

**Questions Submitted in Writing – Special Council Meeting – 20 April 2022**

**Cathy Donovan**, President U3A Apollo Bay and member of the Apollo Bay Community Hall Committee on behalf of the Apollo Bay Community Hall Committee and user groups (including the U3A, Playgroup, Arts Inc, GORH and Marrar Woorn) would like to ask the following question of Council at their meeting on Wednesday 20th of April 2022 in Apollo Bay.

- 1. Can Council please separate the Community Hall cleaning from the Council's cleaning contract and reimburse Great Ocean Road Health for regular cleaning of the Hall (based on the same value as is currently proportionate with the Council's cleaning contract).**

**Background**

The Community Hall is rarely cleaned by Council contractors (who have to travel to Apollo Bay from Colac). Despite regular and frequent requests (made by the Hall Committee to Council) they are apparently not able to commit to cleaning on regular days or prior to specific activities. Committee members have been often informed of filthy toilets having to be cleaned by user groups, floors being dirty and in need of sweeping, band aids on the bench of the kitchen, etc. These things could potentially be a health hazard to users, particularly during COVID.

The Hall Committee has flagged concerns about the lack of cleaning of the Hall with Ian Seuren and the potential for the GORH to assist. The GORH Director of Community Services has flagged lack of cleanliness as an issue with Ian Seuren, as the hospital runs exercise classes at the Hall and at current standards the Hall fails to meet GORH's requirements for cleaning/OH&S/Covid. GORH continued use of the Hall is an integral part of the income for the business plan for the Hall going forward.

The Hall Committee has spoken with the CEO of GORH, who has indicated that they could have their cleaners clean the Hall twice weekly at a user pays cost.

***Response from General Manager Development and Community Services***

Council is happy to work with the Apollo Bay Community Hall Committee, which has requested to become a Community Asset Committee and is subject to consideration at today's meeting, and Great Ocean Road Health to investigate alternative arrangements for the cleaning of the Apollo Bay Senior Citizens' Centre to ensure required service levels are met.

**Bob Knowles**, Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce

- 1. When will Council release the \$5,000 allocated to the Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce in last year's budget? We understand this token payment to be for general admin in recognition of our work in support of Council locally.**

***Response from General Manager Development and Community Services***

Funding towards the Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce in the current year's budget is subject to both organisations entering into a Memorandum of Understanding which is due to be negotiated in May/June. The MOU will outline the responsibilities and accountabilities of both organisations to ensure the funds are expended appropriately.

**Jenny Barrett**, Climate Action Team

- 1. While only a small number of Council's constituents might have been watching, some of us have noticed that in its formal Council Plan of 2021, Council committed to develop a Climate Change Action Plan by June 2022. But there is still no sign of a plan. This is not insignificant to residents of Apollo Bay and Marengo because predicted sea level rise seriously threatens our coastal environment and infrastructure, our towns 'futures' - as do worsening bushfires, floods and drought.**

At the Council meeting in March, the General Manager Environment and Infrastructure told a questioner that despite last year's formal commitment, Council had to review its capacity to develop a Climate Change Action Plan in the set timeframe.

Given that Council has now had a month to conduct this review, can you please tell me when we can expect to see a draft of a Climate Change Action Plan for Colac Otway.

***Response from General Manager Environment and Infrastructure***

Council is committed to preparing a new Environment Strategy and a Climate Change Action Plan. Our thinking is that both of these key pieces of strategic work will require significant community engagement, which we plan to do. Our thinking is that the Environment Strategy should be prepared first as it is the overarching strategy for a wide range of environmental considerations, climate change being one. We anticipate that the community led draft Environment Strategy would be in the community engagement phase from May this year and be adopted by Council around the end of this calendar year or the beginning of 2023. Once that foundation work is in place we will turn our attention to developing a range of action plans to come from the Strategy and we would anticipate that the Climate Action Plan would be the first of these.

