereby the parties' build upon their association and continue to move ahead in a mutually respectful and beneficial manner. We both value the contribution that each makes to the communities' awareness of Natural Resource Management (NRM) and proactive actions to enhance NRM within the Shire.

Relevant Background

The primary objective of BVL is to support and inspire the community in the restoration and conservation of the natural environment. This is achieved via community awareness, training, support, demonstration, and encouragement at field days, at schools, and for local Landcare groups. BVL is funded from a variety of sources and the very significant efforts of volunteers. BSC has within its written objectives a priority on bush regeneration on its lands, and the promotion of community awareness and involvement in natural resource management, this is achieved by the funding of bush regeneration and natural resource management teams within Council, some external funding, and the active encouragement of the community in field days, community gardens, education, and the raising of awareness in the 1.5 million visitors to the Shire each year. The two groups thus each share a strong common objective and have cooperatively worked together at individual and management levels for a considerable period of time.

Disclaimer

This MOU does not entitle any legally enforceable obligations between BSC and BVL.

BSC Ref #E2021/121393

Primary Purpose

This MOU formalises the relationship and the inputs of BSC and BVL in the work of volunteers on public lands in the Byron Shire.

Specific Inputs

BVL will:

- Continue to seek external funding for NRM activities on public and private lands in the Shire and work jointly with BSC in the application for funding of works on its lands.
- Continue to provide a support platform for the community to access and be provided with assistance in obtaining funds for NRM at localities across the catchment.
- Maintain a register of volunteers and accredited bush regenerators for works on lands in consultation with BSC.
- Promote the MOU and individual planting days, field days and workshops via its regular newsletter and occasional media advertisements.
- Promote the MOU to its funding sources and the wider Landcare community as an example of the cooperative approach to NRM that the community seeks.
- Liaise with BSC during external funding applications of relevance and discuss where a joint application would enhance the outcomes and chances of success, agree on a joint or supported application.

BSC will:

- Liaise with BVL and its appointees in the planning of construction and/or maintenance works on or adjacent to Landcare and Dunecare sites.
- Assist with the development of Site Action Plans to guide environmental management and restoration activities.
- Promote the MOU and its benefits across the wider community,
- Continue to provide administrative support (desk, computer, phone, printing) for BVL or an appointed representative to provide the community with support, assistance, and access to external NRM funding sources. This has been proven to increase community and volunteer involvement, such that works on lands in the Shire can be conducted with the valuable assistance of external funding, under the auspices of this MOU. BSC and BVL recognise the provision of support for the community is vital as there are numerous sources for funding and applying for funding is often convoluted and daunting. Significant funds can be accessed when the community is assisted in the process, leading to many volunteers conducting significant works in the Shire.
- Facilitate liaison between BVL and Council's Biodiversity Advisory Committee, via membership on the Committee.
- Continue to work cooperatively with BVL in the application for external funding of NRM works on public lands.
- Liaise with BVL when external funding is sought so that each party is aware of proposals and in some instances, agree where a joint or supported application enhances the chances of successful funding outcomes.

BSC Ref #E2021/121393

- Provide BVL a designated space for storage of equipment within the Mullumbimby depot for as long as this activity is considered to fit within the designated use of the land and can be carried out without impact upon Council operational requirements.
- In the event BVL is requested to relocate, Council will use its best endeavours to offer replacement storage facilities.

Outcomes

- More focussed attention to bush regeneration and cost-effective management of public lands by volunteers and BSC in cooperative undertakings.
- Promoting the involvement of volunteers and the wider community in the restoration and management of public lands.
- Better coordination of volunteers and Council staff in community-focussed activities such as planting days and field days.
- Efficient management of volunteers and their workplace health and safety.
- Promoting better communication between the parties and acknowledging the contribution of volunteers in the natural resource management of the Shire.

Related policies and plans

- Byron Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
- Flying Fox Camp Management Plan
- Koala Plan of Management
- Public Land Plans of Management
- Council Policy - Camphor Laurel Management in Byron Shire
- Council Policy - Tree/ Vegetation vandalism

Site Planning and Risk Assessment

- The parties will carry out site assessments for planning for site activities. This will include consultation between BSC and BVL and the production of template site plans and risk assessments prior to works commencing.
- Wherever reasonably practical, training and induction will be given to volunteers prior to works being undertaken.

Communication

BSC and BVL commit to good and open communication, and that:

- Workplace, health and safety matters are addressed
- BVL and volunteers understand BSC's objectives for the lands
- BSC understands BVL's objectives as a community voluntary organisation
- BSC communicates its planned activities at relevant sites
- BVL has BSC agreement to work on public lands

BSC Ref #E2021/121393

Insurance

Registered volunteers undertaking approved works at designated sites are covered by Personal Accident Insurance held by BVL.

Tools and Materials

Tools are generally self-provided by volunteers, apart from some mechanised or specialist tools [eg, power-auger drills] which may be provided and operated by BSC staff.

Materials such as plants, tree guards, mulch and stakes and follow-up watering are often provided by BSC, although some of these items may also be provided by external funding obtained by BVL or BSC.

This Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed in three years.

Signed this _____ day of _____ 2022.

<NAME>

President
Brunswick Valley Landcare Inc.

<NAME>

Mayor
Byron Shire Council