

## Developing a Community Plan for North Arm Cove

Mid Coast Council initiated the MCC Community Engagement Strategy in 2019. The strategy sets out the processes adopted by MCC for community consultation, engagement and planning of priorities for all areas. An important focus for villages and communities will be development of Community Plans which prioritise projects, for funding and grant applications for improvements on community infrastructure such as amenities, and services. The steps for community planning are set out in the Locality Community Planning Framework found at

<https://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/Community/Local-Community-Planning>

The priorities identified by communities in the Southern Area of Mid Coast will also be a focus for the Southern Area Reference Group. This group will work strategically to identify and agree on priorities and apply for works and funding for the MCC southern area. This is likely to be an important planning strategy for Villages for whom the provision of services depends on allocation of resources over a period of time. North Arm Cove village is represented on this group by members of North Arm Cove Community Association and the Community Centre Committee.

Community Engagement Consultation: The consultation will aim to engage with all groups in the North Arm Cove, will be involved in the consultation. Consultations will not be held for one particular group. Plans developed will be for the locality including the village and surrounding areas.

The main stakeholders identified for the area are North Arm Cove Community Association, NAC Community Centre Committee, Non Urban Landholder Groups, rural land holders in the Hunterview area and other neighbours.

Locality Statistics 2016 Census : The total population in the 2016 Census North Arm Cove locality was 445 residents in 342 dwellings. This area includes the Village and the areas to the north and east as per the locality map.



Some work has already been done in preparation for a community plan for the village area. This is a basis only and needs the contribution of the wider community.

## **Non-Urban Land Holders**

### **North Arm Cove Community Survey conducted October – November 2019**

In October 2019 the then NAC Residents Association Committee and the Community Centre Management Committee developed and conducted a survey of residents with the aim of identifying shared priorities and to be included in a plan for the Village area. This report describes the outcomes of the survey and provides a draft plan for the village area.

#### **Method**

The questionnaire was designed to reflect the current apparent needs of the community for infrastructure, maintenance and development and services. A small test group completed the survey and changes were made in the design.

The survey was distributed to each mail box by hand and most were returned to a box located at the community centre. There were 500 copies made for distribution. All of these were distributed and then a further 50 copies made available at the community centre for people who had lost the survey. Some were placed in committee member's mail boxes. Most returns were made within the first 2 weeks and others followed up until the box was removed on the 20 November 2019.

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In the 2016 Census North Arm Cove Community had approximately 445 residents and 319 houses, 125 of the houses in were unoccupied and this number seems to remain constant. **Cove news delivers 260 to permanent and semi permanent households.** There were 73 responses from households and 196 residents. The representation of residents is unknown however based on the 2016 figure which has moved upward from 445, 196 residents responding to the survey would represent around 40% of the population and is considered a significant sample.

A designated village does not attract the services provided to towns in MCC area. Residents have traditionally relied on representations through the local Residents Association, Tennis Association, Community Hall Committee, and as individuals for progress in the areas of infrastructure and development. The Community has raised funds themselves and or applied for grants for the

provision of facilities and services such as playground equipment, tennis court, lighting in the car park, car park and provision of the kitchen facilities at the Community Centre.

The purpose of the survey was to update council on the profile of the area and the expressed needs of the residents for development and infrastructure. Unfortunately we have not been able to provide an accurate census of the population however we do have strong indicators of the needs and views of residents from this sample.

### Summary of Results

		Total
No of		
Households		72
NO of people		196
Ages	0-5	11
	5 to 10	10
	10 to 20	5
	20 to 30	19
	30 to 50	19
	50 to 70	108
	OVER 70	24

Most residents who responded are in the age group of 50 to 70 years. This was a wide age range and future surveys could take into account some of the differences in needs and views of those 60 – 70 years compared to those in the 50 – 60 year age bracket. Many of both groups are still working either part time or full time. However the later age group are moving into retirement.

The number of children under 10 years in this sample was 21 or 10% of the sample, The younger residents feel strongly about planning for the future particularly for their young families and access to recreational facilities. One mother said that she would like to meet other mothers so that her young ones can form local bonds. She also said that a BMX track would be well used in the future for her young boys. There are over 77 children who visit the Cove regularly, being minded by grandparents during school holidays and visiting friends. These children also should be catered for with recreational facilities such as the picnic facilities at Heros Beach and the proposed BMX track. Putting these projects on the agenda now is important. Some families have had their children grow up waiting for a playground.

