



## Bonny Hills Progress Association INC.

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PO Box 44  
Bonny Hills 2445

bhpa@bonnyhills.org.au

The General Manager  
Port Macquarie Hastings Council  
PO Box 84  
Port Macquarie 2444

Dear Craig,

Attached is a briefing paper from the Bonny Hills Progress Association for the Mayor's information. This is an update of the briefing we provided you in August 2014.

The BHPA welcomes the opportunity to discuss the issues and opportunities raised with you and the Mayor on 19<sup>th</sup> October in Bonny Hills, in preparation for Council's meeting with the Community on 25<sup>th</sup> October.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. J. Hafey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Phil Hafey  
Secretary  
BHPA  
11 October 2017

# Bonny Hills Progress Association Inc

## Briefing paper for the new PMHC Mayor

11 October 2017

### Introduction

As this is BHPA's first official briefing of the new Mayor, this document has been framed with that in mind. It aims to describe who we are, what we do, our bona fides, and the key issues and opportunities that we will be bringing to the table, as well as our broad fit within the wider PMHC region and its associated community organisations.

### Bonny Hills and its Community

Located 25k south of Port Macquarie on the coast between Lake Cathie and North Haven. Population in round figures is 3000 (2016 Census).

Bonny Hills [BH] has progressed from being a small holiday location in a rural coastal setting for local and tablelands people, to now include a large group of permanent residents who work and go to school in nearby villages and Port Macquarie; in addition to a growing body of retirees.

A highly appreciated feature of the village is the natural and visual amenity which is enhanced by the proximate coastline, native vegetation, three large Reserves, and the restriction of building heights.

Retail and other commercial facilities are dispersed throughout the village, and these include a range of home-based businesses. Two caravan parks plus rental properties provide accommodation for tourists and locals. Also present are sizeable and active volunteer organisations such as the Wauchope-Bonny Hills SLSC, CWA and Rural Fire Services.

### BHPA and its Charter

Bonny Hills Progress Association [BHPA] is an Incorporated body<sup>1</sup> whose membership includes residents of the village of Bonny Hills NSW 2445 and other interested parties, and is represented by a committee elected at the Annual General Meeting held in March – see Appendix 1. The core objectives of BHPA are described in Appendix 2, and centre around delivering the Vision of the Bonny Hills community.

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<sup>1</sup>An incorporated body, BHPA complies with the relevant provisions under the *Associations Incorporations Act 1984*, and the *Associations Incorporation Regulation 1999*, administered by the Director General of the NSW Dept of Fair Trading.

## **BHPA membership**

Membership is by household. Direct circulation of minutes is to around 100 households [includes current and pending members]; with a FaceBook/Twitter/Instagram following of 220; while the Community Newsletter is delivered to all households in Bonny Hills.

## **Bonny Hills Vision**

**The community's clear vision for Bonny Hills is to conserve our surrounding natural environment and wildlife, maintain our village character, promote safe roads, ensure clean water and sustain our community's quality of lifestyle by ensuring well-planned and environmentally sensitive development.**

Further detail is attached as Appendix 3.

## **Key issues for Bonny Hills**

The 2017/18 summary workplan for the BHPA committee is attached as Appendix 4. This outlines the key strategic, reactive and communication issues upon which the BHPA committee is focusing.

The strategic issues identified therein are listed here as:

- 1. Assisting Council with the delivery of actions outlined in Master Plans for the three Reserves in Bonny Hills.**
- 2. Conservation of our environment and wildlife**
- 3. Provision of safe roads and pathways**
- 4. Maintaining the "Village Character" of Bonny Hills, which includes the elements of safety and crime prevention.**
- 5. Ensuring a high standard of water quality in Duchess Creek which flows out onto Rainbow Beach**
- 6. Community engagement**

The desired outcomes and progress to this point are summarised in Appendix 4. We expand on key elements here.

## **Master Plans for the three Bonny Hills Reserves**

BHPA has worked closely with Council staff in relation to these plans – focusing heavily on ensuring community engagement. Council signed off on the final MasterPlan in June 2012, and BHPA, together with Council staff, drew up an agreed action plan.

Significant progress made, with major works being an upgrade to the Rainbow Beach [RB] playground and plantings along the frontal dune; new amenity blocks there and at the Hall Reserve, drainage works at RB Reserve, and new picnic facilities at Bartlett's Reserve [as well as attempting to resolve 'paraglider issues' at this location].

Seeking funds for a half netball court on the Hall Reserve is our next major project.

### **Conservation of our environment and wildlife**

Development of an accepted and integrated Biodiversity strategy means that protection of areas of high value native vegetation/habitat, including wildlife corridors is enhanced because there are soundly based strategic guidelines for developers and consent authorities, leading to cessation of the continual erosion of critical habitat and ecosystems.

Our community (and that of our wider LGA) regard this as being a very high priority - we can demonstrate this with recent hot-button examples. And we contend that it is totally unconvincing to use 'offsets' as part of the solution – sensitive ecosystems cannot be simply transplanted from one location to another.

### **Ocean Drive**

The inadequacy of many sections and intersections along Ocean Drive is a constant source of concern to residents of BH and adjacent towns, particularly at night. Cyclists and pedestrians use sections of this road at their peril.

The compounding impacts on the volume of traffic through BH and Lake Cathie of:

- Expanding population and tourism viz Area 14 and the new school
- Grants Head quarry expansion
- The new Stingray bridge
- The upgrade of Houston Mitchell Drive
- The Bonny Hills bypass is effectively 'off the table'

means that both short and longer-term solutions must lie in an upgrade of Ocean Drive and pathways through BH/LC and beyond.

Safety issues for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists should be identified by a methodical safety AUDIT to determine the priorities.

Longer term we trust that the project contained in Council's 2017-18 Operational Plan:  
*4.4.1.32 Commence corridor planning - Kendall Road - Ocean Drive  
- Hastings River Drive regional road corridor (MR538 / MR600) (multi-year project)*

will lead to tangible improvements in our lifetime.<sup>2</sup>

### Adjacent roads

The walkway between Rainbow Circuit and Rainbow Beach reserve along Beach St is a popular route for pedestrians with fast moving traffic and poorly drained verges along Beach St. A pedestrian pathway on the eastern side of the bridge on Beach Street has been on our agenda for many years.

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<sup>2</sup> We have been advised by John Hanlon that this high-level project will investigate the future form of the entire Ocean Drive corridor including through Bonny Hills. It will look at the road cross-section from property boundary to property boundary considering elements such as travel lanes, parking lanes, footpaths, shared paths, utilities, drainage etc. This project will allow a proposed shared path to be considered in the broader context of Ocean Drive through the entire length of Bonny Hills.

### **Water Quality in Duchess Creek**

This has been a major concern for Bonny Hills residents for many years as the outflow is onto the main beach at RBR, and this Creek runs past the LC-BH Sewage Treatment Plant (STP). We have been working closely with Council staff following the STP augmentation to track water quality changes and possible sources of unpredictable 'spikes' in contamination.

Weekly water sampling is conducted for EPA regulatory purposes, but has proven to be an inadequate means of tracking down the sources of contamination. The possibility of non-human sources was strongly on the radar at one point, but this line of investigation has been discontinued. Leaks from infrastructure have been discounted after a thorough audit and the old holding ponds have been taken off-line.

It continues to remain a mystery, but off-site contamination from run-off following rainfall events is now in the spotlight.

### **Maintaining village character**

Maintaining the natural environment, as discussed above, is a significant component of what the community describes as 'village atmosphere'.

#### **Building codes**

The community is very strongly of the view that building codes need to be strictly adhered to with the aim of preventing "Gold Coast" style development. This applies to building heights in particular.

#### **Safety and crime prevention**

Council Officers and members of the constabulary have been very helpful in working together with BHPA – both on a proactive and reactive basis. But there is an increasing sense that rather than responding to the symptoms, we need to develop a coordinated proactive approach to dealing with graffiti and vandalism across the LGA.

#### **NBN**

While perhaps not a hot button issue there is increasing concern about the timing of NBN roll-out to BH and stories of poor performance.

#### **Community events**

A project we are currently working on with assistance from Council staff is staging a Back to Bonny Hills history event in October 2018 as part of the wider celebrations for the 200th anniversary of Oxley traversing the region.

A recent open-air cinema event at Rainbow Beach staged by Council following discussion with BHPA, proved to be a huge success as a community 'bonding' exercise, drawing people from far and wide.

## **Other issues**

### **Submissions regarding larger developments**

BHPA submissions regarding larger developments in and adjacent to Bonny Hills, (like Area 14) have focussed heavily on “unintended” consequences and impacts on existing infrastructure, amenities and facilities, most of which are struggling to satisfy the current population. The state of Ocean Drive running through BH [and Lake Cathie] is a prime example. Environmental impacts also loom large in these submissions which can be viewed on our website.

