



# **Summary of submissions**

Cape Byron Preliminary Visitor

Master Plan

Cape Byron State Conservation Area

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The Cape Byron Preliminary Visitor Master Plan was exhibited for public comment from 13 February to 27 March 2017.

This report presents the planning and consultation phases and a summary of the comments received.

## Introduction

In October 2015 National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) commissioned Context Landscape Design Pty Ltd to prepare the Cape Byron Preliminary Visitor Master Plan (Master Plan) that would integrate into the broader master plan concepts identified within the Byron Shire Council's Byron Bay Town Centre Masterplan.

After targeted consultation, the preliminary master plan was placed on exhibition to enable feedback from the community and interested others. This report summarises the 43 submissions received by NPWS for the Cape Byron Preliminary Master Plan, Cape Byron State Conservation Area.

## Planning and consultation road map



## Feedback received

A total of 43 submissions were received, including four from community groups or non-government organisations.

This report presents the range of feedback received in a summarised format.

## What you thought about the master plan proposals?

Feedback on specific master plan proposals centred around: walking tracks and lookout upgrades, transport, parking and traffic arrangements.

**Table 1 Feedback received on Cape Byron Preliminary Master Plan proposals**

Objective of the plan	What you thought about the proposal
<p>Walking track and lookout upgrades: To transform the existing walking tracks, lookouts and rest areas into a unique, world-class walking experience in an area with outstanding scenic qualities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority of walking track upgrade from Brooke Drive to lighthouse much appreciated.</li> <li>• Love it! Especially closing the road to the lighthouse, expanding the carpark and making the walk a better experience. 100% support.</li> <li>• Very important to extend the walking path from Brooke Drive to Lighthouse Rd. Create a safe way for pedestrians/prams to access that way. Improved footpaths a great idea.</li> <li>• I think the whole plan and concept is great. It will certainly solve the traffic problem and give the visitors a wonderful opportunity to enjoy their lighthouse visit and beautiful walks.</li> <li>• Fisherman's Lookout upgrade is excellent; this is a place I suggest to many people to visit after they leave the Cape as well as the 300m walk through the Palm Forest.</li> <li>• We believe that this Master Plan will help guide tourism in the right direction, providing meaningful experiences for visitors, directing energy toward activities which benefit all members of the community and encouraging responsible tourism.</li> <li>• Walkways should provide level ground and guard rails.</li> <li>• There is little need for a new walking path between the lookouts as proposed. This is not supported. Let's constrain unnecessary environmental impacts.</li> </ul>
<p>Shuttle bus: Provide a shuttle bus system from the Arakwal Cultural Centre to the Lighthouse Precinct.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even though the proposal for electric shuttles buses is admirable, I'm concerned that with the increased number of tourists accessing the lighthouse, we won't be guaranteed a place on a bus.</li> <li>• All good, love the shuttle bus idea. No cars at the lighthouse is a great idea...make shuttle buses surfboard friendly and maybe use buses to go to and from surf instead of needing to park.</li> <li>• Serious safety issues and street congestion will arise from the buses.</li> <li>• Upgrading walkways and the introduction of solar-powered shuttle buses will increase visitor accessibility, while cultural and environmental sensitivities will ensure Byron's natural beauty and rich cultural heritage is protected for years to come.</li> <li>• Do people want a bus leaving every two minutes for the lighthouse? Will you be able to park all of the cars at the bus terminus?</li> <li>• I support the idea of limiting access to the lighthouse precinct to shuttle buses provided that provision is made to allow people who are restricted to a wheelchair to gain access to the precinct.</li> <li>• A regular bus service will see pedestrians clustered in groups going up and down the steep lighthouse pathway, then at Wategos spilling from footpaths onto the roadway and blocking traffic as they access buses.</li> </ul>

