

Tea Gardens Community Conversation – 9 May 2019

Q1. In our community I would like to see a circuit of outdoor exercise equipment for young and the older people. It is so important we are helped to keep healthy. Grants are needed, support is truly needed, can council help and in what way?

A. Outdoor exercise equipment is in place in several locations across the MidCoast region, however these have been the result of grant funding achieved by the community. We can support communities and their funding applications, however before we can do so, we need to have a plan for where outdoor exercise equipment would be placed across the Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest area, to ensure it is located in appropriate places that link with other outdoor activities.

Q2. Can council provide an update on Fame Cove?

A. Fame Cove is currently subject to orders from the Land and Environment Court and Council is enforcing those orders with the owner of the land.

Q3. With Australia suffering one of the worst droughts on record and with the Tea Gardens aquifer at very low levels why doesn't council allow onsite sewerage treatment units instead of pump outs?

A. The issues that result in onsite wastewater being disposed of through pump out aren't related to the drought or low aquifer levels. Generally onsite wastewater treatment systems must be able to dispose of the treated effluent within the capacity of the land to do so. Where the area of land is too small or the land is not capable of accepting effluent irrigation over the longer term (ie shallow rocky or impermeable clay) then pump out systems must be relied upon. Inadequate disposal leads to nutrients leaching into natural water bodies or the potential to spread disease. In these high risk situations, pump out systems are used.

Q4. If the community hall is not a satisfactory venue for public meetings such as this will MidCoast Council do renovations to ensure it is. This would eliminate the need to hold meetings such as this in a Church which our local councillor is very involved with.

A. Council uses many venues for its community consultation meetings across the Council area and not all of these are Council venues. We utilise venues which are suitable and available to meet the needs of our engagement activities. Council has used the Baptist facility for many years and will continue to do so when it is suitable. The Community Hall is used for many purposes and is a valuable asset for the Hawks Nest-Tea Gardens community. The maintenance and upgrade of this facility is managed in accordance with council's asset management program which ensures halls across the Mid Coast Council area are satisfactorily maintained.

Q5. Speculation has been rife over a number of years that Council is negotiating the purchase of a section of land near the commercial centre of Tea Gardens. That would centralise Council offices and community facilities which are in great need. There seems to be no conclusion to the speculation. If this is true

can the concept be finalised in the near future? If not, then Council please confirm in order that various community groups can plan future direction with some certainty.

A. Investigations were undertaken however at the present time council is not proceeding any further with this proposal.

Q6. How can you justify the costs of the Masters refurbishment when there is so much demonstrated ratepayer opposition to this action?

A. The elected Council resolved at the 10 April ordinary meeting of Council to proceed with the project to consolidate the administrative functions of two offices in Forster and one in Taree to a central location on Biripi Way, Taree. In making this decision feedback from the community was considered. Council has undertaken significant research to inform its decision making including independent cost benefit analysis. All of this information is available on Council's website.

Q7. The community buildings in Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest are inadequate for the operation of the Myall Coast Historical Society and the Family Research Group. Council supports historical societies in towns by allowing them to occupy and use historical buildings at minimal cost. Could you please advise if the Council would agree to allocation of land behind the Tea Gardens Library for a building so we can seek grant funding for the construction of a building as the Council has done for the Bridge Club.

A. It is suggested that both of these groups write to Council with their requirements so that they can be assessed and then advised of the best way forward.

Q8. Winda Woppa – can you provide information on the project and what hours the pump will be operating?

A. The sand transfer system at Winda Woppa has been implemented to nourish Jimmys Beach. The cost of the project is \$4.22 million, of which \$3.9 million has been spent. The project has been supported by \$712,000 from the Crown and the remaining \$3.2 million has been jointly funded by Council and the Office of Environment & Heritage. As a result, this has cost Council \$1.6 million, and we have been setting aside funds for many years to cover this project. The project is currently being commissioned. As part of the commissioning we will be looking at setting the operational hours for the pump and will be informing the community when they are set.

Q9. Are there plans to optimising sewer pumping stations to cope with heavy rain?

A. We are working to optimise the operation of the pumping stations and work has been undertaken to ensure pumps are talking to each other. We do recognise there will be more growth in this area and part of the next phase will be to assess the rising main in the Myall Quays area to provide an upgrade in this area.

Q10. Why Hawks Nest doesn't have a town sign? Over the bridge there is no sign to identify and can the bridge be cleaned and painted to be more presentable.

