

# Ulmarra Bypass

## Community Economic Development Plan

May 2018



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# 1 Background

## 1.1 Pacific Highway Upgrade

The Woolgoolga to Ballina project will upgrade 155km of Pacific Highway. The project starts about six kilometres north of Woolgoolga (north of Coffs Harbour) and ends approximately six kilometres south of Ballina. As part of this upgrade, the Pacific Highway deviates from its current alignment approximately 13.5km south of Grafton (Gwydir Hwy intersection) at Glenugie to a more easterly route. As a result several towns within the Clarence Valley will be bypassed. The distance travelled from Glenugie to Tyndale (proposed new interchanges) on the new Highway alignment will be 34.9km, whilst on the current highway alignment it is 43.8km. Travel time on the current route is around 32 minutes. For a light vehicle travel time on the new Highway alignment it will be around 19 to 20 minutes. Hence, Council and the Ulmarra community have identified the importance of planning for the continued sustainability of the village.

## 1.2 Objectives of this Plan

As a result of the Pacific Highway upgrade, an Ulmarra Bypass Community Economic Development program (CED) is being formulated to address the ramifications of this and to create opportunities for the village once the bypass is open in 2020. Roads & Maritime Service (RMS) research<sup>1</sup> indicates positive impacts to bypassed towns and villages however; they stress the importance of pre and post bypass proactive planning.

The Ulmarra CED program aim is to harness local skills and resources to plan together to implement practical, achievable community and business projects. Benefits of creating a Plan include; cohesive strategic planning on issues that affect the community, wider networking opportunities, greater impact and value for businesses and community, and added value to council.

The role of this Plan is to:

- act as a framework to direct activities identified by the Ulmarra community
- to document the outcomes of the community planning workshops
- to facilitate cooperative relationships between the community and external partners; and
- to formalise the goals and objectives of the community to prioritised issues and project activity.

## 1.3 Strategic Imperative

In developing the Ulmarra Bypass CED Plan it is essential it aligns with local, NSW and Australian Government strategies, especially if resources or grant funds are required. Appendix A gives an overview of how the CED Plan might align with some of these strategic actions identified by government.

## 1.4 Plan Methodology

The program commenced with two initial workshops in Ulmarra. The aim of the workshops was to better understand the needs and priorities of the community;

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<sup>1</sup> Economic Evaluation of Town Bypasses – August 2011

the first encouraged a community conversation as to what Ulmarra should look like after the bypass. The community had the opportunity to discuss their issues and concerns in relation to the sustainability of Ulmarra. The second follow up meeting was held to develop a series of actions to drive this vision.

The draft plan will be placed on Public Exhibition for further feedback from the Ulmarra community, before being adopted by Council.

- ✓ Community Conversation - 26 March 2018
- ✓ Workshops to develop actions - 7 May 2018
- ✓ Draft Plan to be distributed to the Ulmarra community for comment - May 2018
- ✓ Feedback was received from Ulmarra Village Inc. and a member of the community
- ✓ Workshop to review the Plan and identify community project leaders - July 2018
- ✓ Finalisation of draft Plan and adoption by Council - August 2018

## 1.5 Ulmarra Progress Association

Fruit bat colonies at Bailey Park, the recent closure of the swimming pool and a village sewerage system were topics which attracted many comments and feedback from the community at both forums. At the second community meeting held on 7 May - it was decided by the attendees that an Ulmarra Progress Association would be created to champion these key local concerns with Council.

## 2 About Ulmarra

### 2.1 Historic Ulmarra

Ulmarra is a National Trust Classified river port on the banks of the Clarence River, 17km from Grafton, in the Clarence Valley Council Local Government Area (LGA).

The village is home to Historic buildings, a river ferry and an antique charm. All reminiscent of a time when the river was the vital transport route in the district. Ulmarra is located on the deep channel side of the Clarence River. The buildings in River Street and Coldstream Street create an image which is redolent of the village's past as a 19th-century river port. So convincing is the historic authenticity of the buildings that the Commercial Hotel was used in the 1987 television mini-series *Fields of Fire* as a 1929 Queensland pub when, amusingly, it was neither built in 1929 nor in Queensland.