Objective of the plan	What you thought about the proposal
<p>Parking: Spaces at top car park removed and converted to lawn and ten spaces removed at the lower car park, with retention of limited spaces adjacent to the Head Lighthouse Keeper's cottage for NPWS staff, lessee tenants, overnight visitors and some disability access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The carpark should be closed immediately, and we can then have a pedestrian-friendly lighthouse precinct.</li> <li>• Happy to see no cars.</li> <li>• Concern is the access and parking for the Marine Rescue members.</li> <li>• Wategos paid parking changes are illogical. Decreased access for surfers.</li> <li>• Shuttle bus to lighthouse a good idea. Perhaps also keep carparks at the top and people have a choice.</li> <li>• Preventing private cars from parking at the lighthouse will immediately see them looking to park nearby.</li> </ul>
<p>Traffic arrangements: NPWS will close public road access to the lighthouse and work with Council to implement changes, address parking, signage and traffic flow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think the whole plan and concept is great. It will certainly solve the traffic problem and give the visitors a wonderful opportunity to enjoy their lighthouse visit and beautiful walks.</li> <li>• Will be sad to lose driving access to the cape which we use often. Unless going early/late now parking is a problem.</li> <li>• Happy to see no cars.</li> <li>• I welcome the plan to remove car access and introduce a minibus!</li> <li>• It would appear that the proposed shuttle bus might not, in fact, give Cape Byron the convenient and environmentally acceptable transport system we all seek. Nor will it give Wategos beachgoers or residents the relief from people searching for a cheap car park.</li> <li>• Limiting access to the up road via a gate will cause massive traffic diversions to Wategos Beach. The lack of car access will have to be very prominently displayed at Clarke's Beach and earlier!</li> </ul>

Generally, comments received demonstrated strong support for improving the visitor experiences on the headland by upgrading walking experiences and protecting fragile environmental features, addressing traffic and parking congestion. Submissions that did not support proposals mostly identified concern's that will be considered and addressed during detailed design and implementation examples include specific walking track details, traffic management, signage and the lighthouse shuttle bus system.

## What other themes were raised during feedback?

Several submissions identified general themes for consideration in the overall design and implementation of the plan are addressed below.

**Table 2 NPWS responses to management themes raised in feedback**

Themes raised	How NPWS responded
<p>Disabled access</p>	<p>NPWS will consider how best to provide access for disabled visitors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visitor's dependant on vehicle access will have access to three disabled car spaces at the lighthouse</li> <li>• ensuring the shuttle service can accommodate disability access.</li> </ul>

Themes raised	How NPWS responded
Reference to Wategos	<p>NPWS has included a Wategos destination page to address traffic and parking concerns.</p> <p>NPWS will work with Council to improve coordination of the walking track at Wategos.</p> <p>The Cape Byron Master Plan is consistent with the Byron Town Centre master plan to improve signage and pedestrian experiences encouraging a cultural shift and relieving traffic congestion.</p>
Lack of utilities/amenities e.g. rubbish bins, drinking fountains, seating and shade	<p>In response to a waste audit, NPWS has increased the number of bins currently provided, while continuing to support positive trends in visitor recycling.</p> <p>NPWS has installed a new drinking fountain with water bottle filling station.</p> <p>NPWS has installed additional shaded seating at the Cape Café.</p> <p>The master plan supports the installation of appropriate facilities to improve visitor amenity while considering heritage aspects of the site.</p>
Accuracy of visitation data	<p>Data was compiled from several available sources, analysed by experts in the field of tourism and traffic and is considered adequately robust to inform the master plan proposals.</p> <p>Construction of new features will be subject to detailed environmental assessment and design prior to commencement. Transport elements will be subject to a detailed exploration of service requirements prior to implementation.</p>
Safety of pedestrians, cars, buses	<p>Safety is considered a priority of the master plan process and has been an underlying driver in providing separated walking tracks and paths, particularly on Lighthouse Road. In detailed design, the location and layout of bus stops, turning points and vehicle and pedestrian intersections will be designed in accordance with Australian Standards, with best practice and safety as a determining factor.</p>

## What's next

The Cape Byron Master Plan will be implemented in stages by NPWS as funding becomes available. Any major works will be subject to rigorous environmental planning procedures in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.