

Stroud Community Conversation – 2 April 2019

Q1. The Branch Lane contributes rocks, dust mud and pollution to the waterways.

A. We acknowledge the Branch Lane does contribute sediment into the Branch. We are aware it needs addressing and that the community is concerned about it. We are working on a project to get funding to improve drainage and seal the approaches to three of the creek crossings on the road to help reduce some of the sediment running into the river.

Q2. I feel we need toilet facilities at Alan Park. The recent upgrade of play equipment and the pending shade cloth make this a very popular park for local children. The park is also used for notable community functions like Anzac Day Services and Carols at the Rotunda which both draw large crowds. The nearest toilet is located at the Courthouse which is much too far for an urgent call of nature particularly for children or the elderly.

A. We are building an all-abilities toilet block at Alan Park. This will include a dump point for motor homes and caravans. Work is currently underway. Alan Park is one of 86 playgrounds we manage across the area and is one of seven that will be shaded under funding received from the State Government.

Q3. I would love to see a dog park established in our area.

A. Typically we don't provide dog parks in areas where there is open space, however it may be something the Showground Committee would like to look at as part of their space.

Q4. As a writer and librarian I am concerned at what appears to be a censorship issue within Council. On a recent trip to Gloucester, my husband and I picked up a copy of "The Manning Community News", an independent newspaper available free in Gloucester and surrounding Manning Valley areas. Is it true that this paper is being banned from Council Libraries and Council buildings?

A. There is a copy of the Manning Community News in our libraries, along with copies of other local newspapers, so the community can access it.

Q5. Footpaths. Many more people are now walking into town for shopping/ social venues or to the showground for exercise or the sporting activities. There isn't a continuous footpath from 'gate to gate' or beyond as far as the Country Club. It is unacceptable to have to walk on the narrow shoulder or grass on a major road - especially with the continuous flow of logging and mine lorries thundering through and the intersections getting busier.

A. We are working on developing a pedestrian access and mobility plan for the region. The prior councils had some plans and we'll be looking to expand on these across the urban areas throughout MidCoast. This strategy will look at hot spots for pedestrians and develop a plan for improvements based on the highest need. This will then help us attract grant funding. Smaller areas are more difficult as it is based on traffic and pedestrian numbers, however location such as schools and shops do rate highly.

Q6. Stormwater drainage: Stormwater drainage needs upgrading especially from the town centre to the south end of Stroud. In a large storm event the runoff from the eastern side-roads bottlenecks at Bucketts Way intersections and causes havoc with the inadequate pipes across the road and under driveways. Point in case Nov 2010 hail storm when numerous properties were severely compromised.

A. We are prioritising stormwater management across the region, and accept it is a big issue locally. Since the merger we have recruited staff specifically to investigate stormwater issues. At the moment we are working through the region catchment by catchment to identify the areas that require attention and to better understand the priority. We don't have a timeframe for when we can look at the Stroud catchment at the moment.

Q7. I want to know what Council is going to do with parks, reserves in the towns & villages along The Bucketts Way, including Mammy Johnsons River Reserve Stroud Road, as a staff person advised me in 2018 that Council was going to consolidate parks and reserves. When I enquired what did that mean (she repeated same) when I asked did that mean to sell the parks and reserves? The staff person replied "the council is going to consolidate their parks and reserves". Are all our reserves/parks safe?

A. Yes they are safe, consolidation in this context means the consolidation of services, mowing services etc, not about selling or rationalising parks. It is about delivering maintenance on a priority/ needs basis. At Mammy Johnsons there are plans for a direct informal (mown) path to the waterfront area. Council is unable to sell community land, such as parks and reserves, unless it goes through a whole rezoning process. We have no plans to do this.

Q8. What is the real cost of the purchase of the Masters Building and the costs of the refit separately itemised to all ratepayers, which could have been used on roads, bridges, maintaining parks, reserves and other Council facilities for ratepayers?

