

Place Plan: New Brighton, South Golden Beach & Ocean Shores

Community Consultation Summary Engagement Round 1 (July – October 2024)



Byron Shire Council recognises the traditional custodians of the land in Byron Shire, the Arakwal, Minjungbal and Widjabul Wia-bal Peoples of the Bundjalung Nation, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

People of the Bundjalung Nation lived in this area for thousands of years before the arrival of non-Aboriginal people and retain a strong connection to Country and to the maintenance, protection and management of Aboriginal cultural values in the Shire.

The Minjungbal people are the traditional custodians of the lands where the communities of New Brighton, South Golden Beach and Ocean Shores currently reside.

Today, these places are home to many Indigenous people from a variety of communities from around the country.

Through this Place Planning process, we aim to recognise and honour the rich history of these places and apply the principles of Caring for and Connecting with Country wherever possible.

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Introduction

We are working with the community to create a Place Plan for New Brighton, South Golden Beach and Ocean Shores.

The Place Plan will define a 20-year vision for each village and identify priority projects across a range of themes such as movement, environment, open space, village feel, community development and resilience.

This Place Plan will form part of a suite of Byron Shire place planning documents that are already adopted for other towns, villages and precincts.

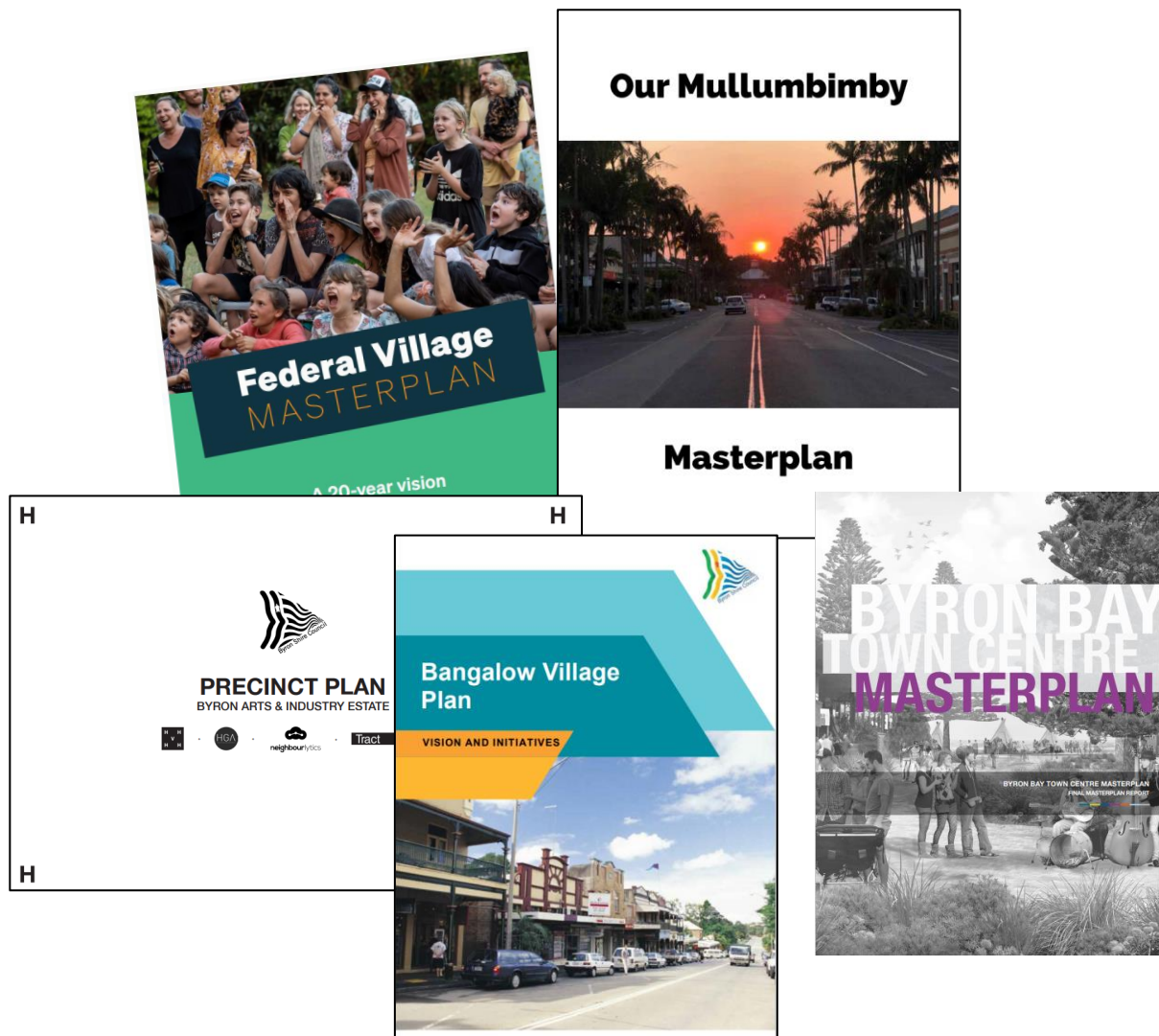


Figure 1 Image shows front page of existing Place Plans in Byron Shire.



Figure 2 Map of the Place Plan project area and key landmarks.

Community Engagement Round 1

This Place Planning process is intended to run for approximately 12 months and began in July 2024.

To help draft the Place Plan, Council will undertake two rounds of community engagement. The first round of consultation was conducted from July to October 2024.

We asked the community: “what do you love about your place, and what improvements would you like to see?”

The engagement included:

- Online engagement through the ‘Social pinpoint’ mapping tool, which received approximately 380 contributions
- 3 workshops open to anyone in the community to attend, with approximately 100 attendees over the three days
- Pop-ups at New Brighton Farmers Market and Ocean Shores Shopping Centre
- 2 Stakeholder Reference Group meetings.