### **Requirement for a site to locate light industrial business.**

Effective community consultation is needed in relation to the proposal to have this located on the corner of Houston-Mitchell and Ocean Drives as this location would not be endorsed by many in the community in our view. It has considerable aesthetic and environmental hurdles to overcome.

### **Playing fields and School**

The proposal to have these located adjacent to Area 14 with access off Ocean Drive is in accord with BHPA views but will need adequate shared pathway access.

### **Council's consultative record**

BHPA has had favourable experiences with Council staff as a broad generalisation. There have been exceptions and we are aware that some in the community have been far less impressed. Suffice to say that this is something that needs to be continually worked on (by BHPA as well) and we are aware that the GM is proactive on this front.

## **Relationship with Council and the wider regional perspective**

- a) The numerous linkages between Council's 2017-18 Operational Plan and the BH Vision were covered in BHPA's submission in April 2017. As stated above, broadly speaking we view our working relationship with Council favourably.
- b) An improved working relationship is developing with Lake Cathie Progress Association and we hope to work with them on issues of common interest.

## **Where to from here?**

1. BHPA needs to gain a better understanding of the new Mayor's priorities and proposed modus operandi.
2. Tight budget constraints mean that BHPA has to ensure that BH residents get a reasonable share of the pie and that this share is allocated to the highest priorities - both within BH and in the LGA generally.
3. **BHPA looks forward to discussing the issues and opportunities raised above at the proposed meeting in Bonny Hills on 19<sup>th</sup> October.**

**Roger Barlow and Phil Hafey**  
on behalf of the **BHPA Committee**

12/10/2017

## Appendix 1

### BHPA committee

#### Executive:

President –	Roger Barlow
Vice President –	Kathy Regan
Secretary –	Phil Hafey
Treasurer –	Carmel Power
Publicity Officer –	Pam Barlow

#### Committee members:

Bill Howell  
Helen Smith  
Ian Simpson  
Julie Krige  
Kylie Moss  
Nigel Swift  
Surya Kalari

#### Contact details

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Website [www.bonnyhills.org.au](http://www.bonnyhills.org.au)

FaceBook @bonnyhillsprogressassociation

## Appendix 2

### The core objectives of the BHPA are to:

- Capture and verify the BH community's aspirations and expectations (hereafter referred to as the 'Vision') for the village of BH and its supporting amenities and facilities.
- Pursue the community's Vision for the future of Bonny Hills, striving for balanced, sustainable and planned growth to benefit the well being of the community and environment by communicating this vision to relevant agencies and authorities and representing the BH community's views in relation to
  - Required facilities and amenities and
  - proposed developments that are likely to impact on the broader BH community to ensure that they conform with community expectations and comply with relevant rules and regulations
- Provide feedback to the BH community about the BHPA strategies and progress on actions designed to deliver the Vision
- Encourage initiatives by community members and organisations that conform with and support the BH Vision
- Recognise that there are many other entities that provide valued services to the BH community and that these services are additional and generally complementary to those contained in the BHPA charter

## Appendix 3

# Bonny Hills Community Vision<sup>3</sup>

**The community's clear vision for Bonny Hills is to conserve our surrounding natural environment and wildlife, maintain our village character, promote safe roads, ensure clean water and sustain our community's quality of lifestyle by ensuring well-planned and environmentally sensitive development.**

### **Conservation of our natural environment and wildlife**

- Effective wildlife corridors which also provide green separation between villages: no development on floodplain (which is potentially habitat for various threatened species).
- 'Habitat Protection' zonings in new LEP to ensure long term viability of corridors
- Entire coastal vegetation strip from Bonny Hills to Lake Cathie remains intact, restored and protected, with no development close to or visible from the beach.
- Eco-sensitive tourism development focusing on natural environmental features: (encourage thriving koala population, birdlife etc).

### **Maintaining village character and quality of lifestyle**

- Village atmosphere maintained and scale of development suited to this aim
- Safe and congenial environment for all the community
- Open space for both passive and active recreation, with sporting fields near school
- Encourage development of appropriate facilities and amenities for the diverse range of people in Bonny Hills, particularly younger people<sup>4</sup>

### **Ensuring safe roads for people and wildlife**

- Safe roads throughout, with
  - Pedestrian and cycle routes between Lake Cathie and Bonny Hills linking beaches, lake, wetland areas and open space; as well as to National Parks to the West.
  - No North/South collector road built through wetland corridor.
  - Reduced traffic speeds on Ocean Drive.
  - Safe road 'crossings' as part of wildlife corridors

### **Water quality and management**

- Clean water and beach
- Total water cycle managed, with dual water reticulation systems

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<sup>3</sup>Bonny Hills Community Vision adopted June 2004 and re-endorsed as Bonny Hills Progress Association's charter at 2008 Annual General Meeting (AGM), and since confirmed by a survey of Bonny Hills residents in 2008, and AGM's since then.