### 2.2 Aboriginal Ulmarra

Ulmarra's name comes from an Aboriginal word meaning 'Bend in the river'. The Yaegl people had three associated dialects, which were spoken on the coast around the mouth of the Clarence River, upriver of Maclean, and in the area around Ulmarra (*Clarence Valley Aboriginal Heritage Study; Maclean community meeting 8/4/2014; MALCC 2014*). In 1882 records show Aboriginal people were working for local farmers in the Ulmarra district. The *Clarence Valley Aboriginal Heritage Study* also identifies the Jarrawarra Waterhole in Ulmarra as sacred:

*The Jarrawarra waterhole is a sacred site for Aboriginal people in Ulmarra, despite not being associated with a Dreamtime being. The waterhole, located on the*

*Orara River just north of Bull Paddock is said to be the residing place of the spirit of an Aboriginal Stockman. It is said that an Aboriginal man drowned here in the 1890s after a violent flood.*

### 2.3 Settlement History

European settlement of the area dates from the late 1830s, following the arrival of timber getters. Land was used mainly for dairying and agriculture, with some sugarcane farming. Population was minimal until the late 1850s, when the village of Ulmarra was established. Some growth took place during the late 1800s. The most significant development occurred in the post-war years, especially from the 1970s. The population increased slightly between 1996 and 2006 as new dwellings were added to the area. The population and dwelling stock were relatively stable between 2006 and 2011.

### 2.4 Demographic Information

A summary of the 2016 Census of the Ulmarra community profile (Appendix B) shows the population at 437 with the largest representation being *Older worker & pre-retirees* (70) and *Empty nesters and retirees* (74). *Couples without children* (60) and *Lone person households* (58) are the largest represented in the total 183 households.

The largest sector represented in household income (41%) is those earning *\$650 to \$1,449* and housing tenure is predominately *Rentals* 34.6%.

65% of households are *connected to the internet*.

## 3 SWOT

A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning technic used to help identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT helps to focus on strengths, minimise threats and take the greatest advantage of opportunities.

Some of the issues, concerns, strengths, and opportunities that were raised in the first community conversation were used to develop the following SWOT analysis.

#### Strengths

- Clarence Riverside aspect is appealing to visitors and residents
- Convenient location between Grafton and Yamba with access via road and river
- National Trust village classification and visually appealing heritage buildings
- Passionate community with a strong sense of local pride
- Local Public School appeals to young families
- Already home to a number of visitor attractors including hospitality, accommodation, attraction and retail businesses

#### Weaknesses

- Unsewered village
- Swimming pool closed
- Faded interpretive signage and no village heritage trail
- Prone to flooding
- Lack of shops and businesses that service local needs

- Lack of job opportunities within the town
- Lack of support for businesses
- Need to travel to other towns for health and medical services

#### Opportunities

- Riverine location and heritage
- Leverage off the Country Music Muster
- Leverage off Jacaranda Festival and its Open Garden program
- Convenient, lower cost option for first time buyers working in Grafton or Maclean
- Less large semi trailers and road freight with the realignment of the Pacific Highway
- Attract Recreational Vehicle (RV) visitors
- Ulmarra business networks encouraging collaboration, training and collaborative marketing
- Promote Ulmarra's Heritage and water based attractions
- Encourage bicycle touring (reduction in heavy traffic)
- Improved infrastructure; redevelopment of Bailey Park
- Creation of Ulmarra Riverside Precinct Plan as identified in Clarence River Way Masterplan
- Tell Ulmarra's story - interpretive signage celebrating Aboriginal, built and riverine heritage
- Leverage off the opportunity for tourists to get off the M1
- Upgrade of Ulmarra Wharf facilities to encourage more water based visitors and tourism
- Attract day trippers from other Clarence Valley towns

#### Threats

- Fruit bat colony at Bailey Park
- Lack of an overarching plan means funding for 'shovel ready' projects is missed
- Ad hoc design (no planning or plan)
- Decline in population age
- Apathy, doing nothing
- Lack of promotion
- Fragmentation of community
- Highway bypass may decrease visitation if no action is taken

## 4 Goal

At the community workshop, participants were "What do you want the outcome of this work to be?" "What does Ulmarra look like in the future?"

