

Bulahdelah Highway Service Centre  
Easter 2018 Survey Report

Report  
10 April 2018

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# 1. Executive Summary

The town of Bulahdelah is located on the Pacific Highway, approximately 250 kilometres north of Sydney, New South Wales. As of the 2016 census, the town had a population of 1,424.

This is the second visitor survey undertaken by KJA in relation to a Bulahdelah Highway Service Centre (HSC), with the aim to assess the impact on visitation numbers by the proposed construction of an HSC along the Pacific Highway, north-east to the Bulahdelah Township at 9844 Pacific Highway, Bulahdelah.

The results of this second survey suggest similar findings to the initial visitor survey undertaken in July 2017, with 70.23% of respondents indicating that the proposed HSC would not have impacted their decision to visit the Bulahdelah township on the day of the survey, had it been operational already.

Further, 52.67% of respondents indicated that they would be either 'unlikely' or 'very unlikely' to visit the proposed HSC instead of the Bulahdelah township more generally.

A key difference between the July 2017 survey results, and the 2018 Easter long weekend survey results, is the much higher proportion of visitor responses captured as part of the intercept survey (87% as opposed to 54% of responses in July 2017). This is likely a result of the high level of tourism activity due to the long weekend.



131

SURVEYS TAKEN



92

SAID HSC WOULD NOT HAVE AN IMPACT ON DECISION TO VISIT THE TOWN TODAY



17

RESIDENT PARTICIPANTS



94%

OF RESIDENTS VISIT STROUD STREET NUMEROUS TIMES A WEEK



114

VISITOR PARTICIPANTS



81.6%

OF VISITORS WERE VISITING FOR THE DAY OR PASSING THROUGH

KJA was engaged to conduct the survey to capture the views of visitors and the community in regards to the proposal for the HSC. The Visitor Survey gathered information on why pedestrians visited the town centre, and whether an HSC out of town would affect their decision to visit for their specific trip, and more generally.

The intercept survey was conducted over two days on 30-31 March 2018, with a total of 131 surveys completed. Of those surveyed, 12.98% (17) indicated that they live locally and 87.02% (114) indicated that they were visiting Bulahdelah.

Among respondents who were visiting, only 17.54% (20) indicated that they were staying for at least one night, with the rest either visiting for the day or passing through the town briefly. Residents were likely to visit the town at least weekly, with 94% of residents indicating they visited Stroud Street multiple times a week. Food or groceries were the most common reasons provided to visit the town.

## 2. Methodology

The survey was designed to take less than 2 minutes to complete and included eight multiple choice questions. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix 1. As this was the second round of undertaking the survey, an initial question was included to clarify whether the respondent had previously completed the survey.

The survey focused on participants' reasons for visiting Stroud Street, whether an HSC would have changed their decision to visit, and whether the presence of an HSC would have a positive or a negative impact on Bulahdelah, in their opinion.

Two KJA staff members conducted intercept surveys in Bulahdelah on March 30 (Good Friday) and March 31 (Easter Saturday). The surveys were conducted at different times on each day in an attempt to capture different audiences:

- 10 am to 5 pm on Day 1
- 7 am to 2 pm on Day 2

A primary survey station was set up on Stroud Street outside the IGA, with one consultant relocating to capture other areas as pedestrian activity changed. As many of the stores were closed over the long weekend, almost all foot traffic occurred on the Eastern side of Stroud Street, around the IGA supermarket and Oliver's Real Food. The location of the survey station is marked on the map below.



### 3. Survey Findings

The below findings combine quantitative data collected in response to the survey questions, as well as qualitative feedback that was provided by respondents in conversation with the KJA survey team, and noted on the individual survey responses.