Specific meetings with key stakeholders and groups including local community associations, local Minjungbal representatives, Mullumbimby High School students, the Ocean Shores Country Club, Ocean Shores Shopping Centre Management, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Transport for NSW and Marine Parks



Figure 3 Images from community workshop held in August 2024.

What We Heard

From the consultation several common themes emerged as to the reasons people love their communities.

The most common responses were:

- The local community and village feel
- the proximity to the beach and waterways
- the beautiful natural environment.



Figure 4 Image shows a word cloud of responses from the question, "What do you love most about your place?" Larger text means it was a more common response.

The following pages summarise feedback across four categories:

1. Movement
2. Environment and Open Spaces
3. Village Feel and Community Development
4. Resilience

1. MOVEMENT

1.1 Safety improvements in South Golden Beach (Beach Avenue and Helen Street intersection)

We heard from community about pedestrian safety concerns at and around the Helen Street and Beach Avenue intersection at South Golden Beach (see red circle on map below).

People want to see: slower traffic speeds; safer connections to and from the beach and community facilities, cafe and Helen Street bridge; improved lighting; shade trees around the playground and skate park.

Potential solutions proposed by community and stakeholders included: speed calming devices on Beach Avenue; pedestrian crossing(s); simplifying the intersection; tightening vehicle turning.



Figure 5 Image shows the Helen Street and Beach Avenue intersection and surrounds. The red circle shows the main intersection and the yellow line borders important context.

1.2 Safety improvements at New Brighton village centre

We heard from community that they were worried about pedestrian safety in and around the New Brighton village centre.

Potential solutions proposed by community and stakeholders included: continuing the existing shared path through the village and along the front of the shop; pedestrian crossings or refuges across River Street and Ocean Avenue; reconfiguring car parking and restricting parking on the creek side of River Street; slowing vehicle speeds.



Figure 6 Image below shows central area of New Brighton and surrounds. The red circle shows the main intersection and the yellow line shows the focus area.

1.3 A strategic network of shared paths for walkers and cyclists

We heard that people want a network of ‘shared paths’ that connect the key services and amenities of the area. Good links to neighbouring Billinudgel, Brunswick Heads and the planned rail trail are also important. A ‘shared path’ is for the shared use of both pedestrians and cyclists (and other appropriate mobility devices).

We heard that the following shared paths were priorities (not listed in any order). Council’s Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) references are also noted.

- A. Orana Road, Ocean Shores – refer PAMP OS007 and OS008
- B. Kolora Way (and bridge crossing) – refer PAMP OS003
- C. Beach Avenue, South Golden Beach – refer PAMP OS004
- D. New Brighton Road – upgrade to existing path – refer PAMP OS003
- E. Orana Road, Ocean Shores (Wirree Drive to Langi Place) – refer PAMP OS008

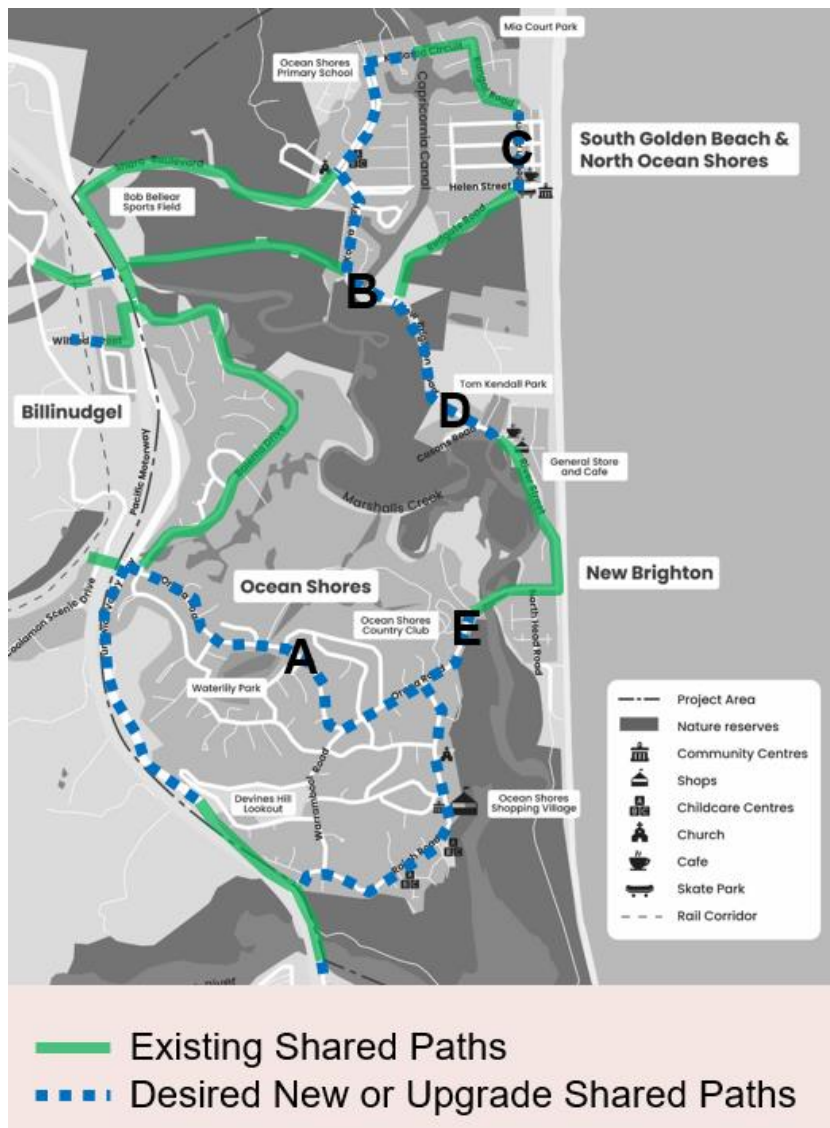


Figure 7 Image shows what we heard would be a good strategic shared path network. The green links are existing shared paths. The blue dashed links are where community would like to see new or upgraded shared paths.

