

EUROBODALLA SHIRE COUNCIL

PUBLIC FORUM

All members of the community who have registered have been advised that they have a **maximum of seven minutes** to put their case.

Ordinary Meeting of Council on **13 September 2022**

Name	Subject/Comments	Presentation	Hybrid
Public Forum – 10.30am			
Trish Hellier	Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting 4.1 Ordinary Meeting held 23 August 2022 4.2 Extraordinary Meeting held on 5 September 2022	Yes	In person
Juliet Ramsay and Sandy Oretaga	NOM 22/015 Sale of Crown Road reserve adjacent lot 6 DP 1171646 Turnbolls Lane Moruya	Yes	In person
Bernie O'Neil (A Better Eurobodalla)	NOM22/014 Responses from Ministers to the Mayor NOM 22/015 Sale of Crown Road reserve adjacent lot 6 DP 1171646 Turnbolls Lane Moruya GRM22/089 Policy Review for Exhibition – September 2022	Yes	In person
Sally Christiansen (Dalmeny Matters)	QON22/004 Dalmeny Land Release Area	Yes	Link
Cath Peachey	PSR 22/037 Hallmark Events Funding	Yes	In person
Dr. Jenny Munro	PSR 22/037 Hallmark Events Funding	Yes	In person

Good morning Mayor Councillors, General Manager, Staff, Gallery and those comfortable Live Streaming from home my name is Patricia Hellier from Batemans Bay

Today I would like to speak on 2 items on the Agenda

First Item Point 4 on the Agenda Confirmation of Minutes 4.1 of Ordinary Meeting 23rd August 2022

I would like to draw your attention to **22/206 and 22/208 MOTION by Clr Worthington. Clr Grace** THAT Council receive a report on the outcome of the consideration of this motion at the LGNSW Conference. I believe there needs some clarification on this motion.

I drawn the Councilors attention to the Live Streaming of this meeting 23rd August 2022

43.18minutes into the meeting **Clr Schutz** stated “I just like it noted that all Delegates are required to report back from conferences they attend so to this point Council will receive a report back on the outcomes of the Conference” to which **Mayor Hatcher** agreed with **Clr Schutz** , **Clr Worthington** then interrupted the **Mayor** stating “I do not agree there is nothing that requires a Delegate to report back on motions in the business paper.

At the **VERY first Council meeting of this term of Council** the criteria of attending **Conferences and Seminar** was provided and I draw the Mayor and ALL Councillors attention to parts of a **Policy that you later ALL adopted that states the following-**

S1.4.4 Councillors attending training seminar and conferences are to provide a **detailed report of the outcome and issues**. Where there are a number of Councillors attending the same conference a **joint report is acceptable** and Councillors not meeting this criteria without reasonable explanation may not receive priority or opportunity for future events.

S1.4.3 “Attendances at Conferences and Seminars is to be determined by resolution of Council. Attendance would normally be limited to **two**. The principal of having a **Councillor and an appropriate staff member would be considered as “best practice”** for attending seminars and conferences, this maybe varied from time to time by a resolution of Council. I will add in the content of this Policy previously it stated that “best practice was that Councillors take turns in attending Conferences”.

S1.5.4 Travel – Car Pool – Councillors must take reasonable steps to **use the most cost effective means of travel**. Councillors should use the **Council pool car fleet** when travelling out of the shire if it is cost effective. Councillors **should share a vehicle when travelling on behalf of Council**.

I believe should Councillors follow **Clr Worthington’s** statement in relation to the LGNSW Conference a **Councillor could quite** easily enjoy the sites of the **Hunter Valley** receive the **minutes of this** Conference and provide the Council with **the mover and seconder and the voting result** without even putting **their bum** on a seat at the **Conference**.

I firmly believe **Clr Schutz statement was correct** and I am not sure **what Clr Worthington meant** when she stated “**we are getting really good at this** – at what - more and more I am seeing certain **Councillors** appear to be making up things “**on the run**”.

It should be noted that the **six conferences** that have been held to date there has only been **two** reports back to Council on **Conferences**. I would like to remind **ALL Councillors these Conferences/Joints/Junkets are Rate Payer Funded**.

