

Crescent Head CAG Meeting

Minutes

Date: Wednesday 10 September 2025

Venue: Crescent Head Surf Life Saving Club

Time: 4:30pm – 7:45pm

Kempsey Shire Council Staff:

Michael Jackson – Director Operations & Planning (Chair)

Caro Szary - Group Manager Strategic and Asset Planning

Liesa Davies – Group Manager Community Partnerships (Facilitator)

Grant Dennis - Design & Investigations Manager (Project Lead)

Mick Hanly – Community Engagement Manager

Lacey Treanor – Junior Community Engagement & Communications Officer

Carly Potter – Business Support Officer

Group Members:

Chloe Hobden-Welch	Lloyd Mather
Daniel Williams	Matthew Shannon
Fred Andrews	Pamela Bryant
Gail Ryan	Ross Foster
Jann Eason	Susie Hughes
Josh Dennis	Tom Vermeulen
Kerry Hudson	
Kempsey Local Aboriginal Land Council (KLALC) Representative	

Minute Taker: Mick Hanly, Community Engagement Manager and Lacey Treanor, Junior Community Engagement & Communications Officer.

1. Welcome & Apologies

The facilitator acknowledged country and opened the meeting, welcoming attendees. It was noted that Fred Andrews joined the meeting via MS teams. Apologies were received from Tom Vermeulen, Josh Dennis, and Carly Potter. It was noted that Matthew Shannon, Kerry Hudson, and the Kempsey Local Aboriginal Land Council (KLALC) Representative were not in attendance.

2. Our Rules

The facilitator shared, on the screen, the rules agreed by the Group at the start of their work and reminded members of their commitment to abide by these.

3. Recap of Previous Meeting & Minutes

The facilitator noted there were some proposed amendments to the minutes, because of comments from a member on the draft. Unfortunately, it was apparent that the updated draft minutes provided to members at the meeting had not printed with tracked changes to highlight these proposed changes, so the facilitator advised that the previous meeting minutes would be re-distributed via email for further review.



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There was some discussion on non-attendance by appointed representatives, and it was clarified that one appointed member had been removed from the group, due to non-attendance.

In addition, clarification was provided by Council staff around the parking bay dimensions (45° vs. parallel vs. perpendicular), accommodation for longer vehicles in the draft concept plan, as there had been an error in previous advice.

4. CAG Role and Moving Forward

The facilitator thanked members of the group for their ongoing contribution and reminded members of their role as an advisory group 'collaborating' with Council, and the end goal of reaching a point where staff could make a recommendation to Council on the adoption of draft concept plan for the foreshore and Willow St precincts, as developed with the Group and with input from the community.

The facilitator noted the significant number of recent emails, calls and texts from the group to staff advocating on specific issues and asking questions as the project reached this 'pointy' end of discussions. It was acknowledged that conversations have narrowed to the 'contentious issues', as they usually do at this stage of the project. Members were encouraged not to lose sight of the bigger picture and all that has been well supported to this point.

The facilitator confirmed that discussions at the last meeting were exploratory, and the options agreed for further consideration at the last meeting, would be further explored (with additional information and analysis) at this meeting to try and reach a point of an agreed updated draft.

Staff noted that 'in an ideal world' they hoped to be able to take a consensus position from the Group to Council, however, if this were not possible, they may need to present options, for Council decision.

It was noted that when a report is presented to Council, the community will be able to apply to speak in support or against the recommendation in the public forum on the evening prior to the meeting.

5. Engagement Results Recap

Noting questions regarding analysis of the 'other' survey responses at and since the last meeting, the absence of a couple of members at the last meeting, and to provide context for the matters to be further considered at this meeting, the facilitator and project lead presented an overview of the community feedback received during the exhibition period. This included themes identified from 'other' comments.

There was debate among the group over the authenticity of survey results, given the use of a 'survey guide' during some of the engagement period. One member noted that this and a range of other activities may influence outcomes. Council acknowledged different categories of influence but stressed all feedback is presented to the Group for consideration.

In considering the community feedback and mechanisms used, other matters discussed included the potential for duplicate (invalid) or influenced submissions, the consideration of face to face qualitative feedback, and challenges in broader community engagement.



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One member noted they have contacted a university professor seeking their professional opinion on community consultation analysis and presented the view that the survey data needed to be central to evidence-based decision making of the group, that further analysis of individual comment was needed and that due process was not being followed. Another member questioned how this could be done and was advised procurement of specialist data analysis is doable, usually at a cost.

One member urged the group to also consider the face to face and written submission sentiment. Council staff agreed survey data should be considered as one part of the consideration - along with face to face and written sentiment, the 'survey guide' and matters like safety and traffic flows, and balance between parking and greenspace, all of which have been discussed through the process.

6. Potential Foreshore Plan Modifications

The project lead noted agreement by the group at the last meeting to incorporate modifications relating to the draft concept as follows:

- Additional disabled parking near toilets
- Inclusion of shaded seating areas
- Provision of bike and e-bike parking.