1.4 Marshalls Creek boardwalk idea and environmental impacts

We heard from many people in the community that they supported a proposal to improve connectivity from Ocean Shores to the ocean by way of a boardwalk through the Marshalls Creek Nature Reserve.

Some residents also expressed concerns about the boardwalk in relation to impacts on the environment and nearby resident privacy. Concerns about feasibility and maintenance cost were also raised.

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service were asked to comment on this matter, and they advised that the proposal is inconsistent with the Plan of Management for the Nature Reserve. They advised that Threatened Ecological Communities and threatened species would be impacted. They did not support a boardwalk through the area as proposed.

The primary purpose of a Nature Reserve is to protect and conserve their unique ecosystems, native plants and animals.



Figure 8 Image of Marshalls Creek Nature Reserve.

1.5 Improved road safety for drivers and pedestrians at key locations

We heard that it was important to improve road and pedestrian safety at intersections and high pedestrian activity areas.

The locations with red stars on the map show where community have concerns about driver safety. These concerns are generally consistent with crash data that Council has for this area. Feedback identified the intersection of Brunswick Valley Way and Shara Boulevard as the most dangerous.

The locations in blue on the map show where community have concerns about pedestrian safety. People want to see safer ways for people to cross the street in these locations.

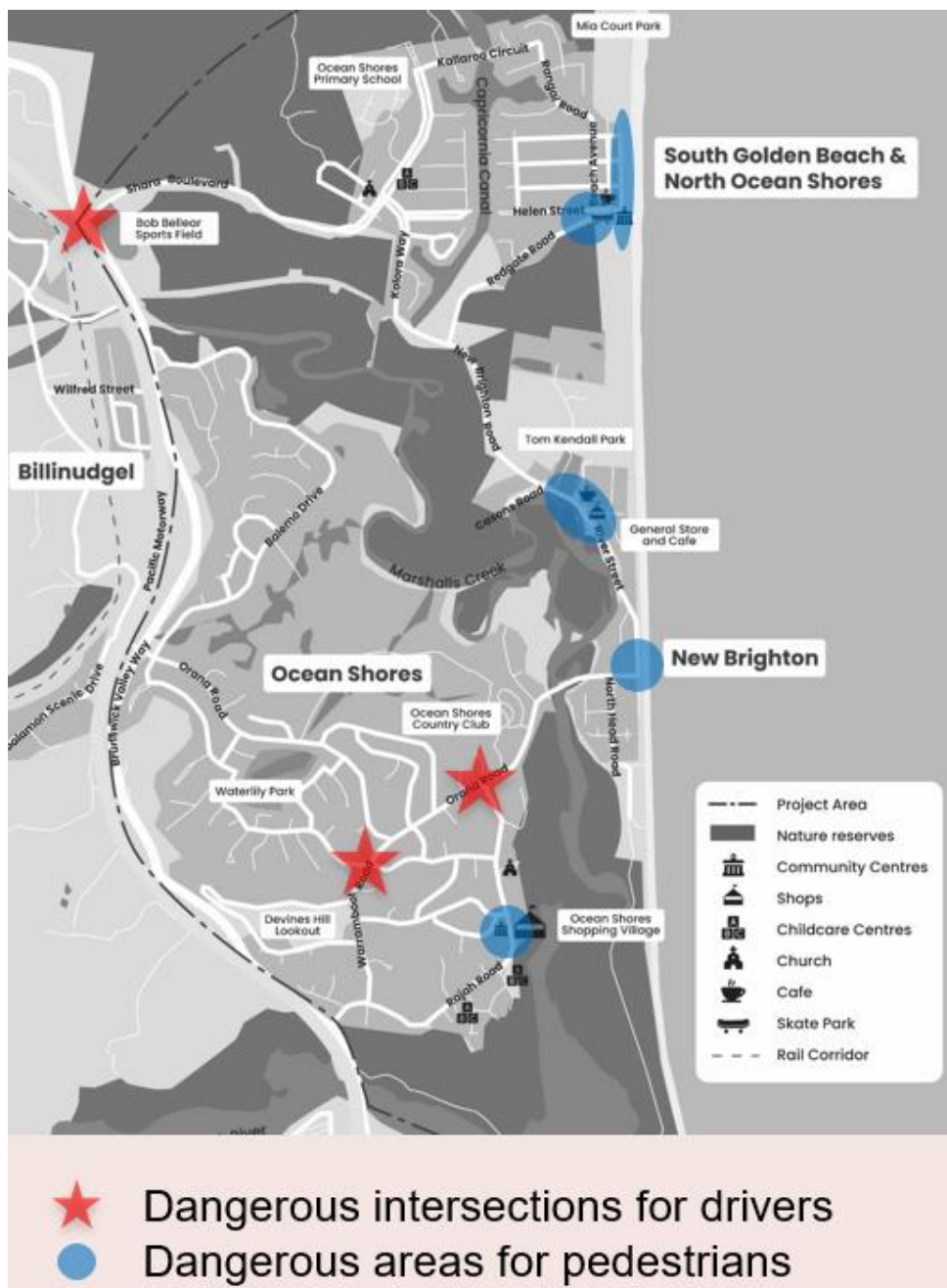


Figure 9 Image shows locations that community identified as key areas of concern for road safety.

1.6 Reduced vehicle speeds on residential streets

We heard that people wanted slower vehicle speeds on our roads to improve safety for everyone. As per the notes on the map below, feedback included the following suggestions:

- Reduce speed to 30km/hr zones at busy locations at the centre of communities
- Reduce speed on Shara Blvd from 80 to 60km per hour
- Reduce speed on Kolara Way from 60 to 50km per hour
- Reduce 50km/hr residential back streets to 30km or 40km per hour
- Reduce speed around Orana Road bridge over Marshalls Creek.

