

## Review of Derrinallum Community Plan (2019)

### Summary

The second review of Derrinallum's Community Plan 2012 – 2022 concluded on the evening of 18 April 2019 when some 35 people came together at the Derrinallum Hall to hear the results of the township survey. This meeting heard that 214 people had contributed their ideas about the future of Derrinallum, with 183 completed surveys submitted. Ninety-seven (97) adults completed the printed survey, 59 completed the online survey and a further 27 Derrinallum P-12 students (19 secondary, 8 primary) rounded out the sample. There was a strong degree of consistency across these response methods.

In answer to the question about what people like most about Derrinallum there was a consistent response across all groups – the friendly people that make up the town, the safe and quiet village atmosphere and Derrinallum's location close to major centres. Mount Elephant, the Avenue, the town's shops and 'country living' also came in for special mention.

The survey offered three ways for people to review Derrinallum's Community Plan: an open opportunity to put forward ideas, an opportunity to reflect on existing priorities; and an opportunity to respond to a limited set of new project proposals. These different ways of responding drew out differing reactions. The open-ended on-line and print surveys are somewhat inconclusive. Around 80 ideas were contributed to make Derrinallum a better place to live or to visit, but only ten attracted more than 10 survey mentions. 'Yes' and 'No' answers about support for existing priorities were quite clear cut, however the opportunity provided to indicate support for new project ideas drew out virulent opposition in some respondents.

As with previous surveys and reviews the upgrading, replacement or relocating of the central town toilet block received a high level survey mentions (23), and this was confirmed in response to a direct question about support for existing priorities where 105 people confirmed this issue as the town's second topmost priority. Having more shops in Derrinallum, Upgrading the Hotel and Streetscape Improvements received strong support across the survey. Few people mentioned 'Encouraging tradespeople to town' in the general survey of ideas, yet it was supported by 114 people in the question about 'existing priorities'.

In regard to new ideas tested in the survey, the 'Pick My Project' priority to install fitness equipment was well supported with 95 in favour and 45 against. The Walker Street Garden was supported by 84 people and opposed by 41. The construction of a 'skate park' and a 'splash park' each attracted roughly equal numbers of supporters and detractors, but little support from younger people.

At the final voting session held on Thursday 18 April, where 35 people had the opportunity to reflect on other people's ideas, strong support was confirmed for Developing the Recreation Reserve. This forum's assessment was it should become Derrinallum's confirmed second overall priority. Brightening up the War Memorial garden received only four mentions in the survey, but 12 'sticker' votes at the public meeting.

Taken together these different forms of responding give a revised list of 12 township priorities. The ranking is somewhat arbitrary depending on how one counts the influence of those opposing various initiatives. If that is put to one side (as it would be in any standard asset-based community-building exercise) the priority set is fairly clear, except that in this case it is the existing priority that is the least controversial that triumphs.



## COMBINED PRIORITIES

	PRIORITY	SURVEYS	YES	NO	NET
1	Encourage tradespeople to town		114	13	+ 101
2	Upgrade toilet block	24	105	19	+ 86
3	Fitness Equipment	13	95	39	+ 54
4	Walking track to Deep Lake	8	88	27	+ 61
5	Bike path between Derrinallum and Lismore	3	85	49	+ 36
6	Walker Street garden		84	41	+ 43
7	Develop small retirement village	9	75	28	+ 47
8	Open a local produce store		73	41	+ 32
9	Improve shops/ Opening hours/ More shops	30			
10	Develop Recreation Reserve	24			
11	Upgrade Hotel	19			
12	Provide more things to do	16			

(N=175)

	Existing community plan priority
	New project proposal
	Priority identified in Survey

## PUBLIC MEETING VOTES

	PRIORITY	Votes			
1	Upgrade toilet block	18			
2	Develop Recreation Reserve	18			
3	War memorial garden	12			
4	Better signs	12			
5	Improve streetscape/ Main Street	11			
6	Flowers and garden beds	9			
7	Support the School	9			
8	Repair roads	8			
9	Upgrade Hotel	7			
10	Provide more things to do	6			
11	Mount Elephant improvements	5			
12	Forge links with Lismore	5			
13	Bike/walking tracks	5			

(N=35)

### Survey design

As indicated in the summary, there are some methodological issues with the survey design which in hindsight could have been minimised if not avoided. A younger generation of Derrinallum residents expressed an interest in the design and prosecution of the town survey, and this interest was openly embraced as means of achieving greater reach and participation across the Derrinallum community. It later became clear that some Derrinallum residents were not supportive of some of the new ideas proposed to improve Derrinallum, so it was decided to make sure these were specifically tested in the survey so that the survey outcomes could provide some leadership direction. The framing of the question concerning some of the proposals for new facilities was unfortunate – ‘would you support . . . and would you use it?’ Older residents may well have supported a skate park, splash park or fitness equipment, but may have also concluded that they would not use such a facility themselves.

## **Participation**

The participation of a nominal 214 people in the township survey is a remarkable result, especially in comparison to the rates of participation in the formulation of the original plan (45 people) and its review in 2014 (only 13 people). It needs to be said that this time round the high level of participation was driven by controversy over the proposed Walker Street Garden project where the differences between the proponents and opponents of the idea became personal. Each side of the argument took steps to ensure that their side would not be undone by the survey and there was considerable effort and initiative taken to encourage a broad level of participation. There is no evidence that individuals filled out multiple survey forms, although that accusation has been made by critics. This criticism is certainly untrue of the printed survey returns, and the consistency of results across the various forms of the survey does not support that claim. Some unique spelling in the on-line survey is the only clue that someone may have also filled out a survey of another's behalf.

## ATTACHMENT

### REVIEW OF EXISTING PRIORITIES

	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NET</b>
1	Encourage tradespeople to town	114	13	+ 101
2	Upgrade toilet block	105	19	+ 86
3	Construct walking track to Deep Lake	88	27	+ 61
4	Develop small retirement village	75	28	+ 47
5	Open a local produce store	73	41	+ 32
6	Establish Northern Food trail	56	46	+ 10

(N=175)

### TESTING OF NEW PROJECT IDEAS

	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NET</b>
1	Fitness Equipment	95	39	+ 54
2	Walker Street garden	84	41	+ 43
3	Bike path between Derrinallum and Lismore	85	49	+ 36
4	Splash park	68	63	+ 5
5	Skate park	53	70	- 17

(N=170)

### COMBINED OPEN SURVEY RESPONSES

	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>ONLINE</b>	<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>PRINT</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
1	Improve shops/ Opening hours/ More shops	10	2	18	30
2	Develop Recreation Reserve	9		15	24
3	Upgrade toilet block	7	1	16	24
4	Upgrade Hotel	6	2	11	19
5	Provide more things to do	8	2	6	16
6	Play/ exercise equipment			13	13
7	Flowers and garden beds	6		7	13
8	Improve streetscape/ Main Street	6	2	5	12
9	Tourist attractions	6		5	11
10	Bike/walking tracks	3		8	11
11	Aged care facility			9	9
12	Mount Elephant developments	7		2	9
	Reinstate market	5		2	7
	Promotional signs	6		1	7
	More jobs			6	6
	Repair roads			6	6
	Town brochure			6	6
	Swimming pool		5	1	6
	Link to Lismore			5	5
	Historical map			5	5
	Health services			5	5

(N=170)