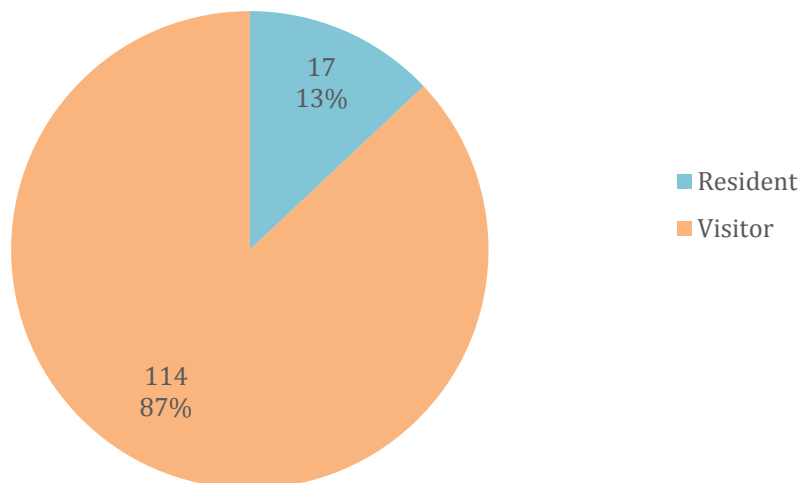
#### Q1. Have you previously completed this survey or one like it in relation to Bulahdelah?

Residents were asked if they had completed this survey previously, or been consulted about this Highway Service Centre before. This question was added to the survey in response to some respondents expressing a feeling of being over consulted on this project previously.

100% of respondents answered 'No' to this question, which is unsurprising given the large percentage of visitor responses received.

#### Q2. Are you a local resident or visitor?

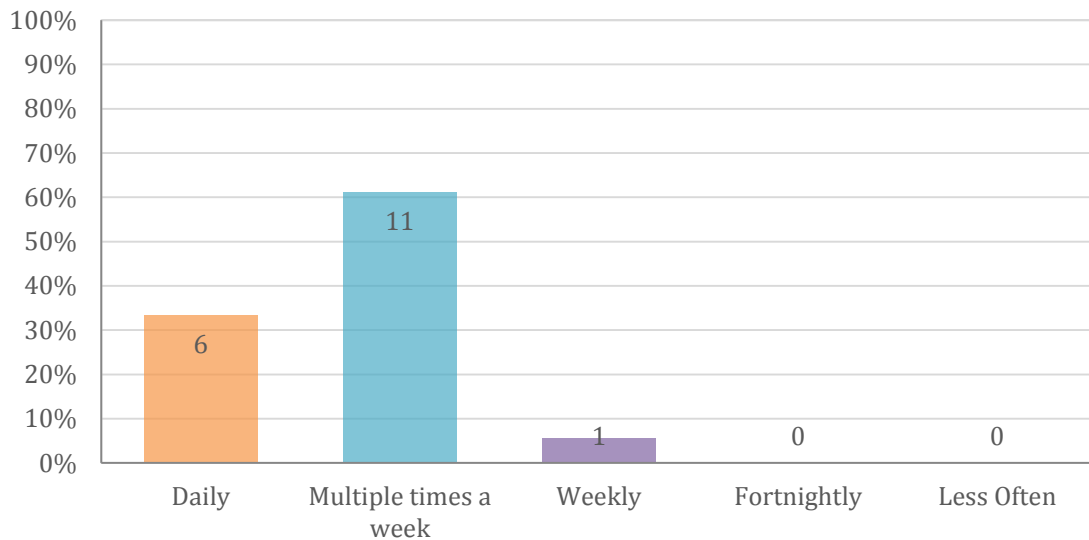
Are you a local resident or visitor?



**Q3. If a resident, on average how often do you visit Stroud Street, Bulahdelah?**

Residents were asked how frequently they visited Stroud Street. The majority of residents visited multiple times a week or more, with only one respondent indicating that they visited weekly, and none indicating less frequently.

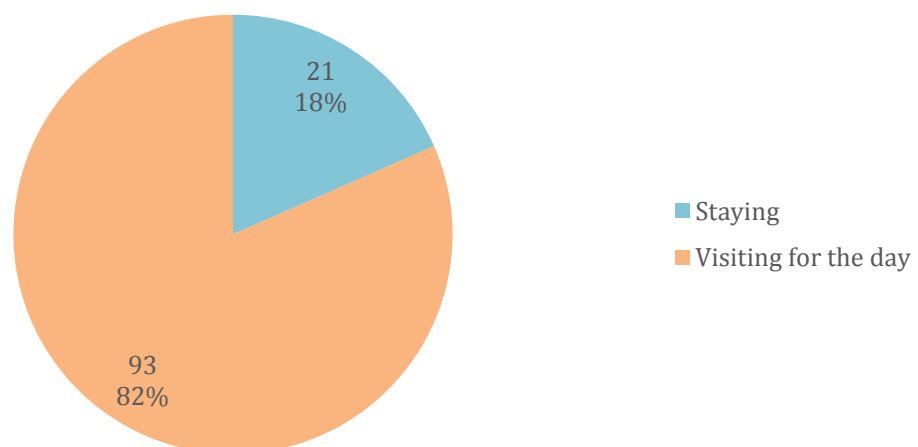
If a resident, on average how often do you visit Stroud Street, Bulahdelah?