A. We are looking at signage across the region and will ensure there is a sign for Hawks Nest. We also accept the bridge is a focal point of the town and we will take this comment on board. We are also looking at the bridge from a mobility and access point of view.

- Q11. Does the Council have or does it plan to adopt to reduce carbon omissions or fight climate change?**
- A. No. There is no plan at this point in time.
- Q12. Settlers Way Tea Gardens – are there plans to do anything in this area to allow for traffic from the Grange and Palm Lakes in an emergency to get out on to the Lakes Way? Is there any other development in that area, is it going to grow?**
- A. There is a plan to look at rezoning the land but nothing definite and any rezoning would require an extension of the roads and it would change the access. We need to sit down and relook at this as we acknowledge the current access isn't good enough.
- Q13. When will there be a footpath for Copeland and Myall Streets?**
- A. We are looking at pedestrian and mobility access across the region and will be developing a Pedestrian and Access Mobility Plan. This plan will inform where footpaths are required to tie in with pedestrian movements, services and need. Filling in missing links in footpath networks will come out of this, and this has been a consistent theme at all the conversations we have held across the region.
- Q14. When this happens will there be any research done to the potential users? There are a lot of people who would like to use the facilities but don't because they feel unsafe and lack confidence.**
- A. There would be an extensive consultation with community, interest groups and key stakeholders to speak to them.
- Q15. Swan Bay a seat was removed where a person could sit and look over the bay, can the seat be replaced?**
- A. We will look into this.
- Q16. How do we work with Council to volunteer and improve the gardens around the community hall?**
- A. We have over 1,500 volunteers across Council's operations and they are very important to us as they assist us to deliver services to our community we may not otherwise be able to deliver. Steve Howard coordinates parks volunteers and he is the best first contact. He will discuss the needs and induction process.
- Q17. The community is very supportive of a hydrotherapy pool, what is the chance of this happening? Also there have been rumours for years that the land the current pool is on is going to be sold off? Is the pool being shut down?**
- A. We understand the community wants a hydrotherapy pool, however it isn't something we can just go and build. We are committing, as part of this process, to undertake a feasibility study into a hydrotherapy pool and look at the costings. Going forward from there will be a matter for the elected Council. As for the current pool, that is community land, so it can't be sold off. While the current pool is fit for purpose it will continue to operate. We do however intend to relocate the skate park to Hawks Nest. Other than that there are no plans to move anything due to the cost.
- Q18. Can we have a marked pedestrian crossing on Myall Street?**
- A. We would have to look at this in relation to the number of people who use it as there are strict parameters around pedestrian crossings. It would also need to go through the traffic committee; however we will take that on board and see if it is viable.

Q19. There are a considerable number of people here who don't know about a development application at North Shearwater – can Council give more time for the people who don't know about it?

A. We have extended the deadline for this development application and information is available at the library.

Q20. We have an aged population here and it would be great if Council could think outside the square and do some planning for this area to be a centre of excellence for the way aged care is approached. It is important section 94 funds are not spent in other areas.

A. Section 94 funds are tied to the area they are collected from; the funds have to be spent in this area. The idea of a centre for excellent is a great one and one worth considering seriously. We are playing catch-up in a planning space in the Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest areas as when plans for this area were done 20 plus years ago we didn't expect the demography we now have.

Q21. I am concerned about the road in the Palm Lakes area, particularly at night. We have been told in the past there would be a roundabout at Spinifex Avenue to the shops. Is this still planned?

A. Spinifex Avenue is ultimately intended to be extended directly to Myall Way. The timing for this has been dependent upon development of the vacant land from the northern most end of Spinifex Avenue to Myall Street. This development has not progressed. Safety improvements are being investigated for Settlers Way to improve the current situation.

Q22. Is there a DA in for Palm Lakes?

A. There were 623 blocks approved at Palm Lakes by the Land and Environment Court in 2003. There is nothing else happening in this space.

Q23. Will the current aquifer be able to support water into the future for a growing population?

A. The aquifer has enough capacity for the current planned area for Tea Gardens but we are always looking at our systems to ensure we have secure yields.

Q24. There should be an overpass at the turnoff from the highway.

A. While this is a matter for the RMS, we can advocate for this when we have the opportunity.

Q25. There is a playground near library that was put in by the Lions. We have asked Council to put cover over it before and the answer has been no – what is the current situation?

A. We have 86 parks and have a strategy to shade them; however this has to be done in an incremental way. Our first priority is to shade the larger parks, and this includes Providence Park, Palm Grove Park in Forster, and other regional parks. Once they are done we will then come back and look at options for shading smaller parks. These options won't always be a shade structure; we will also be looking at natural options.