**Carol Wilmink, Apollo Bay**

**Re: Agenda item 8.3 Establishment of Apollo Bay Senior Citizens' Centre Community Asset Committee**

**Will the newly formed 'Community Asset Committee' now be responsible for ALL management issues at the Colac Otway Shire owned Apollo Bay Senior Citizens Hall; including - raising the funds to purchase land to increase the parking from currently 3 spaces – to a number adequate for the use of our community hall? This will need to accommodate those who may need to seek 'refuge' in the hall during a bushfire in our busy summer season, when visitors parking overflows from the Great Ocean Road back several blocks.**

***Response from General Manager Environment and Infrastructure***

Council has a standard schedule of responsibilities for Community Asset Committees which outlines the responsibilities of Council and the responsibilities of the Community Asset Committee. Under the schedule, major maintenance and upgrade projects remain the responsibility of Council, however that doesn't preclude collaborative projects between both parties if appropriate. Whilst the Committee can raise funds to go towards improvement of the facility, there is no pre-determined requirement from Council on what funds should be spent on. Expanding car parking in this area is not something Council is currently considering.

Apollo Bay's designated Bushfire – Place of Last Resort is the foreshore area between Nelson and Moore Streets. Council's consistent message during a bushfire is to gather at this location because it has been assessed by the CFA and other partners as meeting the very stringent requirements for Places of Last Resort. In addition, Council would use other facilities in Apollo Bay as an Emergency Relief Centre.

**Jacinta Tobin**

**The Rec Reserve Apollo Bay has been taken over by GORCAPA as land manager (under 18E of the CROWN LAND (Reserves) Act 1978). The area has three overlays. Each of those overlays requires a permit for building works.**

(– see here for erosion management ([https://planning-schemes.api.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/vpp/44\\_01.pdf?\\_ga=2.21113851.1985995809.1649052454-1700948188.1649052454](https://planning-schemes.api.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/vpp/44_01.pdf?_ga=2.21113851.1985995809.1649052454-1700948188.1649052454)), here for flood inundation (

[schemes.api.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/vpp/44\\_04.pdf?\\_ga=2.21113851.1985995809.1649052454-1700948188.1649052454](https://planning-schemes.api.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/vpp/44_04.pdf?_ga=2.21113851.1985995809.1649052454-1700948188.1649052454)) and here for environmental significance ([https://planning-schemes.api.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/vpp/42\\_01.pdf?\\_ga=2.21113851.1985995809.1649052454-1700948188.1649052454](https://planning-schemes.api.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/vpp/42_01.pdf?_ga=2.21113851.1985995809.1649052454-1700948188.1649052454)\_)

1. **Can the council advise whether a permit has been obtained in accordance with each of these overlays?**

***Response from General Manager Development and Community Services***

The recreation reserve site is affected by overlays under the Planning Scheme on the southern side. The overlays do not apply to the more elevated parts of the lands fronting Gambier Street. The most recent planning permit application for the site resulted in a permit issued in December 2021 for temporary shipping container worker accommodation. Future proposals by GORCAPA for works on the site will need to comply with the planning scheme and may trigger the need for planning permits. Planning permission would not be required for camping improvements on the area of land not affected by overlay controls.

2. **Under Section 18E of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* the land manager of a site is required to act consistently with the Great Ocean Road Strategic Framework plan, a document that the Minister is required to prepare under the Great Ocean Road and Environs Protection Act 2020 which I cannot find. Under the Act, GORCAPA has not had regard to whether there is a “net gain” to the environment arising from the change in land use.**

**Can the council advise how the extension of the Recreation Reserve Accommodation into the new area on the hill (previously designated as open space by the Colac Otway Shire Council 2011 ) constitutes a “net gain” to the environment ?**

***Response from General Manager Development and Community Services***

The elevated land within the recreation reserve fronting Gambier Street has historically been used for camping, albeit as overflow camping in peak times. Questions about the way in which this land is used should be directed to the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority which are responsible for managing the site. A Master Plan is being developed for the reserve which will provide an opportunity for community input into the future use of the reserve land. It is noted that the Authority is in the very early stages of developing the Strategic Framework Plan referred to.

**Tim Cobb, Skenes Creek**

1. **As the Shire is aware, GORCAPA has plans to grab all the Rec Reserve land above future flood level for camping/glamping but there is no plan for flood protection or relocation of sporting facilities. The cost implications if the Shire (or GORCAPA) then needs to buy alternative land for future sporting facilities will be huge.**

**Does the Shire have a long term plan for provision of sporting facilities in Apollo Bay. If so can I have a copy and will you publish it online for all to see and comment on?**

***Response from General Manager Development and Community Services***

The Apollo Bay Community Infrastructure Plan project looked for suitably-sized flat land as an alternative to the current recreation reserve, but wasn't able to identify any suitable sites. The CIP will recommend that the recreation reserve remain at its current location and be improved based on a future master plan. Council's view

is that the existing recreation reserve has the capacity to provide for the long term sporting requirements of the Apollo Bay and district community.