Some people also wanted traffic calming measures added to Shara Boulevard to ensure vehicles are slowing to 50km/hr as they enter South Golden Beach.

Speed zones are regulated by Transport for NSW.



Figure 10 Image shows speed related suggestions by some community.

1.7 Increased public transport services

We heard that people would like increased public transport (bus) services in the area. Feedback noted that more frequent services, running later in the day and operating seven days a week would increase accessibility and connectivity for residents to travel to and from the area. People also suggested additional bus stops that would make transport more accessible to Ocean Shores residents.

Transport for NSW is responsible for delivering public transport services across the state, and contracts private bus companies to carry out specific routes or services.

The following changes were suggested:

- Creating a direct route from Ocean Shores to Byron Bay
- Increasing the services between Ocean Shores and Mullumbimby
- Improving the connections to neighbouring Shires of Tweed and Ballina
- Implementing on-demand bus services.

1.8 Bridge repairs and upgrades

We heard from people about works they would like to see for a number of bridges in the area. This included:

1. Helen Street Bridge – deck renewal
2. Kolora Way Bridge – accommodating pedestrians and cyclists
3. Orana Road / Strand Avenue Bridge – handrails re-painted



Figure 11 Image shows requested bridge repairs or upgrades locations as per list above.

2. ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACES

2.1 Tom Kendall Park New Brighton transformed into a village green

We heard that people would like to see a second sports field developed at Bob Bellear Sports Field on Shara Boulevard (refer to marker A on map) to remove the need for a sports field at Tom Kendall Sports Field, New Brighton (refer to marker B on map). Some community would then like the Tom Kendall area to be developed as a multi-purpose village park.

This aspiration also aligns with the Byron Shire Open Space and Recreation Needs Assessment and Action Plan 2017-2036. Noting that a project like this would have a 10-20 year timeframe.

We also heard that some community would like to retain the Soccer Club and its amenities at Tom Kendall Park, noting that it is a focal point for children's sport and a popular ground with good drainage.

Another interim suggestion was to replace the existing soccer goals with mixed ball goal posts (including tall posts for AFL or Rugby) to make the space more inclusive.



Figure 12 Image shows location of Bob Bellear Sports Field (marker A) and Tom Kendall Park (marker B).

2.2 Discuss the future of New Brighton Farmers Market

We heard that people love having the New Brighton Farmers Market as an opportunity to bring the whole community together each week.

However, we also heard that there is a significant impact, particularly on nearby residents, from increased traffic, parking and noise. Some residents have suggested the size and location of the market be reviewed.

The current market licence is in place until late 2026. The current licence is for up to 35 stalls every Tuesday between the hours of 8am and 2pm. Setup for the market is from 7am.

It was also noted that improved public transport through the villages would encourage less reliance on cars and potentially reduce parking issues.



Figure 13 Image shows current New Brighton Farmers Market Lease Area (2,574m²).

2.3 Continued improvements at Waterlily Park, Ocean Shores

We heard that Waterlily Park in Ocean Shores is a well-used, highly valued place. We understand that there has been significant works at the park over recent years, and the community would like to see that continue with additional improvements.

There were many different ideas put forward for how the park could be improved. Some of the main ones were:

- A connected path around the lake
- Dog-off-leash area
- Basketball court
- Footpath connection from Dandaloo Way
- Improved wayfinding signage at the Orana Road entrance
- Storytelling signage/artwork through-out the park
- Greater maintenance of the lake

There is a Plan of Management (PoM) that helps to guide works at Waterlily Park. A new project would either need to fit with the framework in the PoM or seek to update it first.



Figure 14 Image shows the 'Land Categories' plan from the Waterlily Park Plan of Management (2008).

2.4 Improvements to various parks and streetscapes

We heard that people love their local parks, playgrounds and beaches. There were a number of requests for upgrades to outdoor furniture and amenities to improve these spaces.

These are described below (not listed in any order):

- A. Shower, water tap and better drainage a Gloria Street beach entry in South Golden Beach
- B. Seat or deck at New Brighton beach entry near Pacific Street
- C. New drinking water fountain at Mia Court Park, South Golden Beach
- D. Any improvements to Helen Street Footbridge Park, South Golden Beach
- E. Landscape trees on Shara Boulevard entry to South Golden Beach
- F. Any improvements and more maintenance of Devines Hill Lookout
- G. Improvements to creek access area at end of Casons Road
- H. Install bins at creek access area opposite New Brighton shop.