Q26. Why does the Council still want a non-ward type of operation?

A. The State Government abolished wards for the amalgamated Councils.

Q27. Why did you close the building inspection office?

A. It is not closed. Building inspectors come and use a space at the district office when there is a demand for them to be in the area. This is how it has always operated, so there has been no change.

Q28. Can you look at putting a give way sign at the corner of Leeward Circuit and Shoreline Drive?

A. We will look at this and refer it to the traffic committee.

Q29. Entry to the pool – does the honesty box work – do tourists pay?

A. We need to look at how we man the pool and collect fees, and while the fees collected don't warrant staffing, it may be something we can work with volunteers on to deliver.

Top priorities

- 1. Hydrotherapy Pool
- 2. Roads
- 3. Community Hall/centre
- 4. Beautification of Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest
- 5. Walkways and Cycleways

Priorities identified from table workshops:

Group one priorities

- 1. Footpaths continuous slash exits roads from Myall River Downs
- 2. Toilets near ferry
- 3. Existing pool to be wheelchair friendly access/Hydro Pool ASAP
- 4. Do not fill in creek behind Higgins Close
- 5. Clean up bushland between Higgins Close and river

Group two priorities

- 1. Heated pool, covered, all year access, hydrotherapy
- 2. Community centre / indoor sports / multipurpose (with ample car parking)
- 3. Dedicated bike paths / access to skate park (footpaths on major thoroughfare)
- 4. Better parking at Jimmy's Beach/ pushbike parking
- 5. Roundabout at Coles/service station intersection
- 6. Better council feedback on council processes, eg North Shearwater subdivision

Group three priorities

- 1. Hydrotherapy Pool
 - a. Needed for Elderly, disabled and kids swimming lessons
 - b. Tourism
- 2. Multifunction centre
- 3. Roads
 - a. Roundabout at Coles requires a slip path on Myall Road at Toonang Parade

Group four priorities

- 1. Environment
 - a. Lakes
 - b. Rivers
 - c. Beaches
 - d. Flora and fauna protection
 - e. Feral cats
- 2. Community
 - a. Transport
- 3. Social
 - a. Shopping

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. New exits from Spinifex Avenue to Myall Street c. New roads recently laid are not sealed properly and must be fixed <p>4. Paths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ibis to Kingfisher Bridge b. Budgerie Street to Marine Road (path and crossing) c. Marine Drive at public toilets d. Bike path around Hawks and Tea Gardens and also Coles to industrial estate <p>5. Dog Park and Gardens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Hawks Nest welcome sign b. Beautification of Hawks Nest area (boat ramp/park opposite IGA) c. Fitness equipment d. Dog park in swan bay near river e. Garbage bins in Hawks Nest parks especially in Swan Bay f. Floating jetty in Tea Gardens - the boat ramps are slippery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Improved competition <p>4. Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All year (heated) swimming pool b. Aged care (palliative care)
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Group five priorities

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hydro therapy pool 2. East Viney creek concerns 3. Traffic management and a pedestrian crossing at Coles roundabout 4. Open the other end of Spinifex Avenue to Myall Road 5. Enclose the current pool and heat it 6. Mark the parking bays along Marine Drive 7. Cut grass on vacant blocks 8. Don't move the library and the pool 9. Bike tracks 10. Community Plan 11. Hawks Nest Square 12. Locate family history group in library 13. Community Hall 14. Disabled parking in town 15. Electronic learning library centre 16. Enhance the library building 17. Activities for young people

Group six priorities

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Footpaths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To help people travel around the town in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and walkers b. System for scooters to pass on the bridge safely c. Footpath all the way from Coles to the bridge 2. Indoor Pool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use of pool all year round b. Remove ramp for easy access c. Think of the health of the community 3. Dredging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Need to bring forward dredging of Eastern Channel 4. Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. For rehabilitation services b. To purchase gym equipment to benefit the ageing demographic 5. Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Outdoor fitness equipment around town

Group seven priorities

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Road safety – Island at Myall and Settlers Way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Road hump on Myall Street is a rip hazard b. Myall Way needs to be kept maintained