Residents were asked to rank services required and the results were that more residents would like to see a coffee shop in the Village, that other services. Transport and Help to stay at home was ranked second, which reflects a national concern about packages to assist ageing and ageing services generally across Australia. These are ongoing issues and the supply of affordable care is stretched. All of these services can be assisted by local community strategies working with existing funding opportunities and services. **This will be discussed with the 355 Committee of the Community Centre to make a plan for connecting with the community and providing relevant and timely services.**

Rank	Services		
1	Coffee Shop	57	79%
2	Transport of Sick and Elderly	41	56%
3	Help to stay at home	40	55%
4	Community Nurse	32	44%
5	Fix it service	30	41%
6	Wifi	28	38%
7	Play group	20	27%
8	Computer Facilities	27	37%
9	Senior Citizens Group ( for isolated )	26	36%

### How do people get information on local activities?

Responses show for this sample that most residents, 85% rely on the local Cove News which was produced monthly and has been for 25 years. This has been the significant form of communication which is coming to an end as the editor is retiring and no one has taken up this role it is likely that letterbox drops of news and activities will still be the best way at present to ensure residents get the details of activities planned at the Community Centre.

4% of households who responded use the North Arm Cove Website for News. This has been operating approximately 6 years. There are a number of reasons for this including residents who do not use computers for communication, residents who do use internet however do not have access to good internet facilities and a device or computer linked to the internet due to costs.

This makes the need for wifi a high priority for communication within and outside the community. As more services are only available through the internet particularly banking, service payments, Centrelink, and increasingly health services access to and training to use the internet will become more important. Particularly for those who have missed out on learning this skill previously. Access to the internet at the Community Centre is one way of bridging this gap in the short term with tuition provided by locals and possibly funded programs.

Cove News	60
News of Area	19
Facebook	30
NAC web	29
Notice Board	11
Word of Mouth	11
nacra	1
community garden	1

The placement of a new notice board should be on the corner of Gloucester Road and North Arm Cove road. With a solar light would enhance the community.

### Developing and Sustaining Our Environment.

The important questions for developing a community plans were covered by asked residents to rank their priorities. There is strong agreement that there is agreement that the first four ranked were high priority. The following table shows that Maintenance of Drains, Signage, Beautification using appropriate flora and conservation, and roads were the most important for residents in this sample.

Access to the water mainly focuses on the possible provision of a boat ramp which has been a long standing goal for some residents and not so for others. It is interesting that approximately 50% of this group would like a boat ramp. The planning of improving access to water at Medina Bay is already underway.

MCC has been successful in addressing drainage in the Cove with the 2016 North Arm Cove Drainage Plan. However maintenance of drains issues are regularly reported to MCC and timely responses and solutions have been provided particularly at the northern end of East Slope Way . However the Cove does not get town services like other areas of MCC. People are required to maintain the verges and drains themselves. As seen by the age breakdown this is not an effective solution for an area which contains so many trees and has drainage issues. These issues need to stay on the agenda for MCC. There is also a need for provision of drainage for Promontory Way which was not originally included in the drainage plan.

Rank	Development and Sustaining Our Environment	%	
1	Maintenance of Drains/Signage	47	65%
2	Beautification	44	61
3	Conservation Plan for the Cove	41	56
3	Roads	42	58
4	Access to Water	37	51
5	Heros Beach Picnic Facilities	34	47
6	Playground	30	41
7	Walking Paths	21	29
8	Lap Pool	21	29
9	Recreation Areas	20	27
10	Bicycle Pathway	11	15
11	BMX Track	13	18
12	Street Lighting	14	19

**Beautification and conservation** has not been addressed by MCC for some time. A proper approach to conservation could be well supported by MCC with existing structures like Land for Wildlife and support for weed control particularly the **Asparagus weed** that threatens to take over the forest across the Cove. A funded effort over a number of years would do best to tackle this issue. Initial meetings with MCC have identified that NAC residents need to form a group to work with MCC on weed removal to protect assets as a high priority. The Esplanade on the northern end of the Cove is the first priority.

**Roads** to North Arm Cove have been improved by MCC recently however there are specific needs that need to be kept on the agenda, such as safety of the North Arm Cove Road, the Ridgeway near the Community Centre and joining **the Esplanade so that there is a road around the Cove. We need to be engaged in the planning for road works in the Southern area of MCC.**

**Signage** – Street Signage is mostly ok in the Cove however there needs to be renewed signs for Speed need to applied for from the traffic committee, Wildlife, No Dumping, No Camping on Council Land. These need to be put on the agenda for provision of Signs by MCC and/or the Traffic Committee.