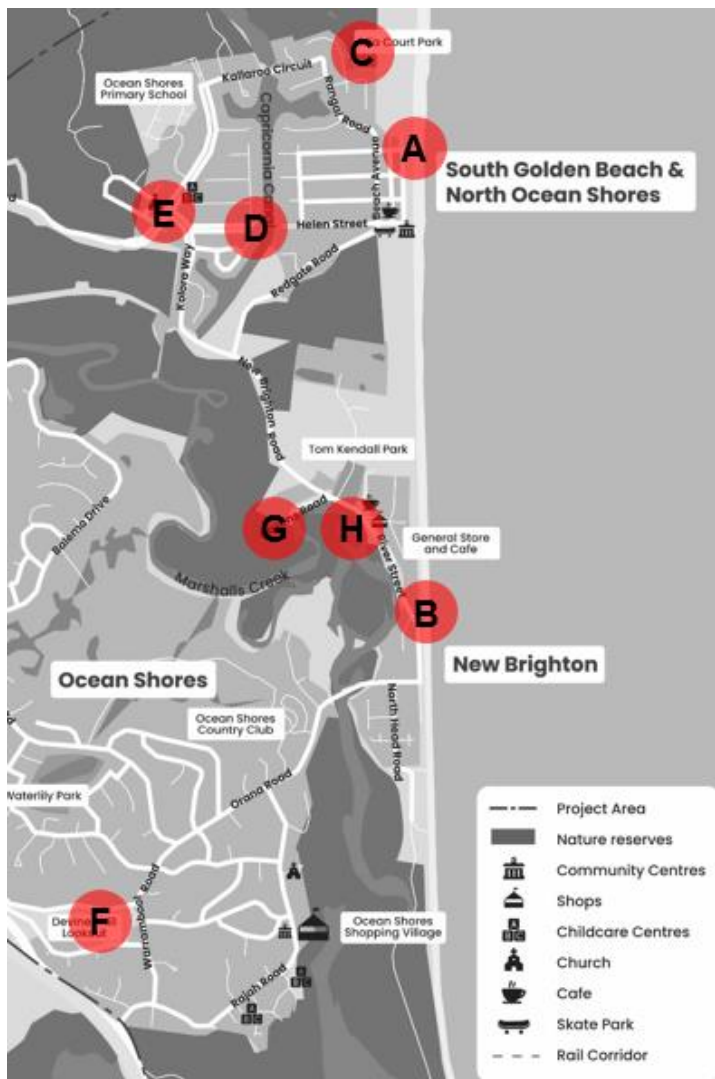


Figure 15 Image shows locations of minor upgrade requests as per list above.

2.5 Connect with nature through walking trails and promote where appropriate

We heard that people love connecting with nature by going for a walk on one of the many bush trails. Many of these tracks are in nature reserves that are managed by National Parks.

Feedback suggested Council work with National Parks to encourage the use of existing nature reserve walking trails and add more walking tracks where possible (for example off Balemo Drive).

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service have advised that Nature Reserves are areas of land in predominantly untouched, natural condition, with high conservation value. Their primary purpose is to protect and conserve Australian native plants and animals and therefore widening or adding walking tracks for recreation is not in line with their Plan of Management.

Promoting the use of other walking tracks not in nature reserves, including the Yalla Kool reserve walking track and the Devines Hill footpath, were other suggestions heard during consultation.

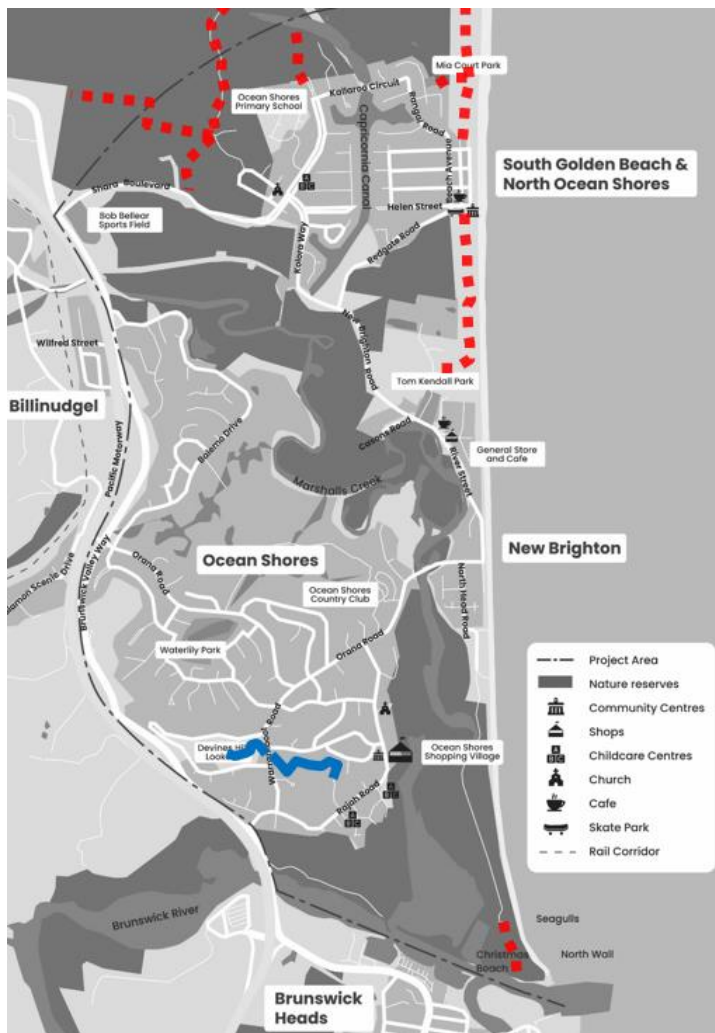


Figure 16 Image shows existing walking tracks in Nature Reserves with red dashed lines, and other paths with a blue line.

2.6 Review of dogs-off-lead areas and regulation

We heard that some residents love to be able to exercise their dog in designated areas on the beaches and that this also brings community together. We also heard that some people, particularly in New Brighton, had safety and environmental concerns with the dog-off-lead area.

A detailed assessment of these areas was conducted during the review of Dogs in Open Spaces Strategy (2022) and results indicated that larger off-lead areas reduce risks and safety issues.

The two off-lead areas shown below are restricted in their size and location due to the surrounding nature reserves. With limited areas available in the Shire for dogs off-lead, any reduction in these areas would have to be matched with additional off-lead areas provided elsewhere.

In addition to the off-lead dog beaches, some people would like to see more regulation of dogs-off lead within the community, including residential streets in South Golden Beach, New Brighton village centre and Waterlily Park in Ocean Shores.

As shown below, the New Brighton off-lead area is approximately 1.5km long and South Golden Beach is approximately 730m long.