My Second Item -4.2 Confirmation of Minutes Extra Ordinary Meeting 5th September 2022 In the absence of the Clayton Minutes ???? Last Wednesday evening 7th September I read the Agenda of todays meeting which listed the Confirmation of the Minutes of the **Extra Ordinary Meeting 5th September 2022** as I could not find the minutes Thursday morning I rang the girls in the Office and I was told they should be up by lunchtime – **by Friday afternoon** I could not find the minutes so I rang again and I was told they would be up late **Friday afternoon** as I type this statement Monday morning they have not appeared on the web site I therefore drawn the Councillors attention to an extract of **2.36 of the COMP** “Copies of agendas and business papers (and I am assuming this would cover minutes) must be published on the **Councillors website** and made available to the **public** at a time that is as close as possible **to the time they are available to Councillors**” therefore I ask the question were these minutes provided to the Councillor?

Given the fact that all the Councillors are aware of what transpired when the **General Manager** called this meeting of the **5th September 2022 into Confidential** and asked those in the Gallery to leave – **I drawn those five Councillors attention** to the Workshop that was held on the **COMP** on **Monday 29th August 2022** there was a discussion about “disorderly conduct in the gallery” and **Mr Jeff Phillips** stated words to the affect “**a person can not be barred from the gallery**” - I knew the process of confidential and I knew due to the fact that a **Councillor** could not attend this meeting in person there would be a requirement for **Live Streaming should the COMP be adopted** – and yet **not one Councillor questioned the fact** “well how do we go into Confidential and yet ask those in the gallery to leave?” Councillor I will leave you with that point for “**food for thought**”.

Trish Hellier

Discussion Points for Public Access Forum 14 September

From Juliet Ramsay and Sandra Oretego
Swan Ridge Place, Moruya

Crown Road Reserve Adjacent to Lot 9 DP 1171646 Turnbolls Lane

Land Values

The owner of Lot 6 has been offered the price of \$3.9 per square metre** for the land while neighbours along the opposite boundary would need to pay the equivalent of our land value, around \$140 a square metre. Furthermore, you have encouraged the owner of Lot 6 to apply for purchasing the land rather than pursuing a fair and rational procedure.

We suggest the ESC prepare a submission to the NSW Premier, Minister for Planning Crown Lands, as this is broad state issue that has great disadvantage to many rate payers and needs to be changed.

Reference to the General Managers Response:

You claim it is not good design to have open space between existing residential neighbourhoods isolated and unplanned. We disagree with the arguments you have raised, as follows.

1. **More houses**, the road reserve land will provide the equivalent of 5 house blocks with access, that is around 5 more than the 97 in the agreed DA for Lot 6. Whereas the “Brae’ development, prior to 2018, had only 57 house blocks, including the road reserve.
2. **Increased planned areas of green space in the subdivision**, this is a strange claim when you are proposing the removal of 1 ha of green space that will result in the destruction of 4 outstanding trees, destruction of a green buffer and destruction of an excellent walking route that could offset the walking on Turnbolls Lane, soon to be impacted by the Lot 6 development. The only recreation area offered in Lot 6 plan is a path around the drainage reserve.
3. **Infrastructure sewers** and infrastructure still need to be laid to new blocks in the road reserve.
4. **An unplanned corridor provides a risk of crime, rubbish dumping and anti-social behaviour.** This is a loose argument, unproved, unevidenced and not relevant. This road reserve is not a narrow corridor and is one of many in Eurobodalla Shire. It will provide environmental and recreational health benefits local residents within a safe environment.
5. **ROSS open space strategy** adopted in 2018, that you quote — ‘open space needs to be assessed in terms of its existing and likely future function’, then you provide 3 recommendations based on what has not been assessed, not explored and not taken into account.
6. **You conclude that the road reserve should be closed and potentially purchased by the developer.** This enables the land to be bought for under \$3.9 a sq. metre then on sold to the developer for considerable profit. This is an anomaly from Crown Lands that is highly unfair to all NSW rate payers including the Swan Ridge Place neighbours, who would gladly purchase the reserve for that same cost.

