

ORDINARY MEETING	9
22 MAY 2024	

PETITION REQUESTING A BRAMSTON BEACH GREEN WASTE DISPOSAL SITE

87/15/1-01 | #7367612

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

- 1. Does not support the introduction of a Council owned and managed separate green waste disposal site at Bramston Beach; and**
- 2. Acknowledges the need for green waste disposal options for Bramston Beach residents by encouraging residents to utilise the 4 established Transfer Stations in the region that accept green waste. Further support the community by continuing to provide 4 free green waste disposal opportunities per year for residents.**

INTERESTED PARTIES:

Nil

Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Council is in receipt of a petition requesting “a new green waste drop off facility within close proximity to our small community” being Bramston Beach. Following the permanent closure, by the Qld Department of Resources (State), of the land previously utilised used by locals and businesses for green waste disposal.

The petition requests that Council considers:

- An extension to the Bramston Beach existing general waste site to accommodate green waste disposal for Bramston Beach residents or
- The development of green waste disposal area utilising Council owned land at Bramston Beach.

The proposed development of a green waste disposal site, on Council land, presents concerns primarily regarding environmental controls – such as contamination from hazardous materials and pests (fire and electric ants) as well as leachate runoff.

Should Council provide all year round free green and general waste disposal to Bramston Beach residents - consideration needs to be given to the equity of waste services across the region.

It is with consideration to these factors that officers are recommending that the request is not supported, and the principal petitioner be advised that Council will continue to work with the residents of Bramston Beach and the region to provide transfer station facilities designed to service and manage domestic household waste with a focus recovery along with kerbside waste & recycling collection services.

BACKGROUND:

At the 23 February 2023 Ordinary Meeting, Council resolved to note and refer to officers the petition with 132 signatures requesting to draw to Council's attention the need for a "*new green waste drop off facility within close proximity to our small community*" being Bramston Beach after the land used by locals and businesses for green waste dumping was permanently closed by the Qld Department of Resources (State).

For a number of reasons Council has previously provided drop bins to service boat ramps and holiday homes free of charge at communities such as Russell Heads, Bellenden Ker, Bramston Beach and Deeral. However due to uncontrolled disposal practices these services incurred significant high use along with dumping of hazardous materials (including asbestos). As such Council has ceased the majority of these services and encouraged the use of kerbside collection and existing Transfer Stations that are designed to accept all types of waste streams.

As such the delivery of waste management services within Division 1, is in some instances inconsistent both within the Division and the LGA.

Please refer timeline for Bramston Bch Transfer Station and green waste pad:

- 9 Oct 13 Council resolved to remove the drop bins at Bellenden Ker and Deeral and convert the Bramston Beach drop bin to a secure manned site with disposal charges reduced to 50% of normal transfer station charges and operating 2 days per week.
- 6 Jul 21 Council received a notice from Department of Resources (State) regarding trespass related acts along with green waste dumping on state land at Lot 27 NR836997 and informed Council of a maximum prescribed penalty was \$53,380. The letter instructed council to "*discourage ongoing use of the site by members of the public and requested the site be restored and rehabilitation*".
- Sep/Oct 21 Council via the Councillor advised residents that the area used for green waste disposal was not a Council designated disposal location nor Council owned land and advice received from the State indicated that ongoing illegal dumping would result in a significant fine to Council.
- 1 Dec 21 Council responded to the State and advised council would engage with the Bramston Beach community to prevent ongoing use of the site by members of the public and restoring and rehabilitating the site.

- 13 Dec 21 Council engaged a contractor to process and remove all green waste from Bramston Beach Lot 27 NR836997 and placed signs advising that green waste was not to be dumped at this location.
- 1 Jul 22 As part of Council's Transfer Station Standardisation project - Council agreed to change the Bramston Beach Transfer Station site to an unmanned site with access via swipe card to Bramston residents only, at no charge to reduce the growing operational costs of this location which attracted on average 4 customers a week with an operating cost to Council of approx. \$45k per annum for staffing, amenities, and maintenance.
- 4 Aug 23 Council received a notice from the Qld Department of Environment and Science regarding different material being stockpiled at Bramston Beach on Lot 27 NR836997 and included a formal warning for contravention of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.
- 20 Nov 23 Council again engaged a contractor to process and remove all green waste and removed all other stored material from Lot 27 NR836997 and replaced signs advising residents that green waste was not to be dumped at this location and advertised the location of alternative disposal sites along with illegal dumping notices and restricted the access to the private state road.

COMMENT:

Council's transfer station network is spread across the region and is designed to service and manage self-haul domestic waste with a focus on diversion from landfill. The distance and driving time to the nearest facility is considered as the biggest potential impact to residential disposal.