**Q4. If a visitor, are you staying in Bulahdelah/nearby (at least 1 night) or visiting for the day?**

Visitors were asked whether they were staying in Bulahdelah for at least a night or whether they were visiting for the day. Visitors passing through or using Bulahdelah for a driver’s rest are reflected as ‘visiting for the day’.

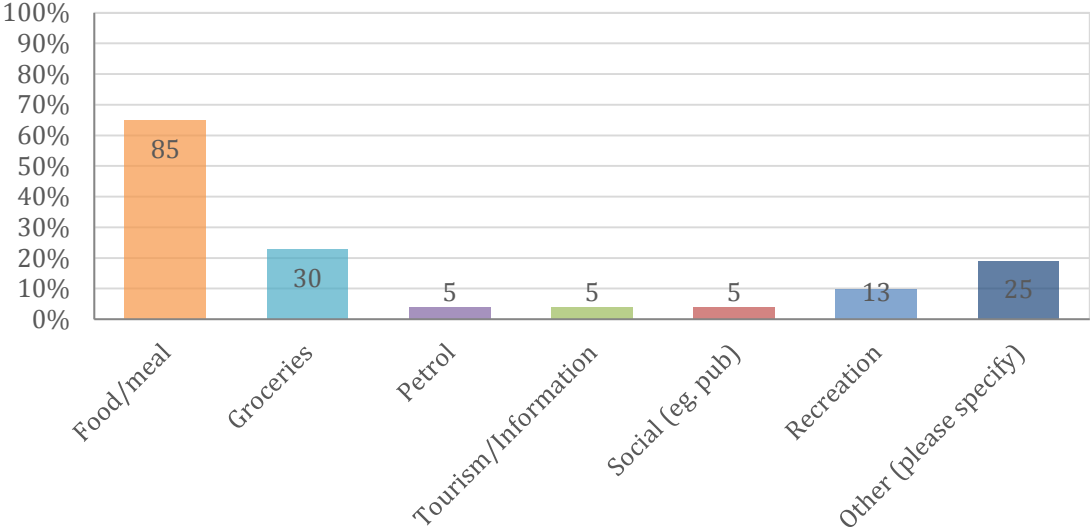
If a visitor, are you staying in Bulahdelah/nearby (at least 1 night) or visiting for the day?



**Q5. What is the main purpose of your visit to Bulahdelah today?**

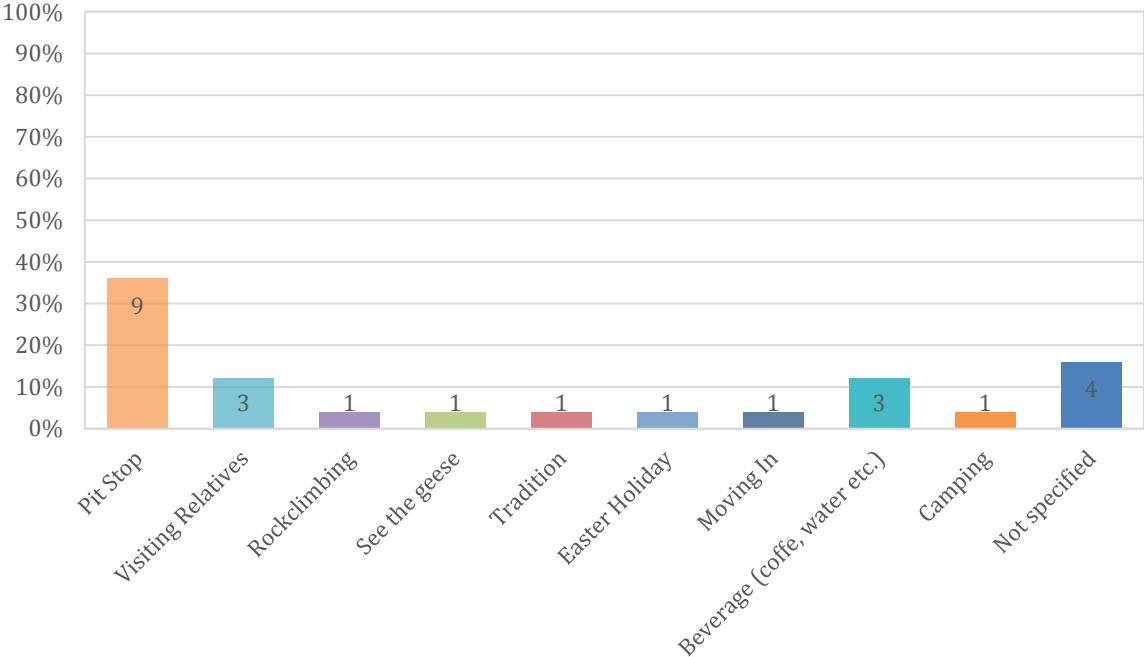
All participants were asked to indicate the main purpose of their visit to Bulahdelah. Participants were given the options of: food/meal, groceries, petrol, tourism/information, social and recreation. Respondents were also given the option to specify any other reason for visiting Bulahdelah. It was possible for participants to answer with more than one response. The largest amount of respondents were visiting Bulahdelah for food or a meal.