* The GIPA documents validating the pricing can be provided on request

7. If the land is sold to the owner of Lot 6 it is likely be left as a wasteland until it is developed, thus having no care and vulnerable to as you have stated, crime and antisocial behaviour.
8. It is interesting that you are liaising with Crown Land for a mutually agreeable outcome without any consideration of liaising with the rate-paying neighbours of the reserve.
9. The current crown land managers (the Swan Ridge neighbours) have been undertaking, tree risk management, bushfire mitigation, regular mowing, slashing and weed control and have done so for 5 years without a finger of assistance from Council or Crown Lands.
10. Council is ignoring environmental, recreational and social benefits and have openly encouraged the owner of Lot 6 to acquire the land at grossly unfair land values. The reserve will also need the required suite of environmental studies that were not included for Lot 6 DA.
11. Swan Ridge residents believe they can manage the land into the future and at the very least, if the reserve becomes Council property, Council could allow community management for around five years and then have it reviewed.

Please respond to the following questions:

- Although Moruya needs more housing blocks, the reserve will only provide around 5 additional blocks to the 97 blocks of Lot 6. Does Council support the outcome of 5 additional house blocks with the loss of a green buffer between a mass of houses and a walking, cycling route that will benefit the extended neighbourhood, public health and the Moruya environment?
- Is Council continuing to support the sale of road reserve to Lot 6 neighbour knowing that the price is 40 times cheaper than the price offered to existing neighbours, creating a grossly unfair pricing discrepancy.
- If Crown Lands decides not to sell the reserve, will Council support the road reserve staying as a public reserve?

11 September 2022

ABE Public Forum Presentation 13th September 2022 Regarding NOM22/014 Responses from Ministers to the Mayor, NOM22/015 Sale of Crown Road Reserve Adjacent Lot 6 DP 1171646 Turnbolls Lane Moruya and GMR22/089 Policy Review for Exhibition - September 2022

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to address Council this morning regarding **NOM22/014 Responses from Ministers to the Mayor, NOM22/015 Sale of Crown Road Reserve Adjacent Lot 6 DP 1171646 Turnbolls Lane Moruya and GMR22/089 Policy Review for Exhibition - September 2022.**

I am presenting today as the Co-convenor of A Better Eurobodalla (ABE), a community forum working to achieve open, accountable and responsive government in Eurobodalla.

ABE has applied our principles of good governance to today's agenda, and offers the following feedback on 3 items.

1) NOM22/014 Responses from Ministers to the Mayor

This Notice of Motion calls on Council to amend its current practices in order to allow public release of responses received from Mayoral correspondence dealing with Eurobodalla advocacy issues sent to State and Commonwealth Ministers.

ABE supports the public release of Ministerial responses to such Mayoral correspondence, as it will provide the Eurobodalla community with valuable feedback which can help our community assess how other levels of government are responding to important issues which affect the Eurobodalla region. This will facilitate a better informed and more engaged community, who can more effectively acquit their electoral responsibilities.

The release of Ministerial responses will assist greater transparency and accountability in decision-making, so ABE supports NOM22/014.

2) Notice of Motion 22/015 Sale of Crown Road Reserve Adjacent Lot 6 DP 1171646 Turnbolls Lane Moruya

The Notice indicates that:

1. Council advise Crown Lands that it withdraws previously stated support for the sale of the Road Reserve W633092 into private ownership.
2. Council staff prepare a report to Councillors exploring options for the land to be transferred to Council management for the use of open space and recreation, and as an active transport connection for South Moruya residents, including the future residents of the 96-lot residential development of Lot 6 DP 1171646.

ABE has presented to Council multiple times voicing concern over continuing alienation of public assets (including the Batemans Bay Community Centre, Coopers Island Road and Clarke Street Broulee), as well as regarding the Turnbolls Lane Subdivision which adjoins the road reserve under consideration today (26th October 2021). It is encouraging to see a NoM which addresses these important issues.

ABE considers that this Motion presents a valuable opportunity for Councillors to take a proactive and constructive role in delivering improved planning outcomes which will enhance a significant residential development project in the Moruya area.

The reasons put forward by the General Manager's response for not supporting this NoM do not stack up. Given that Council has received a "categorical" refusal from Crown lands regarding disposal of Crown Road Reserve W633092 it is surprising and possibly futile for Council to maintain its current position regarding the sell-off of this land. It could be construed that the position put forward by the GM is more supportive of developer's desired outcome rather than the community's.

Further, the very reasons put forward from the GM's response indicate what further work could reasonably be undertaken.