The transfer station approximate distance, travel time and population are shown in the table below:

LOCATION	APPROX. DRIVING DISTANCE (kms)	APPROX. DRIVING TIME	POPULATION
BRAMSTON BCH TO BABINDA TS	30	26	150
BRAMSTON BCH TO BRAMSTON UNMANNED SITE	2	2	
REDLYNCH VALLEY TO SMITHFIELD TS	18	20	13,784
REDLYNCH VALLEY TO PORTSMITH TS	18	23	
EDMONTON TO GORDONVALE TS	18	17	11,409
EDMONTON TO PORTSMITH TS	12	15	
PALM COVE TO SMITHFIELD TS	12	14	2,450
ELLIS BEACH TO SMITHFIELD TS	15	16	5

Source: Population from [Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](https://www.abs.gov.au)

Source: driving distance and time from: <https://www.google.com.au/maps/>.

In terms of the Cairns Regional Council area the distance to the nearest transfer station site travel time to Babinda Transfer Station from Bramston Beach is comparable to other communities.

Additionally, residents are able to utilise the kerbside bins for some garden waste items.

OPTIONS:

1. Option (Recommended):

That Council:

- a) Does not support the introduction of a Council owned and managed separate green waste disposal site at Bramston Beach; and
- b) Acknowledges the need for green waste disposal options for Bramston Beach residents by encouraging residents to utilise the 4 established Transfer Stations in the region that accept green waste. Further support the community by continuing to provide 4 free green waste disposal opportunities per year for residents.

2. Option (not Recommended):

- a) That Council supports the petition and instructs Resource Recovery to implement changes.

3. Option:

- a) That Council requests additional review of possible options.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Risk Management:

Green waste processing is undertaken by a Contractor and is in accordance with all relevant Australian Standards, WHS, State Government Legislation and Local Government Legislation with minimal impact on the environment.

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

Refer Table below with actual annual cost for the existing General Waste Bin and estimated costs for servicing a possible Green Waste Bin

BRAMSTON BEACH WASTE SERVICE	GENERAL WASTE BIN	POSSIBLE GREEN WASTE BIN*
TRANSPORT	3,341	28,787
PROCESSING	1,651	14,463
DISPOSAL REVENUE	0	0
ANNUAL SUB TOTAL	4,992	43,250
TOTAL ANNUAL COST	\$48,242	

* Estimated transport and processing costs based on historical tonnages previously collected at Bramston Bch.

The above figures are based on historical costs of the existing general waste drop bin service and estimated costs for a 15m³ Green waste bin which would require

approximately 6 services per month based on historical green waste tonnages received at Lot 27 NR836997. It is anticipated this figure may reduce if access is limited.

Additional Cap Ex costs estimate \$100,000 - required for shed, concrete pad and fence extensions to accommodate additional bin and heavy vehicle loading requirements.

Natural Environment:

Due to a lack of site control the suggested development of a green waste disposal site, on Council land, raises environmental concerns – such as contamination from hazardous materials (asbestos) and pests (fire and electric ants) as well as leachate runoff from the green waste stockpile.

Green waste stockpiles must be managed in compliance with the *Environmental Protection Act (EP Act)* and within ERA licence conditions.

Corporate and Operational Plans:

The services forming the basis of this Contract relates to the following goals in Council's Corporate Plan 2021/2026.

- Strategic Goal 2 - Natural Assets: Promoting, protecting, and enhancing our iconic natural environment now and for generations to come.
- Strategic Goal 3 – Design for Liveability: Creating a safe, sustainable, and connected place that supports a quality of life.

Statutory:

- Queensland Organics Strategy 2022-2032
- National Waste Action Plan 2019
- Qld Waste Strategy 2018
- Qld Organics Policy 2022

CONSULTATION:

Council has commenced the Resource Recovery Program to 2040 (RR2040), a long-term plan to optimise its resource recovery systems. RR2040 seeks to position Cairns as leaders in resource recovery and by doing so, strengthen the economic resilience, environmental health, amenity and liveability of the region.

Driven by emerging technologies, our commitment to our unique environment, Queensland Government policy drivers including the Queensland Organics Strategy 2022-2032, ambitious recovery and diversion targets, and a new state government waste levy, the proposed first investment under this project is focussed on the kerbside collection, processing and recovery of household food and garden organics (FOGO).

Further consultation on this will be conducted once the business case has been finalised and a preferred option has been identified.

ATTACHMENTS:

Bramston Beach Drop Bin aerial image.



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Gary Everson
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Mark Wuth
Director Cairns Infrastructure & Assets

Bramston Beach Drop Bin aerial images.

