

North Byron Parklands Cultural Events Site

Speaking Notes: Debra Minto

Monday 10 December 2018

Ocean Shores Community Centre

I am here today representing the Tweed-Byron Trail Horse Riders Club. We advocate for environmental preservation and the protection of heritage values associated with horse riding.

We are in favour of North Byron Parklands bid for permanency.

In May of this year, we were privileged to have been granted access to the Parklands site to stage an Introduction to Endurance Horse Riding event. It was organised to permit those people new to the sport, the security of knowing that the event course would be fully contained within one property – free of motor vehicle traffic and other distractions.

The event comprised just over 30 horses and riders, with about 20 support crew and spectators.

Many of those in attendance had never set foot on the Parklands site and had the pre-conceived notion that it was for the exclusive use of tourists attending the big music festivals.

Many were overwhelmed by the scale and layout of the property and saw what great potential it had as a multi-use site. All were impressed by the standard of care that had clearly gone into the planning, construction and ongoing maintenance of the grounds.

As event organisers, (we thought) what a bonus to have this world class site 10 minutes from home. Ample parking for vehicles and horse floats, plenty of fresh grass for the horses, a combination of flat and undulating terrain with lots of shade from the marvellous array of trees.

We all left there that day in May knowing that this place could be many things to many people. And it is right here on our door step.

Endurance Horse Riding relies on the availability of nature trails over long distances for both training and competition.

Horses need to be fit to compete and must pass periodical vet checks at these events. Horse welfare is paramount and due to the many hours spent in the saddle, a strong and enduring partnership is forged between horse and rider.

Heritage values of the Australian Stockman and the Australian Light Horsemen, whose lives depended on the fitness and endurance capabilities of their horse run thick in this sport. R.M. Williams was the driving force behind the first Endurance Riding event ever held in Australia back in 1966.

Our Club has recently been successful in receiving grant funding from the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation to increase participation in Endurance Horse Riding in this area.

The future of our sport and the capacity to encourage participation in the Tweed-Byron area is dependent on the availability of land and facilities. The North Byron Parklands site is compatible with our requirements.

While developed to host short duration major events for tens of thousands; the Parklands site is adaptable for small scale events which have little or

no impact on neighbouring residents and a negligible impact on the environment. Small community events enable those local residents who may never attend a music festival, a chance to visit the Parklands site.

We congratulate Parklands management for the sustainable and ethical practices that have been implemented on site to support the preservation of the environment and manage waste. We know that there are many compliance reporting requirements in order to continue hosting events and activities at the site and we trust that impacts and contingencies will be managed to a high standard.

As local area residents, we have seen how during the trial period for the major events, improvements have been made in managing the operational impacts. We acknowledge that major events do impact local amenity and infrastructure, but on balance the benefits of the Parklands site outweigh the negatives.

On behalf of our club members - most of whom live within the Tweed and Byron Shires - I can confirm overwhelming support for this application for permanency and we hope it will be successful.

Thank you.

Debra Minto
Secretary, Tweed-Byron Trail Horse Riders Club Inc

P:

E: