

Mr. Rob van Iersel
Place Activation Coordinator
Directorate of Sustainable Environment and Economy
Byron Shire Council
Mullumbimby
NSW 2482

22 January 2021

Dear Mr. van Iersel,

Re: Request to facilitate a sustainable, community-led masterplan for New Brighton Village

New Brighton Village is one of the oldest settlements in the shire, and is surrounded by a beautiful environment. It lacks much of the most basic of infrastructure, like appropriate drainage. In more recent times, the village has been surrounded by a large, new residential settlement with beautiful curb and channelling, but with little infrastructure like open spaces and parks. This has meant that New Brighton has been put under much more pressure than its facilities were ever intended.

The river, beach, village park and market are considered to be valuable aspects of the northern shire population (resident and visitor). However, the ever-increasing population pressure is causing considerable strain on the inadequate infrastructure and impacting heavily on residents.

Considering all this, the New Brighton Village Association (NBVA) initiated a process in 2017 to seek to try to address these issues through a process of issue identification and facilitated workshops. The focus was:

1. To identify our community values and concerns,
2. To identify our primary areas of focus
3. To run facilitated workshops with the stakeholders concerned with each of the focus areas, including those both within the village community and the wider community
4. To engage with Council where focus areas are considered by Council (for example, flooding - we await the final report, and the promised follow-up overland drainage study)
5. To involve Council in these workshops to understand the issues and strategies to overcome those issues, and embed these concepts into a village plan where appropriate

The village association commenced the process with two workshops to identify vision and focus areas. Issues were as follows (in no particular order):

- Overland drainage
- Beach / dunes
- Village green (sports field) / recreation use and facilities
- Dogs on beach / in village
- Village design form
- Road speed / pedestrian safety
- Flooding (acknowledging the Council flood management study is in progress)

Crucial to the above are:

- Visitor management – amenity during peak times
- Recreation pressure and facilities (village green, playground, Casons Lane, river access, beach parking and access)

We had planned to follow on with workshops on these key focus areas in 2020, but Covid restrictions put these plans on hold. We invited Mr. Rob van Iersel, Byron Council Place Activation Coordinator, to attend our NBVA meeting in November 2020, seeking advice as to how to proceed from here. He explained the concept of the community masterplans and noted how well the process we were trying to instigate fitted with this process.

We recognise that the time has now come to share our thoughts about what the village is and how we want it to be in the future, so that we can plan ahead rather than continue along this unsustainable path. We need to map a path to be able to find a reasonable compromise between resident amenity and the rights of visitors (many of who are actually locals in neighbouring suburbs), so that we can all enjoy our shared public spaces. Our intent is for this process to be community-led.

Our plan from here is to run additional workshops on the key identified issues, inviting other stakeholders, as well engaging with Council to possibly facilitate the process.

The New Brighton community representatives for the proposed village masterplan would initially be:

- Robert Crossley (NBVA President)
- Scarla Weeks (NBVA Masterplan Coordinator)
- Robyn Bolden (NBVA Council Liaison Officer)

Additional members to this group would be enlisted through the active village mailing list that serves as a communication medium for village residents.

We would herewith like to officially request Council to allocate appropriate levels of funding to enable Council staff to work with our community to develop and facilitate a sustainable, community-led masterplan for the future of New Brighton Village.

Yours sincerely



Scarla Weeks
on behalf of the
New Brighton Village Association