

**EUROBODALLA SHIRE COUNCIL**

**PUBLIC FORUM**

**Ordinary Meeting of Council on 24 June 2025**

Please refer to the minutes of the [Council Meeting](#) for outcomes of the agenda items.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Presentation Provided</b>
Tony Jackson, Tuross Community Gardens	FCS25/035 – Adoption of the Delivery Program 2025-29, Resourcing Strategy 2025-35 and Operational Plan 2025-26, including making of the Rates for 2025-26	No
Neil Gow	FCS25/035 – Adoption of the Delivery Program 2025-29, Resourcing Strategy 2025-35 and Operational Plan 2025-26, including making of the Rates for 2025-26	Attached

## **Neil Gow Public Forum presentation to ESC Public Forum 24 June 2025**

Good afternoon, wallawani, Mr Mayor, councilors, General Manager and staff, and observers both in the chamber and watching the webcast.

I have made a submission to Council in relation to several draft documents made available for public comment at the last council meeting, viz the Draft Delivery Program 2025-29, the draft Operational Plan 2025/26, and the draft Fees and Charges 2025/26 document. I acknowledge that responses to my questions have been published in the agenda paper for today's meeting, along with responses to the concerns of six other submitters, for the consideration of councillors. I wish to speak briefly about two matters.

First, I wish to thank council for recommending that the draft Fees and Charges 2025/26 document be amended to eliminate the requirement for those groups caring for community gardens on ESC land pay a fee which was proposed to be \$626 per annum. In the past the payment of such a fee also attracted an annual administration fee of about \$75, which one can presume will not longer apply if the document is approved by Council. The removal of the fee will assist in expanding activity in the existing gardens, and possibly encourage other community groups to start new gardens. Of course these groups still have to maintain the general areas of the gardens apart from the individual plots, pay for water usage, insurance requirements as per Council's Community Garden Policy and maintain fencing and other minor infrastructure, but the removal of the annual fee will be of great assistance. Thank you.

The other matter I wish to address is not progressing as well. The Longbeach and Maloney's Beach communities have, for many years, enjoyed traversing the informal one kilometre pathway running on council land (Lot 131 DP222540) between the southern boundaries of the houses on the south side of North Cove Road and the cliff top which leads steeply down to the beach, which is not passable for pedestrians at high tide. The pathway is unformed but level, clearly seen and free from vegetation and trip hazards. At the Longbeach end there is a short, steeper section from the beach level at the eastern end of Bay Road to the path at the top. (See below)



The western end of the clifftop walk where the steps are shown by the dotted line

This rough track was upgraded by community members with council knowledge about 30 years ago by benching about 30 steps and, at their own cost, facing them with timber sleepers to limit erosion and provide a firm, level surface for walking. In 2023 Council removed the wooden facings of the steps following an apparent complaint about safety concerns. This was done without any community consultation.



The current state of the benched steps (without wooden facings)

Soon afterwards concerned citizens collected and presented a petition of some 300 signatures to Council and Mr Steve Ranck addressed that matter in Public Forum in August 2023. The petition was noted by Council, but no action was forthcoming. Members of the two relevant community associations met at the site with a Council representative in August 2024, but no response was received. Another meeting with the associations was held in March this year and at this stage no proposal has been received from Council, but we have been assured that someone is working on it!

In the meantime, the steps' track has continued to be used by community members and visitors to access the beautiful clifftop walk for their passive recreation and to enjoy the views across the Bay and to visit friends in both communities and even accessing the southern end of the Murramarang Coast Walk at Maloney's Beach.

Your agenda paper for today's meeting, in relation to my enquiry states, "community members advised that replacing the steps in close proximity to the original location is unsafe and would require a review of environmental factors due to the requirement to remove multiple trees. The options for alternative access will be investigated in 2025-26



period. Contact details for divisional manager Carlyle Ginger to be provided to the submitter.”

I attended the most recent meeting with Council representatives in March this year and can confirm that, at that meeting, no community association representative "advised that replacing the steps in close proximity to the original location is unsafe “. On the contrary, their repair as walkway steps or replacement with manufactured stairs, as used elsewhere in the Shire, and meeting the appropriate Australian Standard, would increase safety for all users. Either solution would be acceptable.



Walkway steps, Moruya Transfer depot.



Beach access stairs South Durras

If the existing route was repaired, very few, not multiple, small trees may have to be removed.

A search of the AHIMS database indicated there is no aboriginal heritage site in the steps area, and the area has been previously disturbed to construct sewerage easement adjacent to the fence lines on council land. This easement is, of course, clear of vegetation.

We are keen to discuss and progress a solution to this ongoing community problem and would be prepared to assist with volunteer labour and consider seeking grant funding to achieve a sensible outcome as soon as possible.

We would be pleased to show you the area if you cared to visit but remember to bring your walking shoes! Thank you for your attention.