From the GM's response:

However, the proposal to retain or purchase Road Reserve W633092 to be used as open space is not based on recreation planning considerations, and is not recommended, for the following reasons:

- It has not been assessed in relation to the wider open space and recreation network, the needs of the broader community and how open space at this particular location is a good 'fit'

The use of the 4 years old Recreation & Open Space Strategy (ROSS) as a rationale for not pursuing the actions outlined in this Notice of Motion is bizarre - just because a parcel of land has not been assessed in the past does not imply it cannot be assessed in the future. In fact, that's what should happen now in response to the current situation and the Notice of Motion.

(GM's response)

- the benefits and proposed uses of the land as open space have not been explored to support purchase or acquisition by Council

Again, that work should now be undertaken to inform Council's decisions

(GM's response)

- the proposal does not take into account open space located in close proximity, or consider why this would be the most appropriate location for open space within the 96 lot residential subdivision (DA0632/20) housing development, approved in February 2022.

Well, yet again, do the work and provide Council with the information to make an informed decision.

The ROSS should be used as an aid to decision-making, rather than a prescriptive straitjacket which precludes new ideas or initiatives. It would also be worthwhile to review the current utility of the ROSS in the light of the post-bushfire and pandemic world in which the Eurobodalla Shire is now operating – business as usual is not a viable option.

The recreation, open space and active transport benefits of the actions put forward in NOM22/015 for both the Turnbolls Lane community as well as the wider Moruya community are obvious, and Councillors should support this community-enhancing proposal.

The reasons put forward by the GM to not support this Notice of Motion are not based on the work that should be undertaken to support such a position. ABE therefore supports NoM22/015, and urges Council to withdraw its previous support for selling off the public road reserve W633092 at Turnbull's Lane Moruya.

3) GMR22/089 Policy Review for Exhibition - September 2022

ABE notes that this agenda item from the General Manager exhibits a fundamental disjunct between the policies listed in the "Recommendation" section and the "Background" section – none of the policies listed in the Recommendation actually appear in the Background analysis.

ABE trusts that this glaring disparity is not indicative of the level of attention which has informed the overall policy review process. (It is not clear whether this disparity is advertent or inadvertent?).

ABE recommends that this agenda paper should be withdrawn until a coherent and consistent account of the policies under review is presented for consideration by Councillors.

Thank you for your attention.

Bernie O'Neil
Co-Convenor
A Better Eurobodalla

Dalmeny Matters Public Forum presentation: Council meeting 13/09/22

Good Morning,

I'm speaking in relation to the Questions on Notice about the Dalmeny Land Release Area on behalf of Dalmeny Matters.

I would like to ask some additional questions about Community Engagement during the planning stages, a Dalmeny Development Control Plan and concerns about Sewer Services in Dalmeny.

Question 1 asks "what engagement will be involved to allow the community input into the details of the DCP?"

From Council's response it would appear that Council does not intend to undertake any more consultation prior to exhibiting a draft.

To date, consultation has included an

- online survey with only 33 responses
- and sessions held on the 9th and 10th of December.

At the time, we raised concerns with Council staff person Angie Radford that the sessions were right in the lead up to the busy holiday period, when many people would be away, and held on a weekday.

She confirmed that there would be more consultation opportunities at a more suitable time of year. This has not happened.

The 2 workshop sessions were brief and did not include information which the community could consider or comment on. The consultants had not had time to become familiar with the site, and had no concepts of any kind to present. They were unable, at that early stage, to answer basic questions from the community members present.

At the walk on Dec 10th, Council staff told residents that they would answer questions being raised but so far this has not happened.

Is this all the input we will be able to have, prior to a draft plan being formally exhibited? Considering half the surveys completed by residents in relation to this development were opposed to it happening- how is this feedback going to influence development plans?

We understand that the planning consultants hired by Council will be paid a lump sum specifically for consultation and engagement, as part of their fee structure. Consultation is happening on a regular basis with developers- why is the community not considered an equal stakeholder?

Will Council commit to providing more meaningful consultation opportunities to the community, not just the developers?

