

### Nabiac – 28 November 2019

#### Part 1 – bushfire discussions

*For anyone needing support and assistance during the recovery from the recent bushfires, visit the Disaster Welfare Assistance Point, established at 68 Wynter Street, Taree by the NSW Government’s Office of Emergency Management or call 1800 018 444. This service provides advice and support for those who have been impacted by the fires.*

The first section of the Community Conversations session at Nabiac provided the community with an opportunity to discuss the recent bushfires and concerns that may have arisen as a result.

At the meeting were representatives from the Office of Emergency Management, Insurance Council of Australia, Welfare Services and MidCoast Council.

A number of questions were asked, and a summary of the main topics discussed is provided:

#### Cleaning up of land

Council does not have the power to order landowners to clean up their land due to a fire threat. The NSW Rural Fire Service does have this power and if you are concerned about bushfire hazards near you, this can be reported via their website at <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/know-your-risk/Bush-fire-hazards-and-your-property/reporting-a-bush-fire-hazard>

Council does have a responsibility to look after its own land and that it manages on behalf of the Crown. Council works with the RFS to undertake control burns when practical.

#### Can Council conduct or authorise backburning?

No Council cannot authorise a backburn. The NSW Rural Fire Service is the only authority that can do this.

#### How do evacuation centres work?

Evacuation centres are identified in the Local Emergency Management Plan. When locations are authorised evacuation centres, they do not become an evacuation centre until they are established by the NSW Police during an emergency situation. It is up to the person leading the emergency response to determine when evacuation centres are put into operation. This is based on the current situation and the need. There is not currently an evacuation centre listed in the local emergency plan for Nabiac, and this does need to be looked at.

There are also a range of neighbourhood safer places listed on the Rural Fire Service website.

#### What is the situation with our water supplies?

A large amount of water was used in fighting fires, during a time in which we are already in drought and water restrictions. Level four water restrictions have now been introduced to

reduce water use to preserve our supplies. <https://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/News-Media/Severe-water-restrictions-for-most-MidCoast-areas>

## Part 2 – Community Conversations

### Discussion summary

Council staff reported on how we plan to deliver the top five priorities from the Community Conversation held in Nahiatic earlier in the year. Those present were invited to contribute suggestions on the detail of these projects to assist in our delivery.

Below are the top five priorities that were raised from the first round of community conversations and the commitment from council.

### Top five priorities identified in round one

#### 1. Parking/Traffic/RVs

A program has started to gather base information such as traffic levels, parking availability and pedestrian activity. This information will help to inform the concept planning and options assessment for future improvements.

Reviews have been completed of the concept designs submitted by community groups. Feedback has been provided. Funding needs to be allocated to the proposal to allow them to progress.

Further discussion on traffic calming and speed reduction measures has occurred with the local traffic committee. Council is negotiating with the RMS to support the measures coming off the highway.

#### 2. Improve rural roads

We currently have a significant program of works on our roads. This level of investment will continue for at least the next four years before reducing to a lower level.

Our main priority is to manage the greatest risks on the network. This will mean that funding for the next few years will tend to be concentrated on our regional roads. These are the roads that connect our communities. They tend to have high traffic loads, higher speed limits and therefore are greater risk.

As we fix the worst areas on these high risk roads, we will be able to spread our maintenance resources further into the local road network and fix more of the things that are wrong. Over time our roads program will include more and more of the local roads that affect access to residences.

We are working on updating the forward roads program based on the funding levels that we are now projecting as being available into the future. Once this is complete, it will be presented to the community so that everyone can see what section of road is programmed to be done and when. We are also working on better reporting for our minor road maintenance activities so that the community can see what we have been doing in regards to roads maintenance and where.

### 3. Beautification/street improvements/village atmosphere

Many communities have asked for CBD beautification and /or locality based beautification strategies. The importance of these strategies to the vibrancy and quality of our urban and commercial areas is recognised by MidCoast Council.

In response Council has recognised the need to develop specific localised beautification plans to increase the aesthetic quality of the natural and built landscapes in our central business districts while welcoming visitors and enhancing quality of life for residents. Staff have been working with CBD businesses to participate in the Vibrant Spaces initiative to create more engaging and activated public spaces.

A program has started to gather base information such as traffic levels, parking availability and pedestrian activity. This information will help to inform the concept planning and options assessment in future stages.

### 4. Shade at parks and playgrounds

The Nabiac playground has recently been upgraded, including a small cycle loop in Nabiac Park. Council has a rolling program of increasing shade in play spaces and as external funding sources become available, this playground will be shaded.

### 5. Community space masterplan

Many communities have asked for improvement to community spaces and recreation areas. MidCoast Council recognises the social, environmental and economic importance of recreation to the community. In recognition of this importance the Community Spaces, Recreation and Trades department is committed to commissioning a Recreation Strategy for the MidCoast Local Government Area.

The Recreation Strategy will provide the overarching framework and strategic direction for the planning and improvement for recreation facilities and services.

The purpose of the strategy will be to identify opportunities to improve the provision and quality of recreation facilities by developing a clear understanding of the current supply and demand of recreation facilities in conjunction with the needs of the current and future population.

### 6. Creek restoration

This site has been examined in detail. The creek functions primarily as an urban drain with a substantive proportion of the creek through Nabiac being on private land. A prominent portion of the creek between Clarkson Street and the unformed portion of Nabiac Street is on public land. Any work here would be classified as beautification. Economic development staff have liaised with a business owners next to the creek. It is suggested that a volunteer program to beautify and maintain the prominent portion of the creek and embankment would best suit this site.

## Further feedback on top five priorities

<b>Parking/Traffic/RV's</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce speed to 40 km in the business areas as soon as possible</li></ul>
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<b>Improve Rural Roads</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grading maintenance – increase the program</li> <li>• Rural road grading</li> <li>• Consider using the old School of Arts site in NABIAC as a parking area</li> <li>• Place 'ripple' strips on the highway entering to the town area. Low cost and could happen now</li> </ul>
<b>Beautification/Street Improvements/Village Atmosphere</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can the community complete the bollards around the memorial park if Council provide the bollards?</li> <li>• Water for the park trees</li> </ul>
<b>Shade at parks and playgrounds</b>	
<b>Community Space Masterplan</b>	
<b>Creek Restoration</b>	

## Q & A session

**Q: How can we water the trees around the cricket area as we the community paid for them?**

A: Unfortunately given the dry conditions and current water restriction level we have stopped all outdoor water use on our own parks and have put a stop on all planting.

**Q: What is happening with the NABIAC Showground Draft Management Plan? Where is it up to and furthermore when can we find out about the proposed NABIAC Showground Management Committee that was proposed in the draft document?**

A: The Plan of Management for the NABIAC Showground is almost completed. We have recently been advised by Local Land Services that a native title assessment is required and this is now underway. When that is completed we will be able to finalise the plan of management and other matters relating to the showground.

**Q: Council has been installing shade over children's play equipment. Our new children's play area is in desperate need of shade in summer. Does Council have a plan to install shade over this equipment?**

A: We have 86 playgrounds across the region. NABIAC playground has recently undergone a major renovation, and the area now has a range of activities for young people. There are no plans to provide shade at this park at this stage.

**Q: Why can't MidCoast Council truck water from the ocean to help people fill up their pools during water restrictions?**

A: This isn't something we will be doing.