

## Summary: PortBUG Position Paper.

Oct. 2013.

### Completing the Coast Park within Charles Sturt Council

#### 1. Outcomes:

- PortBUG strongly favours a balanced development outcome that acknowledges and gives appropriate weight to all interests and issues involved
- Coast Park promises numerous benefits for communities. To realize and enjoy these benefits in the longer term we must ensure the protection of sensitive, unique and rare coastal and marine environments.
- This protection will require *active* and *ongoing* management, public education and cooperation.
- local communities should be recognised for their natural sense of 'ownership' and responsibility for their immediate environments and enlisted as key partners in ensuring that this active and ongoing management occurs.
- In the Coast Park planning process the PortBUG recommends reference to 'bicycle users' rather than 'cyclists' to avoid misunderstandings re. the most likely uses of the pathway by the public.
- by accommodating bicycle use on the Coast Park a wider range of visitors will visit the Tennyson sections in a manner most likely to encourage social and environmental respect, enhancing potential for active and positive public 'management' and recognition of need to actively preserve the unique values of the Dunes area.
- *all* interest groups and designers should identify and focus on *a range* of mutually desirable and sought outcomes and ensuing design requirements. It is important to start with design fundamentals - identification of environmental values and the parameters for public access – to *ensure* that these values and parameters are the basis for *all* aspects of design.
- a Coast Park with good provision for bicycles will facilitate a more sustainable future for the sensitive coastal areas of Adelaide by ensuring a stronger basis for their preservation and support.
- the requirements and needs of bicycle users in the design of the Coast Park *converge* rather than compete with the requirements of other groups.
- Coast Park design is not simply an engineering exercise - it is an opportunity to bring together community development objectives with those

of conservation and heritage.

## 2. Planning Principles & Processes:

- access to the Tennyson Dunes section of the Coast Park should be universal *within agreed key conservation parameters*.
- this access should allow all users - residents, visitors of all ages, people with mobility aids, parents and children, bicycle and skateboard users and so on – *an acceptable experience* of the Coast Park environment via access to the adjacent Coastal Park.
- each identified & specific section of the Tennyson Dunes Coast Park should to be seen as a discrete & unique 'place' rather than as a single zone or 'route'.
- the creation of several unique 'places' will require a 'place making' process & a definite & active level of inputs to ensure appropriate development & management.
- 'place making' demands that each of these environments must be first identified as unique & requiring specific treatment & design.
- where possible & practicable, lower cost & easily replaced surfaces & treatments should be chosen for areas at high risk of erosion or where potential for the environmental impact of pathway works are highest.
- permeable surfaces should be used to reduce water runoff and avoid seed transfer into the dune environment.
- bitumen should not be used on these sections of the Coast Park's pathways for aesthetic, environmental & functional reasons.
- path surfaces should lend themselves to maintenance by local residents & volunteers
- attention in this stretch of the Coast Park should be given to creation of multi-use 'nodes' that will physically & visually disrupt the continuity of the pathway.
- these areas would typically be placed at junctions of the pathway with access points and/or ramps down to the beach. 'Nodes' could include interpretive viewing areas, outdoor showers, drink fountains, emergency phones, emergency vehicle access points, bicycle parking facilities, seating, rubbish collection, shaded picnic areas, small playgrounds & swings & disability access provisions.
- irrigation should promote use of existing grassed areas but be specifically

designed to prevent spread of weeds into dunes.

- materials and design should add value to the area for adjacent residents & should reflect the existing built environment where appropriate.
- where grassed areas exist, the pathway should be located so as to provide a grassed 'buffer' area between pathway and property frontages & to protect invasion of weeds and grasses into dunes.
- where possible, natural barriers should be used rather than fences & the pathway should separate 'made' areas (eg; lawn etc) & 'unmade' (dune vegetation).
- non-native vegetation should be replaced over time with species native to the area as opportunities arise.
- the pathway should deviate where required around existing high-value vegetation points as identified & recorded by the Council with dune-care authorities.
- the pathway should work within existing dune topography and not attempt to create uniformity of grade or direction for its own sake. We note that while this may limit point-to-point access to a small degree for less able visitors, this compromise should be considered essential to maintenance of the special status of key sections of the dune precinct!
- while universal access to all sections of the pathway is desirable, uniformity of either design or *degree* of access should not be considered essential nor should it compromise key environmental considerations.
- Park and pathway design should actively reduce the impacts of both pedestrian and bicycle users in especially ecologically sensitive or topographically challenging areas.
- the benefits of continuous sight-lines should be balanced with those associated with slower walking, running and riding speeds. Longer-distance sight lines should be seen as a lesser priority relative to issues required in developing a sense of 'place' for each section of the Coastal Way. Sight lines should be adequate for slow-speed safety and mixed-traffic security.
- additional parallel paths or on alternative road treatments should be considered where congestion points seem likely or where especially sensitive or vulnerable dune areas would benefit from reduced traffic by encouraging some exercise-oriented bicycle users and runners to take more accessible bypass options over a short distance.
- Park access should be integrated with adjoining walking and cycling facilities, especially with other sections of the Coast Park and local area bicycle and walking networks.

- in all matters, every effort should be made to retain a significant degree of local-community management and 'ownership' or custody of the design, construction and ongoing maintenance processes.

### 3. Planning Processes:

- all stakeholders, including groups and individuals, should be able to provide views re the planning and development of the Coast Park.
- Council should continue to offer on-line, face to face and representative avenues for all parties to present views and preferences.
- open public meetings should recur at several key points in the planning process (eg; to present a final 'preferred plan' in visual form)
- a Reference Group should be established, as soon as is practicable & comprise primarily representatives of organisations & groups that have specific stake in the Park.
- the Reference Group should have the authority to give advice & should also be *provided* with timely & detailed advice as to options being considered by the decision making bodies (ie Local and State governments).
- the Reference Group should be open, with discussions reported online to the constituents of all groups involved & indeed to the wider public
- all key agencies should be included in the Reference Group to ensure the most relevant and timely discussions and information can occur.
- the Reference Group should continue throughout all stages of the Planning and Implementation of the development & should be considered as a model for longer term coordination & community involvement in park development.
- the Council should examine recent problems in construction of an adjoining area of the Park at Point Malcolm & report to the Reference Group on how similar destruction of rare vegetation can be avoided.

### 4. Essential Realities:

- the City of Charles Sturt is under certain contractual obligations to the State Government to ensure completion of its section of the Coast Park
- that at all indications point to the necessity to retain local community and council control of the project & long-term local management of the Coast Park if the outcomes held in common are to be achieved.
- achieving the highly valued outcomes sought by all stakeholders will only be possible if localised community control can be maintained & if a unity of purpose at the community level can be developed.

This Summary Position Paper is based on a longer document developed by Tim Walsh & Sam Powrie for The Port Adelaide Bicycle User Group  
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