A. A new cost benefits analysis on the project is being reported to Council on 10 April, and this will provide information on the value of the project in comparison to a campus model. Councillors will make a decision whether to proceed. It will not impact on district offices such as Stroud. The funds for such a project are separate to funds for other projects such as roads, maintenance etc. These will not be impacted.

Q9. The practice wicket at the showground is damaged, what are Council's plans?

A. The scope of disaster funding was to replace the fence and the practice nets, both of which have been finalised. Replacement of the practice wicket was never part of the disaster funding. We do acknowledge it is in a well-worn state and repairs will be carried out when funding becomes available.

Q10. The centre cricket pitch is at the end of its life and needs replacing. Consideration needs to be towards a new wicket as well as a practical solution for covering and uncovering the wicket.

A. Council will work with the Showground Management Committee within the constraints of the decision made for both sports to remain in the centre oval. We agree consideration needs to be given to a new wicket as it is nearing the end of its life. We would consider a pitch upgrade when funding is available.

Q11. Can we look at relocating the camp drafting facilities?

A. This is a matter for the Showground Management Committee.

Q12. Can Council look at reviewing the purpose of the Showground Management Committee.

A. The Management Committee have delegation under the Plan of Management for the Showground. We are currently reviewing this plan of management. Our preference is for user groups to manage the showground, however if they can't agree or this can't happen, Council can step in and run the showground. However for us to do this, we would need a clear indication from the community it is an approach they want.

Q13. Can we sift from talking flood relief at the Showground to moving forward with new improvements?

A. Our first priority is to deliver flood relief works, which are well underway. We are already talking about new improvements with the practice wicket and main wicket areas, and need to acknowledge and need to look at when funding is available.

Q14. What improvement works are outstanding and what new ones are being considered – how should they be prioritised, how do they affect other user groups, how can other user groups support to get funding/work done?

A. These are matters for the Showground Management Committee to work through.

Q15. Can you provide an update on the skate park? It has been planned for a long time.

A. We need to look at the scope of the skate park. When we went to the community and asked what they wanted they provided us with details. When we took those details into design, it resulted in a \$350,000 design. We have a budget of \$100,000 for the works. We have now asked for the engineering detail of the design to see if it is possible to deliver in a staged process.

Q16. What is Council's position on an application for a gravel mine on Branch Lane/ Pacific Highway with full creek discharge?

A. Council doesn't have a position at this point in time. The Department of Planning has notified Council of the application. A report will be written to the elected body and it will be up to them what position is taken.

Q17. Can you provide an update on the Showground works.

A. We are currently in the process of finalising the projects funded under the Federal Government disaster relief funding. The tennis courts are next, with work to start in May, after the show. The other remaining element is the multi-purpose centre. We will be going through a tender process over the next few months for that element. The full list of works and the associated costs is attached.

Q18. Can you provide an update on the libraries, funding, staffing and the plans for the Forster library.

A. We have 11 libraries across the MidCoast region. We are planning a new library for Forster in the Forster Civic Precinct, which is currently under development. There are no plans to change funding or staffing at our libraries. We have recently implemented

a consolidated catalogue system which is a great credit to the staff who have been working on that system.

Q19. Can you provide an update on the Bucketts Way funding

A. We have a \$19.2 million program to improve the Bucketts Way, which involves 12.5 km of road between Gloucester and the highway at nine separate sites. This will include areas of widening and implementing passing lanes in the Limeburners Creek area. This work will start later this month. We will be looking at the details of the Federal Budget to see how this will impact on the projects also. There was also a commitment by the Coalition before the State election that the State will take on the Bucketts Way as a State Road. We would then maintain it under contract to the RMS. This will have a big impact on the Bucketts Way if it comes through.

The bridge at Limeburners Creek is not proposed to be widened as part of the current Stage 1 works or the Stage 2 that is likely to be funded from the recent Federal budget. There is a project to widen up to 10 bridges along the route in stage three. This stage has not been funded and hasn't been developed into specific projects at this stage. We can't confirm if Limeburners Creek Bridge will be widened under Stage 3 works at this point in time.

