# Noosa North Shore Association inc

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The Mayor

Noosa Council

Dear Tony,

Over the past 20 years we have mainly seen, positive change on the lower Noosa North Shore. A ‘balance’ between our delicate environmental factors and social needs has, generally speaking, been met through careful Town Planning and legislative controls. Today, local residents have access to infrastructure that residents on the southern shore take for granted. These include mains power, Council wheelie bin collection, postal delivery, a waste transfer station and a mainly all-weather unsealed roads - none of this existed only 17 years ago!

Over this period our local community association played an active and a direct role in most strategic planning discussions and forums relating to our locale. We feel that our involvement has played a significant role in making the Noosa North Shore what it is today - something I believe we should all collectively be proud of. However this said, the NNSA today believes that there has been a significant decrease in being consulted and involved particularly over the past 5 years. Today, we seek your support to reverse the situation in order that our ‘voice’ is heard and that Council clearly understands and factors into it’s thinking the needs of our community better. I am writing to you today to bring to your attention several infrastructure issues that concern most residents on the Noosa North Shore.

These are:

* **Vehicular access from the south to the Noosa North Shore**.

In the Public submissions to the New Noosa Plan, the following comments were made by Council staff in the summary report:

These submissions provide a mix of concerns about excess traffic and the provision of a bridge to overcome other traffic issues relating to a lack of ease of access.

Council’s policy position to oppose any bridging of the Noosa River stems from development proposals for Noosa North Shore in the 1980s and 1990s which originally included a bridge proposal. Noosa North Shore is home for a relatively small number of residents and also an entryway to the significant wilderness area of the Cooloola Section of the  Great Sandy National Park. The area is not highly developed and has limited infrastructure. **The introduction of a bridge would dramatically change visitation and development expectations**. In addition to the costs of the bridge there would follow substantial demands for infrastructure particularly parking and beachfront amenities.

The concerns about traffic accessing the ferry may need more attention over time.

The NNSA would like to understand Council’s view of how the introduction of a bridge would dramatically change visitation and development expectations? If a toll equivalent to or greater that the cost of the ferry service remains in place and today’s strict Town Planning controls that preclude any development remain, what specific factors is Council concerned about?

Logic then would suggest that the waiting or queuing times for the ferry are such that this reduces visitation by being a bottleneck and acts as a control mechanism over visitor numbers. Is the concern that a toll bridge would exponentially increase demand for visitation and eliminate any barrier to entry so to speak because the limiting factor is not the cost of the ferry but the delays? So we can adequately respond to our constituency, could you please clarify on what basis Council forecasts a dramatic increase in visitation and development expectations.

* **Ferry Service**

Increasing visitation at peak times is seeing longer and longer wait or queue times for the ferry service. Residents and the NNSA alike have been voicing concerns over the past decade. While Council staff has investigated complaints periodically, there is an increasing sense that underlying problems are not being addressed and an attitude of ‘this is simply as it is - live with it’ mentality. This is causing frustration and angst amongst residents on both sides of the river. The NNSA would like to formally request a copy of or an excerpt from the Ferry Service contract that relates to the performance standards the operators are obliged to deliver. This communication will assist diffuse emotional arguments, anecdotal opinion, etc and help achieve to give a common understanding of what the operators should be providing all ferry users. If no measurable performance standards exist within the contract, the NNSA would like to be consulted in developing these to include as addendum to the current contract or toward a new contract in the future.

* **Roads/Tracks**

In The Noosa Plan including amendments to 3 July 2017 - Noosa North Shore it states

cc) A ferry crossing of the Noosa River at Tewantin is maintained as the only means of vehicular access to Noosa North Shore from the south;

dd) A single sealed access road between the ferry and the beach, via Beach Road is provided for due to low population levels, environmental sensitivity and the desire to protect the character of the locality;

ee) Vehicular access throughout the locality remains of an all-weather unsealed standard to most parts with much of the Noosa North Shore accessible only by four-wheel drive vehicle; with a sealed road linking the ferry crossing point to the beach;

ff) Access throughout the locality is of an adequate standard for recreation, but not suitable for residential and rural residential purposes;

NNSA members fundamentally agree the overall Strategic Plan intent however there are clearly issues that need to be addressed and resolved with regard to road infrastructure here. The quality and consistency of road network on the lower Noosa North Shore ranges from extremely poor to barely adequate depending upon weather conditions and frequency of Council roadworks.

Increasingly in the 2 most populated areas, we are seeing more traffic and heavier vehicles - all of which play a significant role in their condition and longevity. Repairs and works to our road network has typically occurred only when the NNSA and its members have brought to Council’s attention the need to do something about it. Unfortunately, these works may or may not coincide with Councils budgetary allocation for a given year which sees residents and visitors alike having to contend with road surfaces that can only be described as 3rd world at times. This sees damage to cars, service providers refusing to come, and dangerous driving conditions.

While it is not envisaged nor expected that we will see major changes to the road/track network on the lower Noosa North Shore, works are needed in the vicinity of the two populated areas in the near term. We believe that much can be done economically to drastically improve conditions over a 3 year budget planning period. The NNSA would like to see Council commit to:

* An agreed set of outcomes for the quality and type of roads within 3 years throughout the lower NNS by road - through community consultation with the NNSA
* An annual budgeted quarterly works program dedicated to achieving the 3 year objectives
* Upgrading the road surface at Noosa River Esplanade from the Fire Station to the end of the street and Wygani Drive along the houses to stop the significant dust problems that exist today
* Removal of a few trees and widen the road on dangerous sections
* Installation of give way signs at Old Teewah Beach Road and Wallaby Track; Homeport Track and Wallably Track and Wygani Drive and Wallaby Track

The NNSA believes strongly that the time has come to formalise road/track issues and requests that Noosa Council take a proactive role in 2017 to address these in forward budgets. The Executive of the NNSA would welcome a meeting with Council to discuss and work with Council Officers to achieve these objectives.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Regards,

Nick Hluszko

President NNSA Inc.

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