What is the main purpose of your visit to Bulahdelah today?



Out of 131 respondents, 25 selected the option for other. There were a range of responses that fall into 10 categories listed in the table below:

Other reasons for visiting Stroud Street?

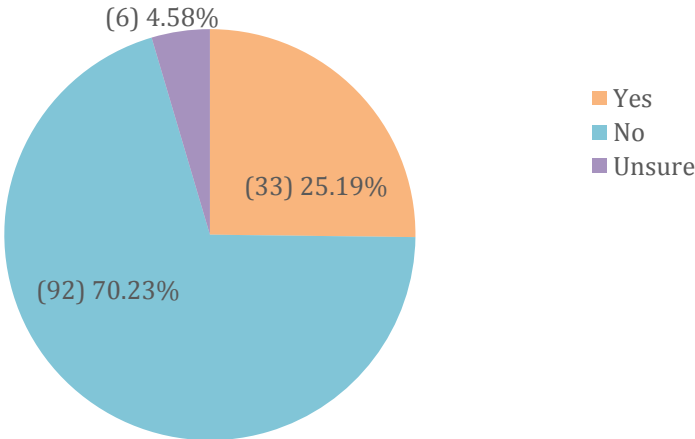




**Q6 a. Would a Highway Service Centre impact your decision to visit the town today?**

Participants were told “Consideration is currently underway for an HSC located on the Pacific Highway to the North-East of Bulahdelah Township. The site would include a fuel retailer with associated quick service restaurant facilities”. A map was provided for reference. Participants were then asked whether an HSC, had it been in operation on the day of the survey, would have had an impact on respondents’ decision to visit Stroud Street.

Would a Highway Service Centre impact your decision to visit the town today?

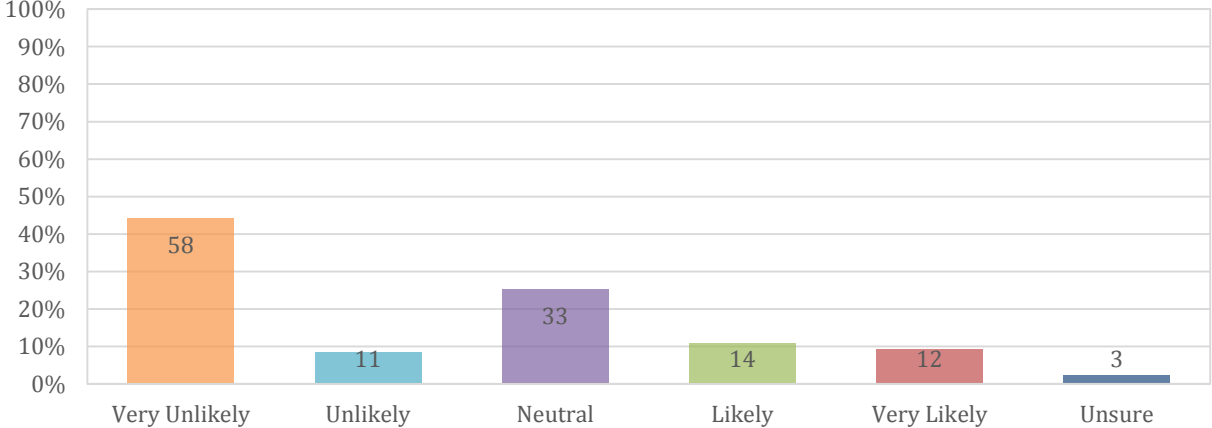


The majority of participants (70.23%) said that their decision to visit the town would not have been impacted by an HSC. Some respondents identified specific stores in Bulahdelah that contribute to this decision, including the health food store Oliver’s. 25.19% of participants indicated that their decision would have been impacted, but overwhelmingly these same respondents indicated they liked Bulahdelah township. 4.58% were unsure, and some respondents specified that it would depend on the services provided at the HSC.

