

Minutes of the Tourist Attraction Signposting Assessment Committee

Dungog Council Chambers, 198 Dowling St, Dungog

Members

Phil Oliver	Guidance and Delineation Manager, Roads & Maritime Services (RMS)
David Douglas	Regional Coordinator TASAC and Drive, Destination NSW
Tom Urban	TASAC Secretariat

Also present

Kellee McGilvray	Roads and Maritime Services
Ken Saxby	Roads and Maritime Services
Jamie Smoother	Roads and Maritime Services
Roger Stephan	Dungog Shire Council
Cameron Archer	Dungog Regional Tourism
Ken Rubeli	Dungog Regional Tourism
Nathan Goodbun	Cessnock City Council
Sarah Crawford	Dungog Contemporary
Amanda Dimeny	Bluegums Cabins

Apologies

David Brown	National Parks and Wildlife Service
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AGENDA ITEMS

1. PRESENTATIONS AND REGIONAL SIGNPOSTING ISSUES

1.1 Members' Report On-Site Inspections

Prior to the meeting, committee members drove from Sydney to Dungog and visited a number of attractions and places of interest.

Wirraway Aviation Museum was visited as part of a site inspection related to an application that was submitted to TASAC in April 2019. Observations from this visit can be found in section 4.5 of this document.

David Douglas and Phil Oliver also spent a considerable amount of time following signs to the Australian Reptile Park, Australian Walkabout Wildlife Park and Glenworth Valley Horse Riding in the Central Coast region. TASAC received correspondence from the Australian Reptile Park some time ago requesting a review of their signage as they were receiving complaints from confused visitors. A representative from the Australian Walkabout Wildlife Park also attended the TASAC meeting in May 2019 to discuss signage options.

NOTE: David Douglas phoned in to a meeting with RMS and the Australian Reptile Park to discuss these issues in more detail. This took place the day following the TASAC meeting.

Committee members also visited the accredited Dungog Visitor Information Centre (VIC) where they spoke with the staff and found them to be very helpful. It was noted that the VIC is not

particularly easy to find. Committee members identified one sign on the way into town and the building itself on the main street of Dungog is quite visible, however, locating the centre was still difficult. Additional signage was recommended with consideration to different entry points into the town.

1.2 Local Signposting Issues

Representatives from Dungog Regional Tourism provided an overview of tourism in the region. This overview included a series of images of the region's natural attractions which were shown as part of a visual presentation as well as a bound paper (provided in hard copy) detailing some of the matters for discussion.

A considerable amount of information was shared in order to provide adequate context around Dungog and the local tourism product. The key points that were discussed include the following:

- Dungog Shire consists of three main river valleys. The region is a part of the Barrington Tops which also constitutes the main tourism product. The three main nature-based areas of interest for visitors are the World Heritage Area of the National Park (mainly for intrepid visitors and hikers), Jerusalem Creek (managed by NPWS) and the area managed by Forestry Corporation which offers a more active camping experience. Forestry Corporation have also recently installed new signage to direct visitors on their own land.
- The area also consists of the town of Dungog as well as a series of villages with multiple guest houses located near Barrington Tops. The main holiday periods bring a significant spike in visitation to tourism businesses, with some overseas visitation to the region driven by the World Heritage listing.
- One noted issue was the mentality of visitors who think of Barrington Tops as the National Park only. Most vehicle access is actually through Forestry Corporation land, which also allows for more activities to be undertaken than would otherwise be permitted on National Parks land.
- Barrington Tops is a large area and can be accessed from a number of different points (including other local council areas). At present signage directs visitors to "Barrington Tops" and does not specify any more detail regarding which specific location this will lead to. Signage also contains the National Parks logo, which may be contributing to the lack of awareness around Forestry Corporation owned assets.
- TASAC noted that there are currently no state roads in Dungog. Local attendees to the meeting did state that one of the roads through Dungog may soon be designated a state road (as part of an election promise). They also noted that the government's Future Transport Plan talks about building links to nature-based tourism opportunities and improving signage for National Parks.
- Mobile coverage in the area north of Dungog was also flagged as being poor. This presents some issues regarding wayfinding and online resources.

TASAC acknowledged that Barrington Tops is a key focal point for the region and should be adequately signposted. Some of the issues regarding different locations and management of sites could be addressed with new signage that includes subtext. This would include additional information to indicate which specific part of Barrington Tops is being signposted. However, the lack of nearby state roads suggests that any new signage plan would be heavily dependent on Dungog Shire Council to upgrade signage on their own local roads. New signage would also require a considerable amount of funding. TASAC have recommended that council undertake

an audit of the existing signage to better understand the problem from a wholistic standpoint. Once this is complete, it would be easier to develop a new signage plan that can address the complexities of a large area with multiple sites, multiple stakeholders and local versus state road ownership.