The community response included:

- Sustainable beyond the highway
- Viable
- Attract families
- Active

- Safe
- A destination
- Friendly

From these we can create a community vision. A vision statement comes from the heart and reflects their desires and wishes for their community in the future.

*Ulmarra is a friendly destination which provides a safe, active environment for the community; and attracts families and visitors to create a viable, sustainable community beyond the highway*

## 5 Community Engagement

Ulmarra residents demonstrated pride in their community and the desire for the village to be sustainable after the bypass.

Rather than focus on the negatives this may bring, this can-do community understood the bypass provides many opportunities for the development of Ulmarra by increasing business and for growing as a tourist destination within the Clarence Valley.

Two community workshops were held with nearly 50 residents attending each workshop.



## 5.1 Community Priorities

The Ulmarra community developed a list of actions and projects which they felt would drive Ulmarra to achieving their vision.

The actions were then divided into areas of similar areas of interest or themes. These were:

- Business Development
- Promotion and Marketing
- Infrastructure
- Events

The community then 'voted' on the actions they determined to be their highest priorities.\*

Actions	Category	Votes
Improve marina, wharf, yacht facilities, marina space, pontoons and moorings	Infrastructure	17
Sewerage	Infrastructure	8
Investigate holding a Busker Festival to coincide with Country Music Muster	Events	4
Prioritise footpaths, curbs and guttering improvements	Infrastructure	4
Renew tourism brown Heritage signage	Marketing & Promotion	4
Promote Historical side of village	Marketing & Promotion	3
Organise an 'Opera' or 'Jazz on the river festival'	Events	3
Investigate requirements and need for roundabout at corner of Coldstream & River Streets	Infrastructure	3
Local businesses to liaise with council on hanging baskets and flowers outside shops	Business Development	2
Investigate creating a parking near current RFS site	Infrastructure	2
Promote Ulmarra as a part of a Clarence Valley art trail	Marketing & Promotion	2
Investigate alfresco and outdoor dining options	Business Development	2
Investigate having blue road signage highlighting village amenities on highway	Infrastructure	2
Improve toilet facilities	Infrastructure	2
Upgrade showground facilities (toilets, showers) and encourage overnight stays (Maclean model)	Infrastructure	2
Organise regular street / craft markets or market day - Think Bellingen	Events	2
Promotion of Ulmarra as a film set location	Marketing & Promotion	1
Promote as a place for families to settle	Marketing & Promotion	1



Beautify village; with flowers outside businesses, grass cutting	Infrastructure	1
Maintain road verges to make river visible	Infrastructure	1
Promote scenic trail along the Clarence River	Marketing & Promotion	1
Create a 'Visit Ulmarra' Facebook page	Marketing & Promotion	1
Investigate visitor service provision in the village	Marketing & Promotion	1
Investigate ways that fruit bats could become a tourism feature - Education Tourism	Events	1
Investigate angle parking one side of Coldstream Street.	Infrastructure	1
Re-open pool	Infrastructure	1
Improve amenities for families and children	Infrastructure	1
Raise the southern end of the Mad Mile to enable access to Grafton during flood	Infrastructure	1
Encourage RV travellers with RV Friendly short and long stay parking	Infrastructure	1

\*Note: there are additional Actions. The Actions above are the ones that received votes.



## 6 Objectives and Actions

All of the actions are divided into similar areas of interest or themes.

These are:

- Business Development
- Promotion and Marketing
- Infrastructure
- Events

The workshop attendees also prioritised these into; instant wins, great ideas with barriers and someday maybe.

### 6.1 Business Development

Objective: To provide business support that directly contributes to business growth and collaboration.