**Q6 b. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to visit a Highway Service Centre on Pacific Highway instead of Bulahdelah?**

Participants were asked whether, in general, they would be likely to visit an HSC instead of Bulahdelah.

How likely would you be to visit a Highway Service Centre on Pacific Highway instead of Buladelah?





Most participants showed very little inclination to visit an HSC on the Pacific Highway instead of Bulahdelah. Among visitors, most explained that they visited Bulahdelah for specific reasons, including a desire to avoid service centres, enjoying wandering around and looking at a small town, and road trip traditions.

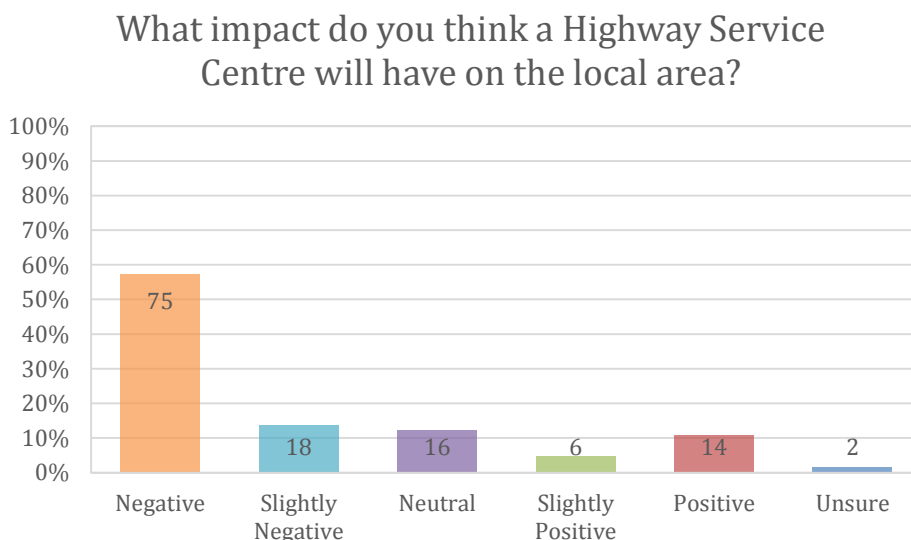
Some respondents disapproved on Highway Service Centres as a whole, and actively choose to avoid them and visit small towns instead.

The participants that selected 'neutral' mostly indicated that normally they go to Highway Service Centres but now having visited Bulahdelah, they would be more inclined to visit again. Other respondents said that their decision depended on what kind of trip they were taking, how long they had been driving, and how far the town is from the highway.

Some of the respondents who indicated either 'likely' or 'very likely' gave specific reasons, including residents enthusiastic about having a fast food outlet nearby, and visitors who indicated that if they were trying to get to their destination as quickly as possible they would use the HSC.

**Q6 c. What impact do you think a Highway Service Centre will have on the local area?**

Participants were asked what sort of impact they thought an HSC would have on Bulahdelah. The responses were generally negative.



Residents were much more likely to indicate that they felt an HSC had the potential to make a positive impact and to revitalise the town, including by providing local jobs. However residents also expressed concerns around the impact the HSC may have on the local businesses in their area.



Participants who indicated that the service centre would have a negative impact generally reasoned that a service centre out of town would reduce the number of visitors to Bulahdelah. Many believed that this would reduce the amount of customers for local businesses, causing them to suffer. Respondents acknowledged the negative impact of the fast food services in HSC's, with many commenting on the amount of pollution that accompanies fast food services on the highway. Multiple respondents acknowledged that although an HSC provides jobs for young people, this only makes up a small section of the community.