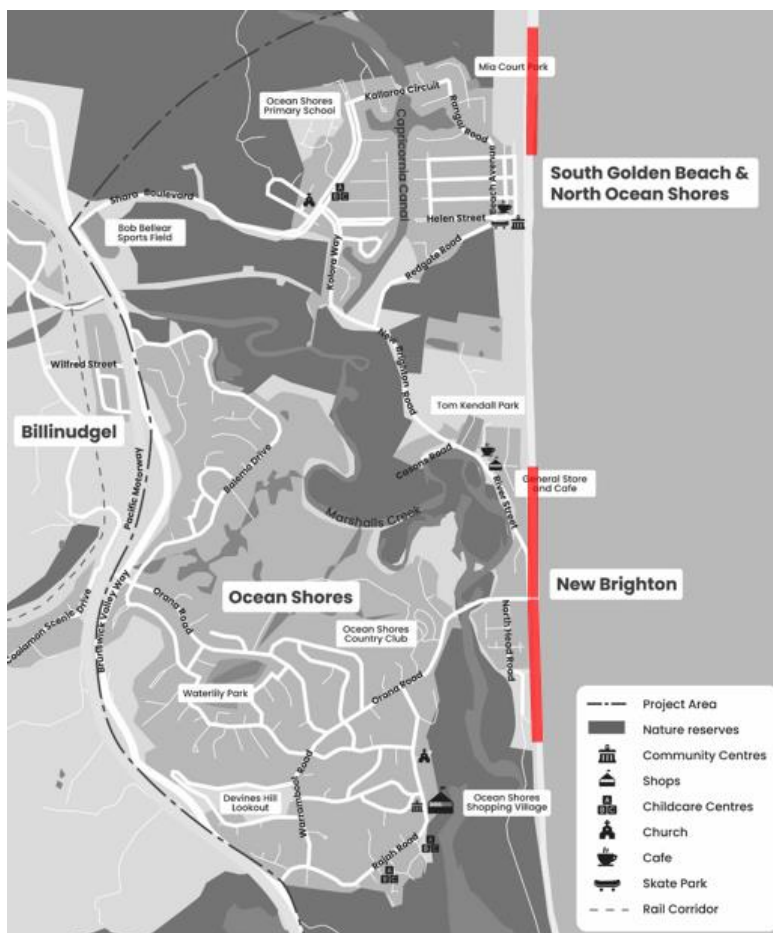


Figure 17 Image shows dog-off-lead areas in red.

2.7 Stabilisation of Marshalls Creek riverbank in New Brighton

We heard from community that it was urgent to address the riverbank erosion on Marshalls Creek between Casons Road and Pacific Street, New Brighton.

Council understands that the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) are progressing a concept design of creek foreshore rehabilitation.

This matter was discussed at the Council meeting 12 December 2024 (Resolution 24-598).

2.8 Limited private beach access tracks through dunes

We heard from community that private dune access tracks have become prolific over the years from residences to the beach. These tracks can decrease the stability of dunes by encouraging dune scour and blowouts.

Council is currently preparing a Coastal Management Program (CMP), which aims to address key coastal issues and threats in a strategic and holistic approach. Preparation of a CMP consists of four stages with Council currently embarking on stage three of the process to identify and evaluate options to reduce key threats and issues.

It is expected that the issue of beach access points will be addressed in the CMP actions.

Council also has a resolution to improve accessibility to beaches across the shire, and Open Spaces team are exploring opportunities at South Golden Beach and New Brighton (RES 24-192).

2.9 Improve public lighting

We heard that more lighting along key active transport routes would increase safety and inclusivity and allow more people to walk short distances at night.

We also heard there is a need to limit lighting close to key wildlife habitats and nature reserves. More than half of the overall project area is classified as a Nature Reserve, meaning they have high conservation value and are home to protected species.

Byron Shire's Coastal Light Management Plan (2024) provides best practice design principles, which apply to new projects, lighting upgrades and retrofitting, where there is evidence of wildlife being affected by existing artificial light. Some of these design principles include:

- Start with natural darkness and only add light for specific purposes
- Use adaptive light controls to manage light timing, intensity and colour
- Light only the object or area intended – keep lights close to the ground, directed, and shielded to avoid light spill.

3. VILLAGE FEEL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Greater Indigenous recognition and inclusion

We have heard from local Aboriginal people that place naming, retaining cultural knowledge and having dedicated spaces to practice culture are some of the key priorities for their community.

We also heard that the broader community would like to increase awareness of local First Nations history and recognise their ongoing connection to country.

Some ideas discussed include:

- Incorporating cultural history, artwork or stories into signage, local events and infrastructure.
- Renaming or dual naming of places or attributes

Note that any actions related to this would be developed in consultation with First Nations representatives.

3.2 Ocean Shores village centre improvements

We heard from people that they appreciate the local shopping, café and services at the Ocean Shores centre. However, people also thought that it could be improved, for example with:

- more retail, café or services
- improvement to public space, more seating, greenery and meeting places.
- better carparking layout
- improving connectivity (including across Rajah Rd to the Community Centre)
- orientation to and activation of the Marshall Creek side
- improving the character and identity of the place, possibly tying to Aboriginal culture and story-telling.

The Byron Shire Business and Industrial Lands Strategy 2020 notes that the centre should be encouraged to evolve into a town centre with a wider range of community services, meeting places and office space whilst continuing to operate as a retail and specialty use commercial centre catering for the local catchment.

The yellow line depicts the area as shown in the strategy.



Figure 18 Image shows a yellow line that depicts the village centre area discussed in the Byron Shire Business and Industrial Lands Strategy 2020

3.3 More local events

We heard that businesses would like a clearer and simpler pathway to hold small events. This is in the context of a potential decline of major music festivals in the area.

We also heard that community want more local events and regular activities held in the North of the Shire, some targeting younger people especially.

Council has recently exhibited a Draft Byron Shire Events Strategy. The Strategy outlines the kinds of events that will bring the most benefit to the Shire, and the resources and actions needed to make these events successful. Refer to Council's website for more information.