Group eight priorities

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Boat ramps 2. Walkways – overall access to the main road in particular 3. Hydrotherapy pool/heated pool 4. Bennett's Beach carpark 5. Moira Parade beautification
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Road markings on Settlers Way 2. Hydrotherapy Pool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consider the aged care centre of excellence 3. Cycle way in Hawks Nest is appalling 4. Spinifex avenue needs to be extended to the industrial area 5. Decent footpaths – for cycle usage 6. Business development – creating opportunities 7. Disabled toilets – on Marine Drive opposite the Police station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Negative incentives for health workers b. Council charging for facilities and services c. Passive outdoor exercise equipment d. Innovative policies for the aged demographic 8. Return and Earn facility 9. Beautification of the waterfront 10. Fenced dog park 11. More RV friendly parking 12. Netted swimming area in the river 13. Regular dredging of the river 14. Disability access into the future pool 15. Boat ramps all need upgrading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Bats 7. Multiple access – DL Grange 8. Community Halls 9. Community transport links within the area 10. Museum – Historical Society and family research 11. Upgrade of roads and the highway into town 12. Seats for the ferry wharf 13. New carpark in Myall Way 14. Lighting B.B carpark Yamba Street
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Group nine priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heated pool 2. Community vegetable garden in unused land 3. Council to be more consolatory about removal of old and dying trees 4. Recycling station by SLSC 5. Plan of management for foreshore 6. Easier access to Bennett’s Beach for dogs 7. Regular cleaning of gutters and drains 8. Recycling station at the beach

Group 10 priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interchange at Myall Road and Pacific Highway 2. Covered hydrotherapy Pool and Tea Gardens open and heated all year 3. Pedestrian access across singing bridge 4. Pedestrian walkway from Hawks Nest to Winda Woppa 5. Shade Covers over children’s play ground 6. Upgrade Moira Parade boat ramp

Group 11 priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pool opened all year round and heated 2. New community hall/centre – movies 3. Explain excessive ‘water rates’ 4. Fix Tea Gardens roads 5. Fix access to Coles (exit to Myall Way near Holiday Coast CU) 6. Continue to dredge the river 7. Better publication of building applications and proposed development – Shearwater DA 8. Discount the rates for community schemes which pay full rates and maintain their own services

Group 12 priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interchange at Myall Road and Pacific Highway 2. Signage to Tea Gardens on North and South approaching roads to Myall Way and Pacific Highway 3. Separate Hydrotherapy pool for Tea Gardens or modify the current pool with cover 4. Upgrade Moira Parade boat ramp 5. Separate pedestrian walkway across the Singing Bridge 6. Tourism rebate to ratepayers and households

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Better access to the service station from Myall Quays 10. Off leash area for dogs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Shade covers over children's play grounds 8. Pedestrian safety along boulevard from Hawks Nest to Winda Woppa 9. Release non-urban blocks at Pindimar 10. Tea Gardens pool open and heated all year 11. Extend 50km zone up to Lyons lookout 12. Pedestrian access from Lyons lookout to Coles
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Group 13 priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Year round heated pool with disabled access and hot showers 2. Hydrotherapy rehabilitation pool 3. Landscape the Tea Garden waterfront 4. Cycleway and pathways Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest 5. Community hall/museum/family history 6. Wind break the southern end of the pool as was promised four years ago 7. Additional pool heating to extend the swimming season to 12 months 8. Circuit gym in either Tea Gardens or Hawks Nest 9. Bridge railings cleaned or repainted 10. 8km walking footpaths from Tea Gardens to Hawks Nest 11. Demerge Council 12. Myall River walk to Nerong

Group 14 priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community hall and sports centre 2. Community centre and pool open all year 3. Roundabout at Myall Road/Corner of Myall Quays 4. Pathway in Kingfisher Avenue Hawks Nest 5. Pathway and walkway from Coles to industrial area 6. Bike access from skate park to shops and town 7. Dedicated bike paths 8. Clean-up parking at Jimmy's Beach and install posts to park pushbikes 9. Hydrotherapy pool 10. Shade covers for playgrounds

North Arm Cove table priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fame Cove <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. State significant b. Maintain liaison with community c. Conforming and environmentally sensitive development 2. Compliance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enforcement of regulation b. Illegal structures/sewer management 3. Roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Safety, speed control, road width b. Lighting c. Signage d. Cycle safety 4. Maintenance of facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Grass cutting b. Toilet cleaning c. Water front cleanliness 5. Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conservation plan for the future b. Feral animal control (cats) c. Dog control d. Illegal dumping

Pindimar table priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Widening and lane marking on Pindimar Road 2. Passing lanes on Myall Way 3. Hydrotherapy Pool 4. Bicycle Way and walking track from Pindimar to Tea Gardens across 5. Release non-urban blocks at Pindimar 6. Update roads 7. Fix drainage 8. Refurbish south Pindimar beach
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