

Macleay Valley Recreation Adventure Park – Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Council supporting this project?

The Macleay Valley Recreation Adventure Park will be a major attraction in the region and help promote the Macleay Valley to tourists as an adventure sports capital in regional New South Wales.

Council has been working in close collaboration with the national governing bodies for sport climbing and parachuting on the project. The adventure park will be built for use by Macleay residents, guests and elite athletes alike to have fun, train and compete in the sport of their choice.

The project will create around 33 construction jobs and, once complete, will provide further employment opportunities associated with the running of the facility.

What will the adventure park include?

The Macleay Valley Recreation Adventure Park will be a multi-functional facility featuring:

- a canopy swoop pond for skydiving
- indoor rock climbing
- a BMX pump track
- flat water kayaking
- amenities, dormitories and a training classroom to support the sports facilities.

What is a canopy swoop pond?

A canopy swoop pond is a purpose-built artificial pond approximately 110 metres by 40 metres. Swoop ponds are generally used by parachuters known as 'canopy pilots' for competitions, which involve flying close to the ground at high speeds, testing pilots' skills and accuracy as they glide across the water and onto a landing zone. To secure points during competition, the parachuters drag their bodies close to or across the water while performing movements or tricks before making their landing.

The proposed pond at Kempsey Airport will be multifunctional. As well as serving its core purpose for competitive parachutists, it will be used to teach flat water kayaking and small craft sailing and for fun water-based activities for children.

Is there a reason why Kempsey is specially placed to host such a facility?

Kempsey Regional Airport was seen as an ideal location due to the amount of undeveloped and unused land in the area.

Kempsey Airport does not have passenger planes, which makes it easier to operate skydiving activities. The airport has a good runway and land around it so is suitable as a drop zone, and the number of days suitable for skydiving is high due to the prevailing wind conditions.

There is no purpose-built 'pond' in New South Wales or on the east coast of Australia. This pond will therefore be a major attractor for the sport.

The Australian Parachute Federation (APF) and a local skydiving company have worked closely with Council in the development of the facility.

The APF have visited the site and locality several times in their work to support the project, including looking at the location on the Mid North Coast.

Parachuters will be able to take off, land and park aircraft easily, given that there is already an existing airport, particularly those coming from parachuting clubs nearby such as in Coffs Harbour or Port Macquarie.

How is the adventure park being funded?

Council was awarded \$11,283,000 to fully fund the delivery of the project through the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund, co-funded by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments.

This funding announcement was made on 27 October 2020, with the project listed as a prioritised project in the first round of funding.

Since that time, the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund has had a further \$250 million allocated to it, which the 47 bushfire-affected NSW councils are eligible to apply for.

How will it be delivered?

This project will be jointly delivered by Kempsey Shire Council and Public Works Advisory, an agency of the NSW Government.

The PWA Project Assurance Team have commenced working with Council to establish reporting regimes, steering committees and the parameters of the funding deed.

When will it be completed?

Project timelines will be finalised once the funding deed is completed and Council have received the funding.

It is anticipated that preparation works and potentially the BMX pump track can be completed this calendar year. The adventure park is expected to be fully operational by June 2022.