He then recapped the four potential parking amendments which had been considered at the last meeting, with the majority of the group supporting further analysis for three of these. One member proposed the group reconsider the fourth option – a reduction in the size of the Area 15 greenspace to allow more foreshore parking. This proposal was not supported by the Group.

The project lead spoke to further analysis conducted by staff for each of the three potential parking amendments, providing top line figures and other considerations and then stepping through each in detail:

1. Convert the southern foreshore strip bordering the holiday park to perpendicular parking
2. Extend the carpark in place of the surf check
3. Change the drop off zone to perpendicular parking

The project lead also noted that overall, if all three parking arrangement amendments were to be agreed by the group, this would result in a net increase in carparks (potentially adding 29 parks to the 140 existing, which is the same as included in the concept plan) and a decrease in greenspace (a loss of 100-400m² depending on options chosen). It was noted that comparatively, the draft concept and options planning allow more space per carpark and wider roadway than is currently in place on the foreshore.

Options 1: Southern Foreshore Strip bordering the holiday park – perpendicular or parallel parking

The Group considered alternatives to the exhibited concept which had included parallel parking along the strip bordering the holiday park near the foreshore. The alternate options presented were perpendicular parks which would add 20 parking spaces but potentially



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reduce the foreshore greenspace width, unless the holiday park boundary were proposed to be moved.

The group discussed the benefits of additional parks along with matters relating to increased traffic along the foreshore strip, the potential for additional parking away from the foreshore/in Main Street and consideration of vehicle lengths.

With advice from Council staff that a recommendation could be made to Council, (and would be supported by staff), to further amend the holiday park boundary to retain the green foreshore strip as exhibited, the majority of CAG members supported the option to amend the design by replacing the parallel parking with perpendicular (and make this recommendation).

Options 2: Surf check vs extended parking

The group discussed the pros and cons of the surf check area vs replacing it with north facing carparking. Some members noted the importance of the visual amenity and efficient traffic flow (arguing that there would be less cars along the foreshore strip if they check the surf at this point). One member urged the group to make a decision based on survey result which had more respondents wanting the extended carpark and around 20% of respondents providing 'other/additional comments' in support of north facing carparks. Other group members and Council staff noted also considerations of information and knowledge gained throughout the planning and both engagement processes, including the risk of vehicles reversing into the turnaround and the potential use of the surf check as an emergency vehicle stopping bay.

Ultimately, the majority of members supported the retention of the surf check.

Options 3: Change the drop off zone to perpendicular parking, drop off and disability parking

The facilitator noted the recent correspondence from the Crescent Head School asking for Council to continue supporting the Crescent Head Community Markets which bring significant income to the school P&C. Staff also noted representations from and a recent meeting with the market coordinator. The Markets Coordinator raised a number of matters relating to the market space which could be considered as part of the detailed design and ultimately was supportive of the proposed amendment to perpendicular parking, which would add 9 additional parking spaces and drop off spaces.

The group discussed a range of considerations on the proposed change, including the loss of markets space (from 1060m² to 1000m²), the need for the bus drop off/turn around to move behind the surf club, that designated 'drop off' parks could be retained and disabled parks could be included close to the amenities.

It was agreed unanimously that the drop off zone be amended to reflect perpendicular parking, drop off parks and disability parking, with a small loss in green space.

7. Foreshore Concept – next steps

The facilitator noted to the group that only one of the three considerations had consensus support and invited ideas on how to reflect the group position in an updated draft. One member suggested that all members all agree to support the majority position on each item.



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This was agreed by all except one member and will be the basis on which Council staff prepare an amended draft concept plan.

The member dissenting further advocated for a review and reconsideration of the survey's individual comments, noting approximately 20% of respondents had made commentary wanting more north facing parking. This was separate to the support for extended parking in place of the surf check. There was no support for further consideration of the matter.

8. Potential Willow Street Concept Modification

The project lead presented the updated draft Willow Street concept plan, which had been developed in response to matters raised at the last meeting. He stepped through the considerations for the change, including improved traffic circulation, increased parking numbers (from 51 to 61), increased greenspace closer to Killick Creek (noting this offset only half of a 300m² portion of greenspace removed in place of parking and roadway in the updated draft).

The group discussed the changes, and they were supported unanimously.

9. Wrap Up & Next Steps

The facilitator thanked the group again for their time and efforts in what was a very long meeting. She explained to the group that staff would take away the outcomes of the meeting and finalise updated draft concept designs for the Foreshore and Willow Street precincts.

Staff anticipated that the next step would be a report to Council, but this would be considered further and they would be in touch with the group to confirm.

One member of the group expressed again their concerns around due process and the integration of community feedback. It was acknowledged that unfortunately, not all members were fully satisfied however the majority supported moving forward to try and work to an outcome and recommended draft to Council.