Top Priorities

1. Showground
2. Branch Lane / Estuary
3. Roads/footpaths
4. Parks / reserves / playgrounds / toilets
5. Mill Creek / Mill Brook
6. Heritage

Full list of priorities identified

Group one priorities

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More infrastructure, roads, DA constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravel road sealing program • Branch Lane (speed signage) former gravel gets very slippery when wet 2. Skate park – already funded 3. Riparian management around showground, Mill Creek/Will Brook 4. Library needs Wi-Fi 5. Leash-free area for dogs 6. Tennis courts – when are they being finished? | <p>Group two priorities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sealing Branch Lane (Bridges) 2. Management of Wetlands and riparian area that feed Port Stephens 3. Manage, maintain and preserve parks and reserves eg. Mammy J <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sell surplus blocks at branch and do up branch lane, community settlement • Erosion/pollution into Branch Creek (Landcare) and Karuah 4. Upgrade Limeburners Creek Bridge and associated roadworks 5. Bucketts Way – maintain |
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Group two priorities

Group three priorities

Group four priorities

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Showground<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tennis Courts• MPV• Sporting arena2. Bucketts Way – Limeburners – Clarencetown turn to Ironstone Road<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When will roadworks commence?3. Allworth<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Riverbank erosion – trees• Edith Waters Park needs a facelift4. Flood prevention at showground – culvert Mill Creek5. Stroud Road – public toilet upgrade6. Booral – footpath from Booral School to shops7. Booral – upgrade park at rear of hall8. Mill Creek Road – seal from Gaphill Road (5kms)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Showground – fix and improve2. Visitor information centre (at Court House) - currently just coop roster and toilet3. Continuous footpath through town4. Manage and improve heritage aspects (colours/signage) of town (Compliance)5. Road repair at Stroud Road and Bucketts Way in general (between Reidsdale and Karuah)6. Air-condition Booral Hall7. Shade over infants pool8. Stormwater drainage – Bucketts Way south of Stroud – currently flooding driveways9. Disabled toilet facility behind Court House – central in town
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Stroud Showground Expenditure / Works Completed

Works	Works Undertaken	Status	Funding	Cost
Amenities Building 2	Repairs made	completed	Disaster Funding	\$148,726
Amenities Block, Ladies	Repairs Made	completed	Disaster Funding	
Grandstand Building	Repairs Made	completed	Disaster Funding	
Poultry Pavilion	Replaced	completed	Disaster Funding	
Kiosk, Secretaries Office	Repairs Made	completed	Disaster Funding	
Pavilion 1 (Mexan Stall)	Repairs Made	completed	Disaster Funding	
Showground perimeter fence	Replaced	completed	Disaster Funding	
Electrical Infrastructure	Repairs Made, new mains distributor board installed	completed	Council	
Cricket Practice Nets	Replaced	completed	Disaster Funding	
Tennis Court Fence	Partial Replacement	completed	Disaster Funding	
Kevin Francis Park, barbecue, playground	Repairs, replacement	completed	Disaster Funding	
Rodeo Arena Surface	Replaced	completed	Disaster Funding	
Rodeo Shed	Repairs	completed	Disaster Funding	
Rodeo Signage	Replaced	completed	Disaster Funding	
Pony Club Fence	Replaced	completed	Disaster Funding	
Profile tennis courts	Repairs	completed	Infrastructure Funding	\$16,000
Ernie Holstein Chicken Pavilion	Replaced	completed	Disaster Funding	\$31,000
Millbrook fence replacement	Replacement	underway	Infrastructure Funding	\$28,000
Stroud Showground Survey	design	completed	Disaster Funding	\$13,000
Geotech Report, general	design	completed	Disaster Funding	\$ 8,000
Designs / specifications, tennis clubhouse, carpark	design	Completed	Disaster Funding	\$ 8,000

Tennis clubhouse	Replacement	Nearing Completion	Disaster / infrastructure Funding,	\$139,500
Tender Tennis Courts	Replacement	completed	Disaster Funding	\$20,000
Multi - Purpose Building, design, Specifications	Nil	Under review	Disaster Funding / Infrastructure Funding	\$18,000