<sup>4</sup> Note that there is scope to consider the aggregate set of facilities and amenities across adjacent villages from Lake Cathie, Bonny Hills, North Haven and Laurieton, provided suitable transport links are in place.

## Appendix 4

# Current BH Progress Association Projects

Updated 24/09/17

The Progress Association's work plan 2017/18 provides an overview of the project areas to be managed by Committee members over this period. More information can be found in the Minutes, Briefings, Newsletters and Submissions sections of the BHPA website – [www.bonnyhills.org.au](http://www.bonnyhills.org.au)

## 2017/18 Summary work plan

Key Issue	Desired outcome	Actions required	By whom	By when	Progress to Sept 2017
<b>Strategic issues</b>					
<b>Reserves Master Plans</b>	A proactive approach is important regarding planning what the community wants the three BH Reserves to look like in the future.	Work with Council - the lead agency - to facilitate communication with, and participation by the community regarding delivery of the Plan.  Pursue grant opportunities and volunteer inputs.	Roger, Bill          Julie Pam lan	Report progress to committee monthly	The action plan has been agreed (see website for detail) and the actions are being executed from the highest priority down.  New amenity block at RBR built and the old one demolished. Worked with Council to help resolve safety issues raised in relation to paragliding at Bartlett's Reserve. The next project is a half netball court
<b>Conservation of our natural environment and wildlife</b>	Integrity of the native vegetation and associated wildlife - guaranteed protection via recognised planning instruments	Pursue the development of an LGA wide Biodiversity Strategy by PMHC  <u>Lessons from the Astoria development are that powers can be quite limited in some circumstances</u>	Roger	Report to committee on progress	Council has approved the Vegetation and Koala Maps and from these a Biodiversity Strategy is being developed to assist with planning decisions.  BHPA had representation on the Community Panel associated with this project and continues with a watching brief. -
<b>Maintaining village character and quality of lifestyle</b>	Safe environment providing 'village' amenity and facilities	Proactive interaction with police, PMHC and community. Sporting and	Phil and Bill	On-going	As needs arise – graffiti and vandalism could become a focus – also links to engaging with the community.

<b>Key Issue</b>	<b>Desired outcome</b>	<b>Actions required</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Progress to Sept 2017</b>
<b>Major new development applications/processes in BH and adjacent areas</b>	Complying building heights [see below] That these developments comply with community expectations and Council's and other government agencies' regulations	recreational – linked to Reserves  Area 14 etc – communication plan and watching brief to respond to DAs  An appropriate industrial site developed for this part of the region [BH/LC]	Roger and Phil	Reactive at one level but very important to monitor and report as needed.  By July	A community forum was held at our AGM to provide a starting point for revisiting the community's vision for Bonny Hills given the rate of development we are now experiencing and the likely impacts. <u>Develop an engagement strategy with residents</u>
<b>Grants Head Quarry – increased extraction rate</b>	A reasonable level of impacts on the BH community	Response by BHPA and BH residents with follow up actions as required.		As dictated by Council advice	Monitoring compliance is the focus now. An expansion of footprint within their boundary has caused some angst.
<b>Application for a mining exploration licence</b>	No Mining	In the first instance to be fully informed	Roger	June 2017	Application withdrawn.
<b>Water quality in Duchess creek</b>	Safe levels of microflora and nutrients in DC and its outflow into the ocean on Rainbow Beach. Timely advice on BG Algae levels in D and Saltwater Creeks	Follow up on water quality data with PMHC staff regarding a systematic approach to identifying occasional spikes in contamination and possible health implications. Timely communication to the community.	Roger	Report to committee as data come to hand.	Progress is reported in the BH Newsletters, which are on the website. Current thinking is that spikes in levels are associated with rainfall events and runoff into the creeks. Old soakage ponds have been taken off-line.  Timely communication of spikes in BG Algae results is a parallel focus.