Dalmeny Development Control Plan

In regard to question 2 about whether Council intends to create a development control plan for Dalmeny Village as a whole, we would point out that there are currently DCP's for

- Narooma
- Bodalla
- Batemans Bay
- Moruya
- Tilba
- Mogo and
- Nelligen

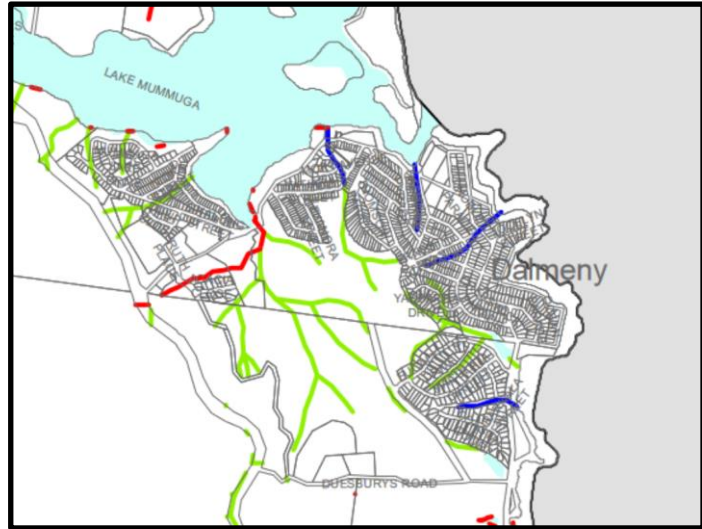
Development Control Plans assist home and land owners to make development applications and guide the placement of facilities and services.

If Council extended the scope of the Draft DCP to include the whole of Dalmeny this may help identify opportunities for growth within the existing boundaries of the village, which would better align with the strategies for growth in the Southeast and Tablelands Regional Plan and protect biodiversity.

Is it efficient and logical to adopt a Development Control Plan for a portion of Dalmeny only? Separate controls would only increase the feeling that this new subdivision is being tacked on to the edge of our community.

Council also committed some time ago to making a Character Statement from all villages, hamlets and suburbs in the [Local Strategic Planning Statement](#), (pg 27) as a *short term* action. This has not yet taken place. We feel that a Character Statement for Dalmeny Village would be very helpful in informing the planning of the development area.

Will Council fulfill this commitment by consulting with the community to develop a Character Statement, as part of the planning process for the Land Release Area?



Regarding Sewer Services:

When will Council update the community about the Draft Estuaries Management Plan? We have heard nothing since our submission was sent in January. This draft plan had been completed without considering how development in Dalmeny would impact the lake.

Surely this must be addressed urgently, if planning is to be done in a responsible manner.

Councillors will need to be aware of the risks before they consider whether to approve the Dalmeny development.

Will Council commit to undertaking proper assessments of the risks to the lake as part of the planning process, as soon as possible?

Clearing and development in the catchment area will dramatically increase the load of stormwater runoff into our estuaries and will also increase pressure on the sewage system.

In Eurobodalla, our salt water and our fresh water are our greatest assets. Yet we still pump secondary treated effluent out to sea.

If we look at Council's [Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy](#) we see that:

- the Kianga sewage treatment plant has **insufficient** capacity to treat current holiday season loads
- wet-weather sewage spills are expected to be a **1 in 5 years event**.

We have already seen 4 spills into Mummaga so far this year - all outside the holiday peak

It feels as if Council are glossing over the spills into Mummaga Lake. This hardly makes us feel confident that the health of the lake and our community is being given serious consideration. This is the water our kids swim in. It's where we fish. It is a sensitive ecosystem that we have a responsibility to protect.

Council has promised that the 'modelling' for a future sewerage system will look at population growth, including the proposed Dalmeny expansion. But the system is already failing.

Will Council commit to modelling a system that better caters to peak demand, extreme weather events and considers the treatment of sewerage up to a tertiary level to minimise environmental impacts?

Thank you



Submission to Eurobodalla Shire Council Meeting – 13 September 2022

Consideration of Agenda Item PSR22/037 - HALLMARK EVENT FUNDING

The Narooma Oyster Festival has celebrated the NSW South Coast's classic indigenous food, the rock oyster, as well as the people and produce of the Eurobodalla, on the first weekend in May, for the last 15 years.

The festival was an initiative of the Narooma Chamber of Commerce to drive the visitor economy at a traditionally quiet time of year. Countless community members and small businesses have supported this event over a long period of time, and I congratulate the Chamber for their vision and leadership.

The Narooma community has been successful in leveraging the rock oyster as part of its destination brand building, and it punches above its weight in driving the year-round visitor economy to Eurobodalla.

