



KEMPSEY
Shire Council

DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

14th November 2006

DCCS13	GOOLAWAH RESERVE		
	FILE: LA12633	SJR	{Folio No. *}

SUMMARY:

Reporting on discussions with representatives from the Department of Lands with regard to Crown Lands south of Crescent Head incorporating and enveloping Goolawah Reserve Primitive Camping area.



BACKGROUND:

The issue of Crown Lands south of Crescent Head has been subject to numerous deliberations of Council over the past year.

Council was originally approached by representatives of the Department Of Conservation (DEC) in February 2006 to discuss the possibility of Council relinquishing care and control of Goolawah Reserve. If Council agreed to that approach DEC would seek the transfer of those reserves to their control.

When considering tenders for the operation of the 4 Shore Holiday Parks in March 2006 these discussions intensified and a report was submitted to the 28 March 2006 meeting of Council. This report considered Council's 21 November 2005 resolution **"That Council examine the position of Management of Goolawah Reserve following the review of tenders for the caravan parks."** A copy of this report is attached for consideration and background information for Councillors at [\(Appendix J, part 1, part 2, part 3, part 4\)](#).

The Directors recommendation in this report was not supported at the March meeting when Council resolved to accept the tender submitted by Family Holiday Experiences to contract manage the Goolawah Reserve for a five year period.

At the 9 May 2006 meeting of Council a rescission motion was moved in relation to the March resolution to award the contract

management of Goolawah Reserve. This rescission motion sought to have the recommendation contained within the report to the 28 March 2006 meeting become the motion. This rescission motion was defeated.

Throughout May/June 2006 correspondence and a petition containing 989 signatures was received supporting Council relinquishing Goolawah Reserve to DEC as a Nature Reserve or similar. This was reported to Council at the July 2006 meeting of Council.

Representatives from Council met with the Minister for Lands on 22 June 2006 at the Correctional Centre whereby it was made clear that the Minister would not consent to the transfer of lands to DEC and that his department would allocate \$100,000 for the preparation of Plans of Management

CURRENT

Following a recent meeting with the Mayor, Council officers, and Mr Craig Barnes, Regional Manager of the Department of Lands (DoL) to discuss items relating to the future of Goolawah Reserve it is timely for Council to re-visit the topic.

Recent discussions on the future of the Goolawah Reserve have yet again sparked debate within the community and a growing band of local people are lobbying for a change in status of the reserve.

The DoL have indicated at [\(Appendix K\)](#) that it is their intention to engage the local community through the establishment of a community reserve Trust, with a preference that its management responsibilities include the areas managed by Council as well as those managed by the DoL.

The question for Council is: - Does it wish to retain the existing primitive camping grounds of Racecourse Headland and Delicate Nobby as awarded to Family Holiday Experience P/L at the March 2006 meeting, or include these camping reserves within the community reserve Trust?

The proposed community reserve Trust would be formed following a call for expressions of interest within the community. Council would be afforded the opportunity of an Ex-Officio position on the Trust. Expressions of interest would be assessed and if suitably qualified appointed to the Trust.

The DoL has appointed a Ranger/Project Officer to oversee Goolawah Reserve and to coordinate public consultation and planning and also monitor and assist with land management activities over the area.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- **Environmental**

Historically very little attention has been provided; given inadequate resources, by Council toward the management of these Crown Reserves in terms of facilities maintenance, weed control, interpretive and instructional signage.

- **Social**

The local community have sent a clear message to Council that they have concerns for the future of the unique Crown lands south of Crescent Head. Once the Community Reserve Trust is established it will provide those who are passionate about the area with an opportunity for input into its future directions. This outcome would be viewed in a positive light by the community as an example of Council heeding the opinion of its constituents. This new Trust also has the potential to create difficulties for Council and the camping areas contractor as some decisions between the adjoining areas could be in conflict.

- **Economic (Financial)**

The 2006/07 Budget for Goolawah Reserve shows a net operating deficit of \$15,467.

- **Policy or Statutory**

Nil implications

- **Director's Review**

Family Holiday Experience Pty Ltd have indicated that they would not seek to manage the Goolawah camping grounds on behalf of a Community Trust, and would not object to Council terminating the current arrangement should Council wish to relinquish Trusteeship of the Reserve area.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council as Reserve Trust Manager, advise the Department of Lands of consent to relinquish trusteeship of Reserve 1003268 and Reserve 8864.
2. That Council advise the Department of Lands that it has no objection to the establishment of a community reserve trust to manage the reserve lands south of Crescent Head.

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G B Snape

DIRECTOR CORPORATE & COMMUNITY SERVICES