Actions	Priority
Local businesses to liaise with council on hanging baskets and flowers outside shops	Instant Wins
Investigate alfresco and outdoor dining options	Great ideas with Barriers
Encourage cross business collaboration; social media training and tagging	Instant Wins
Encourage businesses to open consistently especially on weekends and public holidays	Instant Wins
Encourage businesses to access heritage grants through Council and NSW Govt.	Instant Wins
Provide opportunities for social media training on Facebook, Instagram, TripAdvisor etc.	Instant Wins
Encourage Ulmarra business to keep information updated and current on MyClarenceValley website	Instant Wins
Organise community bus - on the hour between Country Muster and Ulmarra	Instant Wins

### 6.2 Promotion and Marketing

Objective: To raise awareness of the village of Ulmarra and all its offerings including attractions both natural and built.

Actions	Priority
Renew Tourism Brown Heritage Signage	Instant Wins
Ongoing promotion of Ulmarra's heritage	Instant Wins
Promote Ulmarra as part of a Clarence Valley Art Trail	Instant Wins

Promote scenic trail along the Clarence River.	Instant Wins
Create 'Visit Ulmarra' Facebook page	Instant Wins
Investigate visitor service provision in the village	Instant Wins
Promote Ulmarra on the Clarence Valley Cattle and Cane Trail	Instant Wins
Promotion of Ulmarra as a films location	Instant Wins
Ongoing promotion of Ulmarra's river and heritage attractions on tourism website and social channels	Instant Wins
Promote as a place for families to settle	Instant Wins
Promote businesses holding events	Instant Wins

### 6.3 Events

Objective: to encourage more community led events to drive visitation.

Actions	Priority
Investigate holding a Busker Festival to coincide with Country Music Muster	Instant Wins
Organise an Opera or Jazz on the river festival	Great ideas with Barriers
Organise regular street/craft markets or market day - think Bellingen	Instant Wins
Investigate ways that Fruit Bats could become a tourism feature - Education Tourism	Great ideas with Barriers
Organise an Australia Day function	Instant Wins
Kids Fun Days, music, BBQ, games	Instant Wins
Garden competitions, garden group and open days coinciding with Jacaranda Festival	Instant Wins
Organise big markets at the Showground	Great ideas with Barriers
Work with local fishers to organise a fishing competition	Someday Maybe

### 6.4 Infrastructure

Objective: Improvements to the built environment.

Actions	Priority
Improve marina, wharf, boat ramp, yacht facilities, marina space, pontoons and moorings	Someday Maybe

Sewerage - See Item 1.5	Ulmarra Progress Assoc.
Re-open Pool - See Item 1.5	Ulmarra Progress Assoc.
Prioritise footpaths, curbs and guttering improvements	Instant Wins
Investigate requirements and need for roundabout at corner of Coldstream & River Street	Great ideas with Barriers
Investigate creating a parking area near current RFS site	Instant Wins
Investigate having blue road signage on the highway highlighting village amenities	Great ideas with Barriers
Improve toilet facilities	Great ideas with Barriers
Upgrade showground facilities (toilets, showers) and encourage overnight stays (Maclean model)	Great ideas with Barriers
Beautify village; with flowers outside businesses, grass cutting of public parks	Instant Wins
Maintain road verges to make river visible	Instant Wins
Investigate angle parking one side of Coldstream Street	Great ideas with Barriers
Improve amenities for families and children	Great ideas with Barriers
Raise the southern end of the Mad Mile to enable access to Grafton during flood	Someday Maybe
Encourage RV travellers with RV friendly short and long stay parking. Improve signage and facilities.	Someday Maybe
Ensure swings and slides, skate board/scooter area included in the Bailey Park Plan	Instant Wins
Improvements to waste management and public bins	Instant Wins
Provide canoe access beside boat ramp	Instant Wins
Create footpath from the village to the oval	Instant Wins
Repair roads leading to Ulmarra that are being used during highway diversion	Instant Wins
Plant more shade trees in the main street	Great ideas with Barriers
Plant herbs, edible gardens	Great ideas with Barriers
Include strategies for main street beautification in the Ulmarra Riverside Precinct and Village Plan	Great ideas with Barriers
Ensure adequate parking for RVs and Vans	Great ideas with Barriers

Basketball Courts	Great ideas with Barriers
Improve interpretive signage: including birdwatching, history, architecture, Aboriginal heritage	Great ideas with Barriers
Investigate the commercial viability of a 'River Cat' Ferry from Grafton to Yamba via Ulmarra	Someday Maybe
Investigate improving access for cyclists with the development of a cycleway to Grafton	Someday Maybe

## 7 The next step

Once the draft Plan is reviewed, further workshops will be held to commence implementation.