3.4 A greater focus on youth

We know there is a significant population of children and young people in the area.

Being away from larger town centres and high schools, and having limited public transport, younger community members are heavily reliant on adults to move around the shire.

We heard that a greater focus on youth is needed to better accommodate their needs and become a more connected and inclusive community.

Some suggestions include:

- Encourage and hold more events that cater to families and young people, such as markets, open air cinema and live music events
- Build a pump track in the area south of Bob Belleair Sportsfield
- Improve shade and seating at existing parks and recreation areas
- Consider suitable sites for a dedicated youth space
- Engage youth in more community activities and encourage and enable young people to actively participate in planning and implementing events and activities in the area.
- Establish a youth council for young people to have formal ongoing consultation with Council.

3.5 Review suburb boundary of South Golden Beach

We heard from community that some residents within the northern section of Ocean Shores feel like South Golden Beach residents more so than Ocean Shores residents. There were comments that the suburb boundary is unclear, confusing and potentially divisive for this community.

The actual suburb boundary of South Golden Beach is shown on the map below.

Place names are managed by the NSW Geographical Names Board.

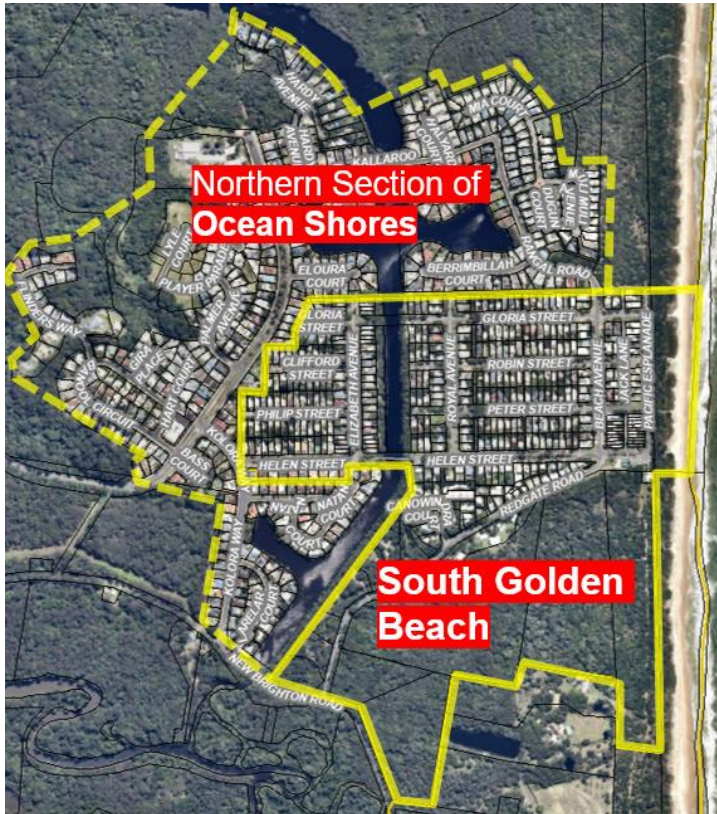


Figure 19 Image shows a map with yellow line around the suburb of South Golden Beach and a dashed yellow line around the neighbouring northern section of Ocean Shores.

3.6 Entry and wayfinding signage

We heard from people that it would be good to have entry signage for each village. These signs could be distinct for each place. The coloured markers on the map indicate potential locations for village entry signs.

We also heard that some people would like beautification, better maintenance and wayfinding signage at the roundabouts and intersections on Brunswick Valley Way.