<b>Key Issue</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Actions required</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Progress to Apr 2016</b>
<b>Ensuring safe roads, tracks and pathways for people and wildlife</b>	A safe road and traffic scenario for BH residents and the traveling public + wildlife.  Minimise the impacts of heavy traffic.	The state of Ocean Drive through the village, the increasing traffic load, and safe cycle and walk ways through BH are priorities.  PMHC to be 'kept honest' regarding progress on priorities.	Bill, Phil	Report progress to monthly committee meetings	The BH LATM, part of Council's rolling works program may have been superseded in part by <i>4.4.1.32 Commence corridor planning - Kendall Road - Ocean Drive - Hastings River Drive regional road corridor (MR538 / MR600) (multi-year project) in PMHC 2017-18 Operational Plan.</i> Following up.
<b>Other</b>					
<b>Community Hall Extensions</b>	The primary aim here was to enhance the BH Hall facility with two small meeting rooms.	A feasibility planning and costing phase was the first step. Subsequently this project was 'folded into' the Reserves Master Planning process – see item above	Bill (as part of a community based committee of hall users).	On hold	The need for these extensions should be revisited vis-a-vis other facilities available locally.
<b>Community level sustainable energy initiative</b>	BH community involved in sustainable energy use	Monitor the opportunities with Council and other organisations	Julie, Bill	Report back to Committee as warranted	Based on initiatives being undertaken elsewhere there may be an opportunity for BH community to be more proactive regarding sustainable energy use. This is a watching brief.
<b>Communication</b>					
<b>Discussions with Council and/or Council Officers</b>	Council aware of BH aspirations, issues and concerns, and progress in relation to these.  Align with Council Strategic planning docs	Meet with Councillors and/or Council Officers as required, providing briefing notes beforehand and summary notes following meetings.	Roger and Phil plus other committee members as appropriate	As required, generally on an issue or opportunity basis	The concerns and opportunities for BH are contained in briefing papers to the Mayor and GM of PMHC which is provided on the web site. Interactions with Council have been numerous and are recorded in the BHPA minutes of meetings – see website.
<b>Web site and Social Media</b>	A web site and social media pages centred on BHPA.	The BHPA website and FB page are in place. Maintenance and updating.	Roger	Ongoing	Our Facebook page has been linked to Twitter and Instagram pages. Current following is 217.

<b>Key Issue</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Actions required</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Progress to Apr 2016</b>
<b>Bonny Hills Newsletter articles and press releases</b>	Convey BHPA news and activities to BH residents on a regular basis	Preparation of articles and press releases.	Pam, Kylie	In time for each Newsletter; as needed for press releases	All articles and press releases have been delivered on time. Newsletters can be found on the website.
<b>Emails to BHPA membership</b>	Members kept abreast of issues and opportunities and of BHPA actions in relation to these	Timely email messages out to all current and recent membership.	Phil	As required	This is a routine activity.
<b>Coast and Estuaries Committee</b>	Keep BHPA informed of actions in relation to coastal issues relevant to BH	Timely communication	Phil	Following meetings of this Committee	Now defunct
<b>Liaise on common issues with other Progress Associations</b>	Synchronisation of effort on issues of common interest with other PAs	BHPA has defined the issues relevant to BH. Compare notes with other PAs	Bill and Julie	Ongoing	Lake Cathie PA has been reinvigorated and is collaborating with BHPA on a 'southern focus' for improved infrastructure etc. Awaiting release of UGMS.
<b>Ongoing representation and delivery of BH residents' views</b>	Attempt to represent the broad range of views held by residents on issues and opportunities for Bonny Hills  Encourage community engagement and input  Increased turnover of committee positions	Ensuring an adequate number and spread of members  Holding public meetings or input as the need arises  Proactively engage with the BH community - SLSC  - BH history project  -How to involve young people?  Approach to succession planning developed	Pam and committee members  Roger Surya, Pam  Julie Bill  Helen Kathy Kylie Roger  Pam Surya Kathy  Nigel and Phil	Over the next 12 months  Second half of 2017?  By February  Oct/Nov  September  August	The aim is to have at least 10% of households as members including a range of businesses  Review of community vision and BHPA direction  SLSC and BHPA combining on a project  Hold a BH history event in 2018  Explore options with key people; social media; Open air cinema  The need has heightened with pending resignations in 2018

<b>Key Issue</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Actions required</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Progress to Apr 2016</b>
<b>Fund raising</b>	Businesses engaged with BHPA for betterment of BH	Register started	Nigel Carmel	July	Nil
	Tradies engaged with BHPA for betterment of BH	Register started	Carmel Kylie	July	Nil
	To cover operational costs	Iron man volunteering	Pam to coordinate	May 2017	7.5 intersections manned by 13 people