A more detailed action plan will be developed with responsible champions, timeframes, priorities, operational actions (to breakdown those action in sub actions). The community decided to start with the planning and development of the Instant Wins actions.



## 8 Appendix

### 8.1 Appendix A – Alignment with Local, NSW & Australian Government Strategies

In developing the Ulmarra Bypass CED Plan it is essential it aligns with local, NSW and Australian Government strategies, especially when leveraging resources or grant funds. Below is an overview of how the CED Plan might align with some of the strategic actions identified by government.

Clarence 2027 Community Strategic Plan:

- Encourage vibrant and welcoming towns and villages
- To have an attractive and diverse environment for business, tourism and industry
- Prepare precinct plans for centres bypassed by the Pacific Highway

North Coast Regional Plan 2036

- Historic Heritage is a major contributor to the region's identity and character. It also has the capacity to generate economic value, particularly through tourism

Clarence River Way Masterplan

- The establishment of Ulmarra as a specialised tourism destination into a vibrant river village in the Clarence Valley, focusing on its cultural and historical significance

Clarence Valley Tourism Industry Development and Marketing Plan

- Unify, train and enable the local tourism industry
- Develop experiences delivering the happiness and shared memories ethos
- Leverage infrastructure projects for tourism and relocation growth
- Assis the local tourism industry reach the regional average occupancy rate

NSW Visitor Economy Action Plan

- Increase visitation
- Grow physical capacity
- Renew and revitalise NSW destinations
- Improve the visitor experience
- Increase the visitor spend
- Make NSW more competitive