The idea of a tourist drive or loop road was also flagged as a possibility to better link local villages and possibly multiple local government areas. While TASAC acknowledged that such a plan might be possible and beneficial to the region, the cost of installation and ongoing maintenance was likely to be a prohibitive factor. Possible alternatives that were suggested include the development of drive(s) entirely on council owned roads or a series of online trails.

1.3 Hunter Wine Region Signage

Nathan Goodbun from Cessnock City Council attended the TASAC meeting to discuss regional wine signage in the Hunter region. In the past, Cessnock Council have had a number of proposals for wine signage in the Hunter region including a wine country signage strategy with Singleton Council. These proposals have relied on a series of grants to fund their partial implementation, which included a series of information bays that have now been constructed around the region.

Approximately two years ago, a proposal was put forward to signpost a series of wine districts using brown tourist road signage; however, a number of issues were identified preventing implementation. Available funding at the time was insufficient, the proposed signage was deemed to be very wordy and some issues around consistency (signposted wine districts matching those on printed maps) were never fully addressed.

More recently, Cessnock City Council has obtained funding to implement a series of signage improvements including updated brown road signs. The current proposal suggests a revision of the wine precinct plan to signpost five wine districts – Pokolbin, Lovedale, Mount View, Wollombi and Broke-Fordwich. The proposal would see individual regions signposted (e.g. “Lovedale Wineries” as opposed to a broader “Wineries” sign. This will assist tourists with navigation while also avoiding confusion when wineries can be found in multiple directions. For example, rather than the word “wineries” with arrows pointing in multiple directions, a sign would indicate which specific wine region is in which direction. Current council estimates suggest that this would require eight new or revised signs on state roads and nine on local roads. It is also hoped that this will end the persistent problem of local residents illegally adding additional arrows to road signs.

TASAC agreed that the proposal as described in the meeting sounds logical and that new signposting for wine regions may be possible. The committee also want to make sure that the issues that were flagged when the proposal was first raised two years have or will be addressed, including printed maps conforming to the signposted regions. Nathan indicated that the current map is different to the one that was used two years ago and that this is no longer a matter for concern. He will provide TASAC representatives with a link to the new map (*Note: This was provided by Nathan after the meeting*).

RMS also stated that local residents and businesses would need to agree to the plan before it is implemented to avoid local complaints after the signage has been installed. Council should provide RMS Hunter region with evidence of consultation carried out and Hunter RMS will decide if to proceed with the signs.

In order to progress this matter, Nathan will liaise with Nick Trajcevski and Ken Saxby from RMS Hunter Region. They will review the proposed plan and begin discussions around design and implementation of the new signage.

2. NEW TOURIST SIGNPOSTING APPLICATIONS

2.1 Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service contacted TASAC to enquire about changing existing signage to include the 'Kamay' prefix for Botany Bay National Park. The TASAC archives indicate that it has been more than five years since the national park was approved for signage and so a new application would be required.

The application suggests that the park is popular with visitors and has suitable facilities to justify signposting. The committee have agreed that the national park should continue to be signposted subject to a site inspection that needs to be conducted as per standard TASAC policy. As an additional note, the applicant is aware that installing new signage will come at a cost and has assured TASAC that a suitable budget is available for this purpose.

Decision: Application is approved pending a successful site inspection.

Action: **TASAC Secretariat to arrange site inspection and send relevant correspondence.**

2.2 Gosford Chocolate and Nougat Factory

Gosford Chocolate and Nougat Factory are seeking signage to their base of operations and manufacturing facility in West Gosford. The current setup includes a store, café, tours of the manufacturing facilities, two windows to observe factory operations and chocolate making classes for children. Tastings are available all day in the shop and adequate interpretation can be found on site including a video of the manufacturing process which runs on a loop, information panels guiding visitors through the chocolate making process and large panels on the history of both the region and the business. A site inspection has also been conducted by the TASAC Secretariat.

As part of their submission, the applicant also provided a range of samples of their product. While the committee greatly appreciated the gesture, this offering was declined on the basis that it may create a conflict of interest and resolved to return the sample products unopened (*Note: This was done in person immediately following the meeting*).

The committee agreed that the application met all of the requisite criteria for signposting and resolved to approve the application. The applicants preferred wording for the sign – 'Gosford Chocolate & Nougat Factory' – was also endorsed as the name to be placed on signage.

Decision: Application is approved.

Action: **TASAC Secretariat to send relevant correspondence.**

2.3 Clog Barn, Coffs Harbour

Clog Barn originally contacted TASAC after one of their existing signs was removed. A search of TASAC records could not locate the original application suggesting that the signs were either approved long ago or were installed without TASAC authorisation. The applicant was advised to submit a new application.