As this regional event grew in scale and complexity, a new not-for-profit company, Narooma Rocks, was established in 2019 to develop a strategic plan for the delivery of the festival. Its volunteer Board members are drawn from across the Shire.

The festival has grown in stature to arguably southern NSW largest event.

Oyster farm gates have popped up in the Shire and Australia's Oyster Coast Ltd, a young company launched at the 2014 festival, is now a major oyster marketer and local employer in the Bay.

The festival's strategy is built around showcasing the rock oyster from the estuaries of the NSW South Coast in particular, engaging with the oyster industry, educating the consumer and media about merroir/provenance, and linking it to contemporary cuisine.

Some of region's finest chefs have participated alongside the country's most eminent chefs including Colin Fassnidge, Sean Connolly, Jordan Toft, Paul Farag, Corey Costelloe, Stephanie Alexander, Sam Kane, Courtney Roulston, Julie Goodwin and Maggie Beer to name a few.

The festival is home to the Australian Oyster Shucking Championships and Australia's Biggest Oyster competition, both of which have continued to generate national and international media coverage over many years. We are delighted to support Batemans Bay oyster farmer and reigning Australian Oyster Shucking Champion, Jim Yiannaros, at the World Championships in Galway later this month.

2022 Narooma Oyster Festival

A full report of the 2022 oyster festival has been provided to Council. As a fully ticketed event, supported by independent data gathered in collaboration with the Council, our evaluation is robust.

- More than 10,000 people attended in 2022, a 50% increase on 2021
- 92% reported the festival was the sole reason for travel
- 77.5% were visitors from outside our region
- Visitors reported a 3-night average length of stay – this has been consistent over two years
- Accommodation occupancy was second only to 2022 School/Anzac/Easter holidays
- Media reach was over 19 million
- In Narooma alone, more than \$800,000 in additional discretionary spending occurred that weekend compared to weekends either side (SpendMapp)
- 18.2 FTE jobs were created in the Shire because of the festival (Economy ID event impact calculator)
- The festival's direct spend in the region was approximately \$550,000
- \$280,000 contributed in-kind and from volunteers.

It's an incredible outcome for the region and that's before you consider the economic impact for the oyster industry and the other producers, craft brewers, distillers, wine makers and local businesses and community groups who participated. The intangible benefits in terms of destination branding, reconciliation and community pride are immeasurable.

Festival Sustainability

The economic benefits of the oyster festival and the destination positioning, accrue to the regional economy, not to the organisation that delivers it.

The Narooma Oyster Festival's sustainability is tied to Narooma Rocks' three-year plan to develop an iconic tourism attraction, the Rock Oyster Country Gateway Centre, a 'cellar door' to showcase NSW rock oyster estuaries and offer educational and tourism activities.

The plan is to attract visitors to the region year-round, assist in dispersal during peak periods and within three years to generate enough revenue to support the organisation to retain core expertise to plan and deliver the Narooma Oyster Festival annually.

The Gateway Centre proposal is well developed, and discussions are on-going with NSW Government to find a suitable home and funding stream to support its implementation.

Hallmark Event Funding

When the Council's Events Strategy was adopted in 2019, I expressed concerns at that time that the level of resourcing available to implement the Strategy was insufficient. The Covid pandemic, the war in Ukraine, inflationary pressures, fuel and labour shortages were not on the radar.

Little did we know at that time that the Oyster Festival would experience 200% growth in demand within three years.

Public funding is critical to support large festivals, particularly in the regions.

It is more common in the major cities but there are many examples where local Councils have recognised the opportunity and they have taken on a major role.

In fact, I am not aware of any of the top 20 food and wine festivals around the country (a ranking which the Narooma Oyster Festival has regularly enjoyed in the F&B media) that don't have significant public funding.

Given the extraordinary benefits and opportunities this festival presents to the entire Eurobodalla Shire, it is not reasonable to rely on the community to underwrite a festival of this scale and complexity.

Narooma Oyster Festival is recognised as the Hallmark event of the Shire and we wear that badge proudly.

Councillors will today consider supporting the Narooma Oyster Festival as a Hallmark Event for the Shire for the next three years. The funding envelope proposed is \$20,000 per year, and an additional \$15,000 for traffic management. This is significantly less in real terms to the 2019 offer. Some of you may not be aware that Council used to provide the traffic management to the festival (as is outlined as a deliverable for Hallmark Event status in the Council's Event Strategy).