## 8.2 Appendix B – Ulmarra Community Profile

# Clarence Valley Council area

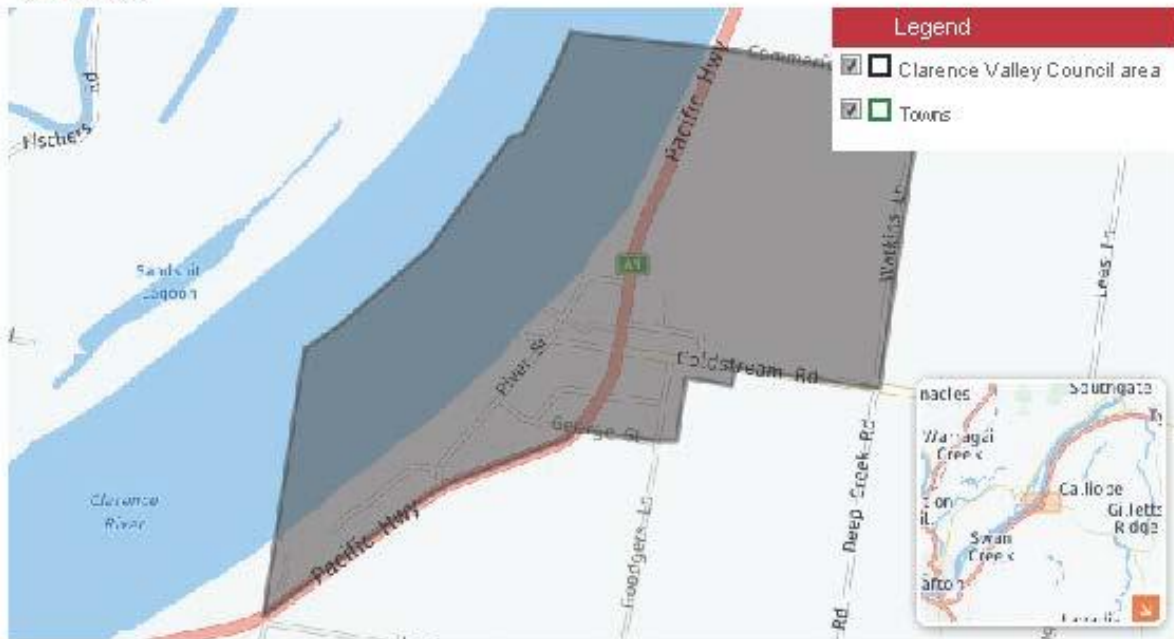
## Additional areas

Additional areas are summary profiles that present a sub-set of socio-demographic information and are designed for areas which have too small a population for detailed profiling.

**Please note that these are summary tables that include selected statistics drawn from the 2016 Census. Therefore the sum of these selected components may not equal the totals given in these tables.**

### Summary profile area

Ulmarra, 2016



Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.

### Ulmarra summary profile, 2016

Name	Number	%	Clarence Valley Council area	
			Number	%
<b>Population Summary</b>	--	--		<b>0.0</b>
Total Population	437	100.0		100.0
Males	202	46.2		49.6
Females	228	52.2		50.4
Australian citizens	401	91.8		89.9
Eligible voters (citizens 18+)	320	73.2		71.1
Indigenous population	40	9.2		6.3
Australian-born	379	86.7		83.7
Needs assistance due to age or disability	52	11.9		8.4
<b>Age Structure</b>	--	--		<b>0.0</b>

## Ulmarra summary profile, 2016

Name	Number	Clarence Valley Council area	
		%	%
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	15	3.4	4.9
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	34	7.8	8.3
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	31	7.1	7.1
Tertiary education/independence (18 to 24)	30	6.9	6.1
Young workforce (25 to 34)	29	6.6	8.2
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	64	14.8	16.2
Older workers & pre-retirees (50 to 59)	70	16.0	15.4
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	74	16.9	16.5
Seniors (70 to 84)	61	14.0	14.3
Frail aged (85 and over)	27	6.2	3.2
Total Population	437	100.0	100.0
<b>Household Types</b>	--	--	<b>0.0</b>
Couples with children	23	12.6	19.7
Couples without children	60	32.8	29.4
One parent families	25	13.7	10.8
Lone person households	58	31.7	26.3
Group households	8	4.4	2.8
Total households (inc. non-classifiable)	183	100.0	100.0
<b>Education</b>	--	--	<b>0.0</b>
Attending pre-school or primary school	43	9.8	9.0
Attending secondary school	19	4.3	5.7
Attending university or TAFE institution	21	4.8	3.4
Total persons (including those not attending)	437	100.0	100.0
<b>Dwelling Summary</b>	--	--	<b>0.0</b>
Separate houses	168	86.2	81.5
Medium and high density	23	11.8	12.1
Other dwellings (inc. Caravans, houseboats)	4	2.1	5.7
Occupied private dwellings	183	88.8	87.3
Unoccupied Dwellings	20	9.7	12.3
Non private dwellings	3	1.5	0.3
Total dwellings	206	100.0	100.0
<b>Housing Tenure</b>	--	--	<b>0.0</b>
Owned	52	25.0	36.6
Purchasing	40	19.2	21.3
Renting	72	34.6	21.0
Total households (inc. not stated and other)	208	100.0	100.0
<b>Household Income</b>	--	--	<b>0.0</b>
Less than \$650 (low)	52	31.3	26.9
\$650 to \$1,449 (lower middle)	69	41.6	38.4
\$1,449 to \$2,499 (upper middle)	22	13.3	15.8
\$2,500 or more (high)	3	1.8	8.2
Incomes not stated	20	12.0	10.7



## Ulmarra summary profile, 2016

Name	Number	Clarence Valley Council area	
		%	%
Total households	166	100.0	100.0
<b>Internet Connection</b>	--	--	<b>0.0</b>
Internet connection	119	65.0	69.1
No internet connection	54	29.5	21.9
Not stated	15	8.2	8.9
Total households	183	100.0	100.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016. Compiled and presented in profile.id by id, the population experts.

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