Council is keen to partner with GORCAPA, the reserve user groups and the wider community on the development of the recreation reserve masterplan, which will guide the future development of sporting facilities at the reserve. Our understanding is that the project is commencing in coming weeks and that an issues and opportunities paper should be available by mid-year.

We will make sure that sea level rise is something that is discussed as part of the masterplan so options such as lifting the courts or raising the oval in the future can be explored.

**2. It was great to hear that Council Officers advised GORCAPA months ago to consult the wider community about plans for the Apollo Bay Rec Reserve before making decisions on implementation.**

**Sadly GORCAPA's project team has (so far) decided to ignore that advice and not do any public consultation - much to the disgust of many in the community**

**Will the Mayor write to GORCAPA's CEO on behalf of our community to:**

- a) request that GORCAPA complete a Masterplan for the Apollo Bay Rec Reserve sporting and camping facilities before going ahead with its 'Camping Uplift' project**
- b) restate and reinforce COS's position that public community consultation on proposed changes at the Rec Reserve should take place before decisions are taken**

***Response from General Manager Development and Community Services***

Council continues to work closely with the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority on a number of projects including the Camping Uplift project. Whilst it would have been beneficial to complete the masterplan for the recreation reserve first, there is still scope for Council to work with the Authority and community to achieve good outcomes through the upcoming master planning process. The Authority has confirmed that it is commencing work on the Recreation Reserve Master plan in coming weeks, and that the project will involve broad community engagement.

**Norm Marriner**

**I have the following question regarding the proposed GORCAPA development on the hillside of the Recreation Reserve adjacent to Gambier St. Apollo Bay.**

**Due to the high volume of water runoff down Cartwright Street, which completely waterlogs the hillside of this proposed development, has council been approached to implement the extensive drainage infrastructure required in Cartwright St and Gambier St to rectify this problem and who will be paying for this work?**

***Response from General Manager Environment and Infrastructure***

The Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority has been in discussions with Council regarding development at the Recreation Reserve, in particular on the land abutting Gambier Street. These discussions have centred on potential traffic and road infrastructure impacts, including drainage, to ensure consideration of necessary works are incorporated and undertaken to support any development at this site.

**Jan and Laurie Shaw, Apollo Bay**

- 1. We are concerned about the traffic management from the Great Ocean Road to and from Gambier Street in relation to the access to the proposed development. Who is the responsible body and what action will be taken to ensure this doesn't cause accidents?**

***Response from General Manager Environment and Infrastructure***

The arterial road intersection is the responsibility of the Department of Transport (DoT).

The Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority has been in discussions with Council regarding development at the Recreation Reserve, in particular on the land abutting Gambier Street. These discussions have centred on potential traffic and road infrastructure impacts, to ensure consideration of necessary works are incorporated and undertaken to support any development at this site.

- 2. We believe there will be a safety issue with campers entering and leaving the site onto Gambier Street and this will become a Council responsibility. Does the Council have a management plan in place? And if so can we see it?**

***Response from General Manager Environment and Infrastructure***

No Council does not have a management plan in place. The Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority has been in discussions with Council regarding development at the Recreation Reserve, in particular on the land abutting Gambier Street and safety will be a key consideration.

**Ms Bateman , Southern Otways Sustainable Incorporated**

**Given that Colac Otway Shire has targets to reduce greenhouse emissions , and there is evidence that electrification can expedite these goals, what progress has the Shire made in the requested Licence Agreement for two EV charging stations in the Council car park in Pascoe Street, Apollo Bay?**

***Response from General Manager Development and Community Services***

Council provided support for an Apollo Bay community member to submit a grant application to the Destination Charging Across Victoria program for two fast EV chargers in Apollo Bay. The State government is yet to announce the successful projects to be funded through the program and Council look forward to progressing opportunities in Apollo Bay if funding is allocated.