The application indicates a high-quality attraction that meets all relevant criteria. The main attractions on site include a miniature village which is accessible free of charge and includes detailed interpretive panels, as well as regular clog making demonstrations. Criteria around parking, opening hours and toilets were also met without issue.

The committee approved the application pending a successful site inspection as per standard TASAC policy.

Decision: Application is approved pending a successful site inspection.

Action: **TASAC Secretariat to arrange site inspection and send relevant correspondence.**

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF 15 MAY 2019

The minutes of TASAC's meeting of Wednesday 15 May 2019 in Sydney were confirmed by the committee. All relevant actions have been completed.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 Tourist Drive 11, Glen Innes

Discussions with Glen Innes Severn Council about Tourist Drive 11 began in October 2017 when council confirmed that they would conduct an audit of the drive and prepare a plan for its future. Plans were delayed when Peter Teschner (who was co-ordinating this activity) left council, however, TASAC were re-assured that the plan would still be delivered. The matter has now been pending for some time. The committee agreed that the impending tourist drive review negates the need for the Tourist Drive 11 plan to be delivered at this stage. It was resolved to leave this matter until a revised tourist drive approach is agreed. No further action is required at this time.

4.2 South Coast National Parks

As part of a regional signage upgrade, TASAC was seeking to discuss signage for a number of South Coast National Parks with the relevant NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service contact. This was planned for an introductory meeting with relevant staff; however, this meeting has not yet taken place. The signage upgrade has not proceeded and so it was agreed that this matter is no longer relevant and requires no further action.

4.3 Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens

The TASAC Secretariat was contacted by Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens just prior to the meeting and informed that an application will be submitted shortly. The matter therefore requires no further discussion.

4.4 Broken Hill Solar Farm

Prior to the meeting, Broken Hill City Council provided a new contact for this attraction to the TASAC Secretariat. Contact has been made and an application for signage will be prepared. The matter therefore requires no further discussion.

4.5 Wirraway Aviation Museum

The museum submitted a signage application in April 2019, however, a number of questions remained over its viability as an attraction. The museum was visited by TASAC representatives David Douglas and Phil Oliver to conduct a detailed site inspection. The attraction itself was found to be of good quality and worthy of signposting pending a few minor amendments which were discussed with the owners on site. These amendments include a sign out front indicating the opening hours and additional interpretation on the individual aircraft. Photographic evidence of these inclusions will need to be provided before signage can be installed.

Action: TASAC Secretariat to send formal correspondence outlining the above requirements for signposting to be approved.

4.6 Gosford Car Museum

RMS have now made direct contact with the museum regarding the removal of signage. The matter therefore requires no further discussion.

5. INQUIRIES RECEIVED SINCE LAST MEETING

- 5.1 Friends of the Koala, Lismore
- 5.2 Mid North Coast VIC Signage
- 5.3 Hickeys Falls, Warrumbungle Council
- 5.4 Mountain Ridge Wines, Shoalhaven
- 5.5 Tenterfield Saddler
- 5.6 Mino and Co, Griffith
- 5.7 Wollumbin/Mt Warning, Tweed
- 5.8 Broulee Signage, Eurobodalla
- 5.9 Southern Cross Pottery, Coffs Harbour
- 5.10 Kiama Historic Town
- 5.11 Barraba Silos, Tamworth
- 5.12 Shoalhaven Heads

Nathan from RMS can make contact with Phil Oliver to discuss this matter.

5.13 Southern Highlands Wine Signage

6. POLICY ISSUES

6.1 RMS Signage Tracker Update

The initial signage tracker document has now been completed and will be provided to the TASAC Secretariat following the meeting. In future, the document will be updated prior to each meeting with the completed signs to be noted in the minutes.

It is confirmed that the following signage installations from the 2018/19 financial year are now complete:

- National Motorcycle Museum
- Australian Motorlife Museum
- Pro Hart Gallery
- White Rocks Reserve
- Grafton Regional Gallery
- Nashdale Lane Winery
- Lismore Regional Gallery
- Nan Tien Temple
- Montoro Wines
- Butterfly House

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 TASAC Meeting Schedule

TASAC has agreed that the meetings for Northern (September 2019) and South West (October 2019) will take place in Kempsey and Corowa respectively.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is currently scheduled to take place in Lightning Ridge on the 3 July 2019.

The meeting concluded at 12.35 pm.

Attachment 1 – TASAC Meeting Schedule

Region	Location	Date
Hunter	Dungog	12 June, 2019
Western	Lightning Ridge	3 July, 2019
n/a	Sydney	21 August, 2019
Northern	Kempsey	18 September, 2019
South West	Corowa	16 October, 2019
Hunter	Newcastle	20 November, 2019
Southern	Goulburn	11 December, 2019