Those that were positive about the HSC generally viewed it as an opportunity to revitalise the town. Numerous respondents expressed a desire to see change in Bulahdelah, acknowledging that the HSC could possibly be risk to the town, but that it was worth the risk. Others felt that visitors may be more inclined to visit Bulahdelah if there is a HSC next to it.

A small number of respondents acknowledged the need to plan for the future, with one respondent commenting that an increasing population in Australia means an increase in services and residents in particular expressed excitement at the idea of new services close to Bulahdelah. Many residents referred to the bypass itself as proof the town would survive, commenting that despite the threat of the bypass development there are still visitors to Bulahdelah.

16 respondents, both residents and visitors, indicated that the service centre would have a neutral impact on Bulahdelah. Most of these respondents acknowledged that there would likely be some positives and some negatives, including a possible loss of customers visiting the town centre and that shops could be at risk of closure, but the increased demand for jobs from the HSC would possibly make up for this. One respondent suggested that the services prepared for the HSC be built in Bulahdelah to keep it relevant and support local jobs.

## 4. Conclusion

Over the course of the survey collection, a large number of pedestrians in Stroud Street were willing to provide their time to complete the survey. This has led to a significant data set being collected that captures a range of views and opinions towards the proposed Highway Service Centre.

Broadly speaking the results of this survey during the Easter Long Weekend reflect similar findings to the previous survey undertaken in July 2017, albeit with a much larger percentage of visitor respondents in Survey 2.

Of the 131 responses received, 17 were from local residents and 114 were visitors to the Bulahdelah. 92% of the resident respondents visit Bulahdelah Township multiple times a week, and 81.6% of visitors were visiting for the day (not staying nearby).

60.31% of responses identified food or groceries as one of the reasons for their trip to Bulahdelah when completing the survey.

70.2% of responses indicated that the presence of an HSC would not have impacted their decision to visit the Township that day, with 60.5% of responses indicating they would be unlikely to choose to visit an HSC over the Township more generally.

Residents were much more likely to indicate the HSC would have a positive impact on the town than visitors, with a focus on job opportunities for local residents.

While visitors were more likely to indicate they believed the HSC would have a negative impact, this would appear to contradict earlier responses in the survey (Q6a and Q6b) that indicated the majority of respondents would not have changed their decision to visit the town if the HSC was operational.

# Appendix A – Visitor Survey



## Bulahdelah Township Visitor Survey

Stroud Street, Bulahdelah

30-31 March 2018

We are conducting a Community Survey to assess the reasons visitors come to the Bulahdelah Township.

1. Have you previously completed this survey or one like it in relation to Bulahdelah?

Yes                       No                       Other .....

2. Are you a local resident or visitor?

Resident                       Visitor

3. If a resident, on average how often do you visit Stroud Street, Bulahdelah?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
                                                                                          
Daily      Multiple times a week      Weekly      Fortnightly      Less Often

4. If visiting, are you staying in Bulahdelah/nearby (at least 1 night) or visiting for the day?

Staying                       Visiting for the day

5. What is the main purpose of your visit to Bulahdelah?

- Food/meal
- Groceries
- Petrol
- Tourism/Information
- Social (e.g. Pub)
- Recreation
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

6. Consideration is currently underway for a Highway Service Centre located on the Pacific Highway to the North-East of Bulahdelah Township (see map). The site would include a fuel retailer with associated quick service restaurant facilities.

a. Would a Highway Service Centre impact your decision to visit the town today?