When I briefed Councillors in May this year, I suggested an investment of at least \$100,000 was required from Council. I advised that the future of the festival is in serious jeopardy as Narooma Rocks contends with unprecedented demand and exponential growth in infrastructure, labour, and transport costs.

Only five years ago the event budget was \$100,000. In 2023, we expect the budget to be more than \$700,000 to deliver the festival to the same standard as 2022. Scaling back is not a serious option given the sheer numbers attending and significant annual overheads remain. It would also cut off NSW government funding that is tied to the festival to expanding and growing.

The organisation needs to find core funding of approximately \$250k per year to cover the fixed running costs, to maintain our now considerable assets, and to retain a small part time team of specialists.

If Narooma Rocks cannot attract sufficient public funding, the Narooma Oyster Festival will need to hibernate at best, until such time that there is adequate funding to deliver the event.

This loss of momentum would present a significant risk to the future of the festival, its relationships and its budding international status. It will impact:

- Local businesses
- Local oyster farmers
- Brand reputation & trademarks
- Community engagement and resilience
- The regional economy will be at least \$3 million poorer in 2023 and 18.2 FTE jobs will not be created.

Festivals are the lifeblood of the community and contribute huge economic and social value.

But there are very few indigenous products like the rock oyster, and even fewer festivals that differentiate a destination from all those other destinations competing for the visitor dollar.

I would argue the Eurobodalla's marketing budget would see a better return if it worked to own the 'rock oyster space' and leveraged this local gift to stand out from a crowded and competitive tourism space.

I urge Council to work with us on a sustainability plan to retain this event. There are many models, and it is not sufficient to just to agree to write to government agencies seeking event support for regional events.

While I admire Councillors enthusiasm to get behind new events, I would urge you to reflect on the fact that the Narooma Oyster Festival has taken fifteen years to achieve this success.

It takes time to build a brand and following of this significance.

I urge you to work harder to retain this wonderful event in Eurobodalla.

Cath Peachey
Chair
Narooma Rocks

13 September 2022

Submission for Eurobodalla Council Chamber Tuesday 13 September 2022

Consideration of Agenda Item PSR22/037 – Hallmark Event Funding

It gives me great pleasure to speak today in support of Narooma Rocks and their main event, the Narooma Oyster Festival. I do so in my role as President of the Narooma & District Chamber of Commerce & Tourism.

Cath Peachey has produced a comprehensive summary of the outcomes of the 2022 festival. I congratulate Cath and her board and I do not intend to reiterate the benefits to the economy so clearly outlined.

I have been involved with the Oyster Festival since the first in 2008 as a sponsor, until my retirement in 2015, and, thereafter, as a volunteer. The community spirit and camaraderie amongst the volunteers is exceptional and that benefits both the festival and community.

The festival provides an opportunity for local industry, produce, art, crafts and involvement of the schools.

The event has been funded primarily by the local community since its inception. There is no lack of passion from the community. I implore Eurobodalla Council to recognise the special qualities of the festival and its significance to the whole LGA.

I understand from a range of accommodation providers that the town is heavily booked for next year's Oyster Festival. Narooma can't possibly accommodate all the visitors in Narooma and many are willing to stay in other centres. The festival has invested in buses for the last few years (with support from locals) to help get the visitors out to the surrounding towns. The buses have been well patronised from Batemans Bay in the north to Bermagui in the south. There is scope to grow across the whole LGA.

I want to stress Cath's report that of festival visitors

- 55% visited other local venues
- 37% visited nearby towns
- 29% shopped in Narooma

Our business community relies on this economic boost. I think that I am correct in saying that Spendmapp data revealed that \$800,000 more was spent in Narooma on the Friday/Saturday of the festival compared to other weekends in May. This is remarkable considering that tickets and accommodation were largely pre-paid before visitors arrived.

In conclusion, I feel compelled to refer to the amazing job that Cath Peachey has done since 2012 in running the festival with the Narooma Chamber of Commerce until 2020 when Narooma Rocks was established for that purpose. The 2020 Festival was cancelled due to Covid and the subsequent events in 2021 and 2022 were exponentially bigger, more successful, despite Covid restrictions, and more costly to run as Cath explained.

This festival now needs skilled professionals to run it and public funds to back it. The local community will step up and play its part. Please give us your support.