**Pedestrian access** around the Cove is only available on the roads and needs planning for the short term to reduce risks of injuries and provide proper access for those with mobility issues. Some areas

are very unsafe with roads being widened and no access for pedestrians to walk. In the long term a proper solution for pedestrian access. The MCC PAMP strategy

**Walking paths** – there is safe pedestrian pathways for the area. Residents have ranked in the mid range. There needs to be a high priority for provision of access between houses. A proper crossing at the hall. Access between residences and safety on roads for pedestrians has been added to the MCC PAMP Strategy

**Lighting** – along streets for safe walking in the evenings has been a priority for years. The areas where there is no lighting on Promontory way need to be addressed.

As there are more young families moving into the area there is a need to provide infrastructure for the future such as a BMX track. There were plans to build one locally and this could be followed through with a joint effort from MCC and local initiatives for funding.

### Maintenance and upgrade plans for the Community Centre

Build a veranda off the kitchen for outdoor coffee shop	?			Priority
Update kitchen cupboards and benches	\$5000	Community Centre and MCC		
Build a new storeroom for chairs and class equipment	\$5000	Community Centre and MCC		
Resurface the floor	\$1000	Community Centre and MCC		
Building Paint needs re-doing on the south side of the Hall	?	MCC		
Paint the inside of the hall to provide a brighter environment	Paint only \$200			
Replace lighting with LED				
Update technology wiring and where appropriate equipment	\$200	MCC		
New air conditioner in the kitchen	\$200	MCC		
Ongoing maintenance – servicing of the air		MCC and Community Centre Volunteers		

conditioners, cleaning of roof gutter etc				
Coffee Shop at the Community Centre	\$6000	Community Centre Committee	2020	
Wifi at Community Centre	\$50 per month	Community centre Committee	2020	
Australia Post Box for Parcels at Community Centre		Community centre Committee	2020	
Exercise Equipment and classes	\$8,000	Staying Active Grant	2021	
Water Storage of 50,000 litres for the Community Centre	\$6000	Grant	2020	
Assessment of Access for people with Mobility Aids		Community Centre and MCC		

### Draft Plan

Project	Responsibility	Proposed Time Frame Short Term end of 2020	
Maintenance of drains – clearing out drains of debris	Southern Area Reference Group	2020	
Signage Illegal Dumping, Tree Preservation, Wildlife, No Camping	MCC – Report and Request list to be sent	2020	
Beautification- Weed Removal on Council Lands- replacement with appropriate planting	MCC and NAC Residents	2021	
Conservation Plan for North Arm Cove – in response to the MCC Biodiversity Strategy and Greening Strategy Weed removal is critical to protect assets.	NACRA and MCC – Weed removal. A group of residents needs to be established to work with Council.	2021	Ongoing plans to be updated with MCC.
Roads – Joining the Esplanade	MCC	?	
Safety on North Arm Cove Road	Traffic Committee Assessment – renew speed signs and	2020	

	additional signs in hot spots. Wildlife signs Rural Road Sign		
Safety on The Ridgeway near Community Centre	Traffic Committee Assessment – warning signs	2020	
Pedestrian Access – provide pathways around the cove so that residents can move from one house to another safely Traffic Management Plan	MCC PAMP Strategy Assessment and Plan	2020 – Short term hot spots are identified and a solution provided.	Long term plan for infrastructure MCC
BMX Track at Yallarwah Park	NACRA and MCC – provide a plan and make a track	2020	
Picnic Facilities Heros Beach – landscaping, road and picnic facilities	NACRA and MCC	Request approved by Daniel Aldridge Manager Community Spaces, Recreation and Trades	Monitor at SARG
Access to Water – Medina Bay	Medina Bay Access Group NAC	In Progress 2021-2022	Consultation planned for April 2020
New Notice Board located on the corner of Gloucester St and North Arm Cove Rd.	NACRA and MCC	2020	
Designation Off Lead Area for Dogs	NACCAi	-	
Green Waste Strategy	NACCAi		
Lighting Promontory Way	MCC		

**Additional Ideas Development and Activities provided by responses.**

Boat Ramp

Swap Markets

Walking/Kayaking/Cycling Groups

Food Swap

Socials

Produce/plants

Trivia night

Ferry Service

Clean up rocks at Heros Beach

Open the Esplanade so that there is a road around the village

Children's Tennis Lessons



Shop

Signage

Road Signs

Reduction Speed limit to 60 on Carrington and North Arm Cove Road

Oysters are Ugly

Fire Protection

Exercise Equipment

Youth Group

Veranda at the kitchen side of the community centre

Off lead Dog Area

Town Water

Yearly Fete

Internet and TV Reception

New Notice Board

Green waste collection strategy for North Arm Cove