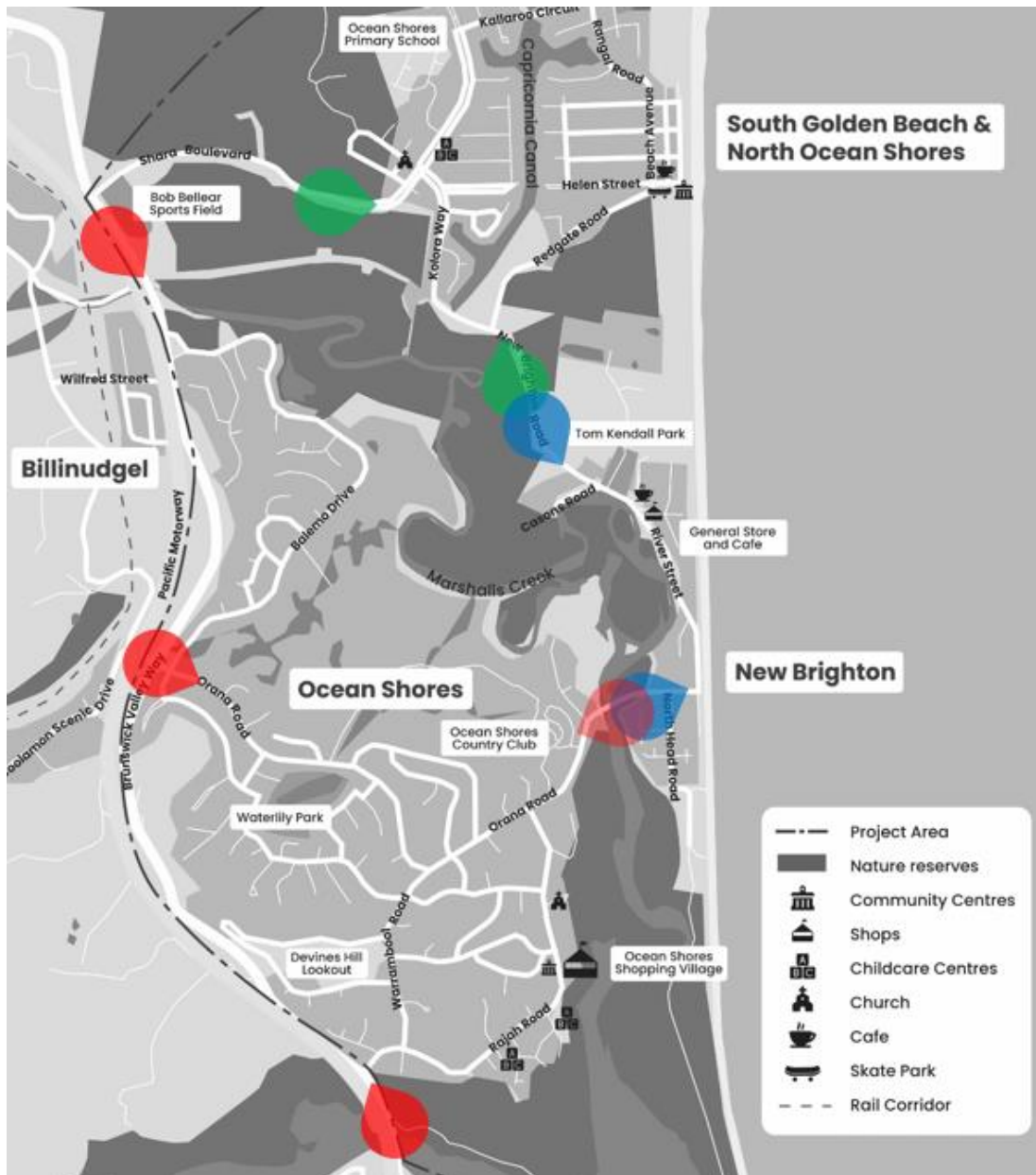


Figure 20 Image shows potential locations for village entry signs.

3.7 Considered development controls

We heard from community that they want any new development or redevelopment to be consistent with the existing character and local environmental constraints.

The Byron Shire Residential Strategy 2041 makes comment in relation to infill and local character (refer Action 13):

In conjunction with revised infill planning controls, review DCP residential character narratives to elevate the role of local character within the planning framework.

3.8 Creative industry opportunities

We heard that there is a strong creative and artistic local community, and people would like more creative expression and public art in the area.

The long running Ocean Shores Art Expo is an example of this creative expression, and how it can help to also bring community together.

The Byron Shire Arts and Culture Action Plan 2023 - 2026 identifies four priorities:

1. Acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal voices and stories, communities, cultural expression, and creativity.
2. Support arts and cultural activity, participation and creative experience for the whole community
3. Foster a resilient creative sector committed to climate consciousness and ecological sustainability
4. Nurture, amplify and support our artistic and creative industries — makers, artists and communities.

3.9 Better access to essential services

We heard that there is a lack of local accessible community and health services. This means that things such as license registration and renewal, support with concessions and other financial assistance, accommodation support and health related services can be difficult for local residents to access.

Most of these essential services are managed by State Government. The closest Service NSW locations are Ballina and Tweed, which can be difficult to access if you do not drive or have access to a car.

Mobile Service NSW centres travel around the state and routinely stop at the Ocean Shores Country Club. However, these mobile service centres do not offer the full list of services.

3.10 Maximise use of the Ocean Shores Country Club

We heard that people would like to increase the public use of the Country Club and its grounds. Some suggestions included:

- A Saturday morning 'park run'
- Public access to the club swimming pool
- Offering a mixture of events and/or activities to suit different age groups
- A nature walk or public access areas within the grounds.

The Country Club property is privately owned and maintained by the members of the club. The company limited by guarantee was formed for the purpose of providing recreational facilities for its members. These recreational sporting activities are currently golf and bowls.

The Country Club advised Council that **members** may access the golf course for walking or running only before 7am any day of the year and after 5pm during EST and after 6pm during DST (Daylight Saving Time). Cycling or other activities are not permitted.

4. RESILIENCE

4.1 Flood and drainage works, planning and communication

We heard that flood and drainage works continue to be a priority for the community. The impacts and trauma from the 2022 floods are still ever-present for some residents.

Some residents wanted to make it clear that a key characteristic of much of the area is that it is a floodplain.

Some residents expressed a lack of clarity about what flood and drainage works Council is undertaking. Many people wanted more communication with Council about what was happening or planned in their area.

Some people thought that essential maintenance works such as maintaining drainage easements was not being done to a level of service they were happy with.

We heard some strong views about reducing flood risk with measures such as: new ocean outfalls; dredging of creek systems; modification of the Brunswick River training walls; and bund structures. Council notes that independent experts have previously not supported these as viable.

We heard from Council staff that one important project that will commence shortly is the Shire wide Overland Flowpath Study.

We also heard from Council staff that funding was needed to update the North Byron Flood Study and associated Risk Management Study and Plan. This update was a recommendation from the NSW Government's Post 2022 Event Flood Behaviour Analysis – Brunswick River (February 2024). The next round of flood grants through the NSW Government opens in May 2025.

4.2 Community awareness and preparedness

We heard that the community feel vulnerable to future disasters and emergencies, and that there is a need to work together to build resilience and feel better prepared for potential future events.

The community led Community Resilience Hub (CHUB) have been actively working for over two years to help locals be better prepared, working with Council, emergency services, government agencies and other groups across the Shire and the Northern Rivers. They are currently building a network of 'street coordinator' volunteers to increase communication.

A priority for the New Brighton, South Golden Beach and Ocean Shores CHUB is to resolve a permanent location for storage of emergency supplies.

Other suggestions to increase community preparedness include:

- Develop a tailored Emergency Preparedness Plan for the three villages and neighbouring communities
- Hold facilitated workshops or training for community
- Increase education around food security
- Run regular activities/events that work to embed emergency procedures in the community.

Community preparedness is an ongoing process that needs to be sustained and continually redeveloped over time. People interested in joining or connecting with their local CHUB can contact council.



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