

FEEDBACK REPORT – GLADSTONE / SMITHTOWN COMMUNITY CATCH-UP SEPTEMBER 2018

Overview: Around 30 people attended the Gladstone / Smithtown Community Catch-up in September. The workshop style format saw participants in table groups answering several questions and discussion topics.

The following report summarises the points that participants discussed and documented. It identifies key themes for further review in updating the Gladstone / Smithtown Community Plan.

1. What do you love?

	What do you love about your village?	
	Gladstone	Smithtown
People / Community	Quiet, respectful of each other and property Neighbourly Sense of community – SES, RFS, formed a CWA Branch	Sense of community Local spirit Family orientated Safe Village atmosphere
Village / Aesthetic	Attracts tourists Can't be built out Lack of traffic Not too urbanised - Limited kerb and gutter	Can't be built out Great wharf
Location	Close to beaches and towns Easy access – highway, airport, medical services, Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie	Central location – Proximity to larger centres – half way to Brisbane or Sydney Great environment – clean, safe area River / rural yet close to beaches
Lifestyle	Climate Recreational – great outdoors – relaxing Markets Art Gallery Lack of traffic Low crime	Sport – local football team Family orientated
Facilities	Park, playground, toilet block Shops, eateries River and wharf Pool Primary school and pre-school Hotel	Hall The smaller local school in both locations Bowling Club

Employment	Nestle Shops Cafes/eateries	Nestle – been very good employer for the Shire. Need to protect this business
Tourism	Gallery – huge asset Eateries Heritage walks Historical buildings Markets River.	

Key Themes: This summary shows that the location, lifestyle, village atmosphere and the sense of community are highly valued attributes.

2. Where do we want to get to?

	Where do we want to get to?	
	Gladstone	Smithtown
People / Community	Gallery, emergency services etc – need more members, enhance the existing sense of community	
Infrastructure	More street lighting Improve roads Gladstone Hall – restoration and maintenance	Drainage– Improvements and maintenance Condition of roads – Morton Avenue mentioned Footpaths – access and mobility issues. People have to go on roads Improved and consistent signage for both villages Smithtown Hall improved/maintained
Flood Mitigation	Drainage both in village and outlying areas Levee banks Stock refuges (Old Station Road and Seale Road) Warning system starting from Bellbrook Erosion and weed management	Drainage both in village and outlying areas Levee banks Stock refuges (Old Station Road and Seale Road) Warning system starting from Bellbrook Erosion and weed management

Facilities	Community playground Heat the swimming pool – all year use Improve camp draft facilities Upgrade park – shade – picnic tables – bike track. Provide leash free areas Upgrade river access and swimming options Gladstone Hall – repair the front	Park upgrade including off-leash area and start a community picnic Rec for school aged children and teens Boat ramp cleaned up and upgraded Sporting field upgrade including lighting Keep bowling club open Dredging of river for better boat access
Tourism	Upgrading historic walk – signs and plaques. Develop an app for the walk Destination signage More promotion including apps Public art trail Time limited parking – encourage campervans for overnight stays	More promotion including apps Highway signage celebrating both towns More farmgate stalls
Other	Noxious weeds – Tropical Soda Apple, eradication / management MV Food Bowl participation at Gladstone Markets Communication improvements including consultation. Letter box drops – not everyone uses computers Respond to correspondence	Maintain eco system and river health Kerbside pick up Water pressure and quality issues at Belmore River improved Develop a Smithtown to Gladstone walk, marking out the distance and installing exercise equipment along the route

Key Themes: The critical role that appropriate flood mitigation plays remains important to these communities; facilities that enable active community connections are also highlighted.

3. Priority Rankings

Each participant reviewed the notes compiled from questions 1 and 2 and placed their two votes on the issues they felt are the highest priority for the future. These votes weren't separated into individual villages but give a strong sense of the focus on facilities and tourism opportunities.

Priorities – ranked from the wall dots. Not necessarily specific to either village

- Park** upgrade including:
- Interactive and multi-purpose for all ages
 - Basketball / netball court
 - Bike track
 - Seating
 - Water bubbler
 - Toilet block upgrade
 - Shade cover for play area

Tourism

Signage for both towns:

- Highway destination signage
- At different intersections

Historical walk upgrade including:

- Better signage
- Better plaques
- Better brochures / an app / QR code

Grey nomad overnight parking – time limited, paid, number limited.

Improved use of technology to promote both towns eg. WikiCamps app.

Macleay River – including riverbank

- Weed management (issue near Smithtown Medical Centre)
- Erosion control
- Netted swimming area
- Dredging for boat access

Flood mitigation improvements:

- Drainage both in town and outlying areas
- Levee banks
- Stock refuges (Old Station Road and Seale Road)
- Warning system (from Bellbrook)

Football field upgrade including lighting

Gladstone Hall restoration of exterior walls

Water pressure and quality Left and Right Bank, Belmore River

Footpath upgrades and night time lighting

4. How can Council and the community work together?

How do we work together?

Improve communication – 2 way

- Need to capture all population groups / demographics through use of different platforms, including community meetings, surveys, social media, council app.
- Want to know who to talk to for specific issues – have a dedicated staff contact for community conversations.
- Establish community reference groups with community champions.
- Respond to requests.
- Quarterly “Coffee with Council” – meet and talk to staff and/or Councillors, what’s happening in the community, what’s working, what’s not.

Community to take ownership for own villages

Need more compliance inspections



**Please note – questions were also received from the floor on the night and were answered where possible, but have also been included with more detailed responses in the separate Q&A document.