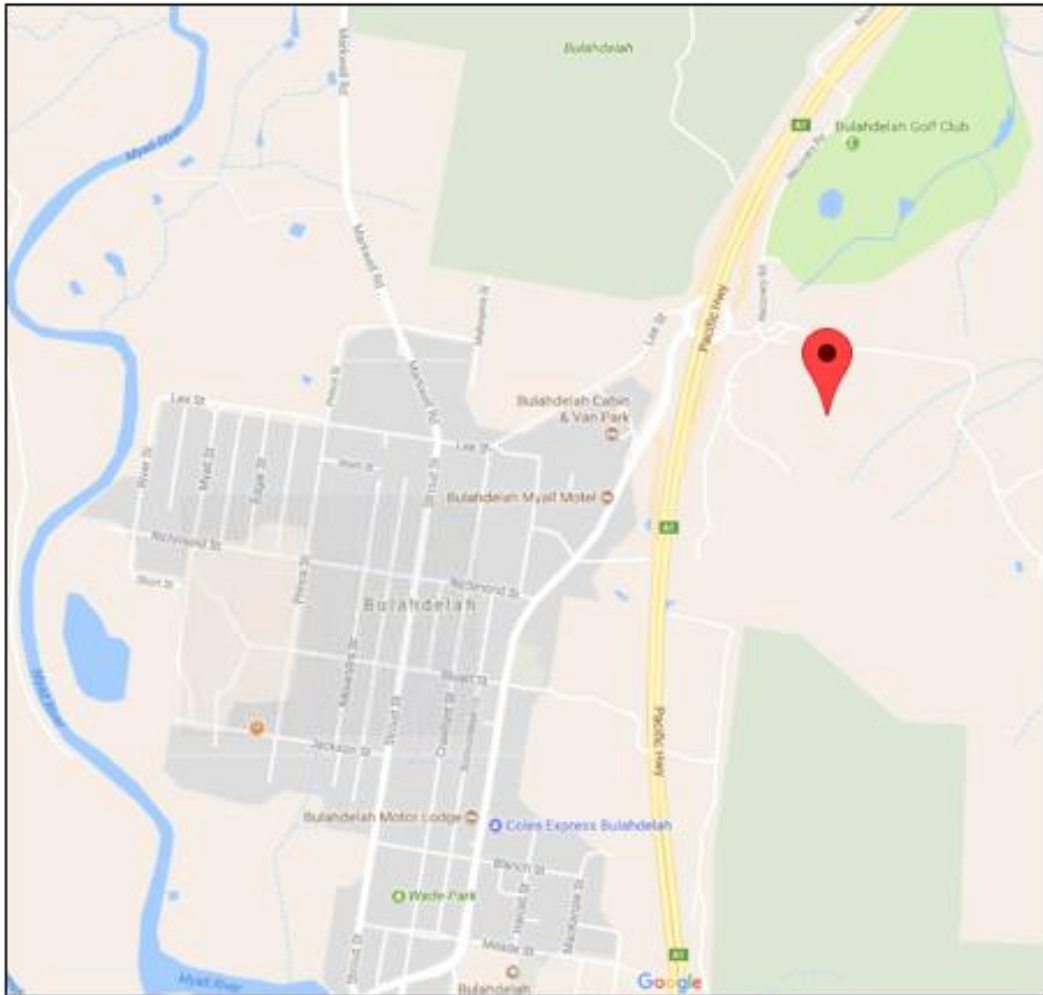
Yes                       No                       Unsure


b. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to visit a Highway Service Centre on Pacific Highway instead of Bulahdelah?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                        
                                                                                                                
Very Unlikely                      Neutral                      Very Likely                      Unsure

c. What impact do you think a Highway Service Centre will have on the local area?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                        
                                                                                                                
Negative                      Neutral                      Positive                      Unsure



 Proposed Bulahdelah Highway Service Centre location (Lot 3 DP 1120817 & Lot 100 in DP 1139447)

Sydney office  
Level 8, 2 Elizabeth Plaza, North Sydney NSW 2060  
PO Box 302, North Sydney NSW 2059  
T 02 9955 5040 | F 02 9955 5901

Melbourne office  
Suite 1102, 530 Little Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000  
PO Box 16215, Collins Street West VIC 8007  
T 01 9005 2030

E [info@kjasoc.com.au](mailto:info@kjasoc.com.au) | W [kjasoc.com.au](http://kjasoc.com.au) | ABN 60 003 647 581

## Appendix B – Survey Data (Visitors & Residents breakdown)

**Q5. What is the main purpose of your visit to Bulahdelah today?**

	Food/Meal	Groceries	Petrol	Tourism/ Information	Social	Recreation	Other
Residents	7	9					2
Visitors	78	21	5	5	5	13	23

**Q6 a. Would a Highway Service Centre impact your decision to visit the town today?**

	Yes	No	Unsure
Residents	1	14	2
Visitors	32	78	4

**Q6 b. On a scale of 1 to 5, how likely would you be to visit a Highway Service Centre on Pacific Highway instead of Bulahdelah?**

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely	Unsure
Residents	9	0	5	1	1	1
Visitors	49	11	28	13	11	2

**Q6 c. What impact do you think a Highway Service Centre will have on the local area?**

	Very Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very Positive	Unsure
Residents	6	0	3	1	7	0
Visitors	69	18	13	5	7	2





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