



**TAKE IT EASY: Noosa Council has opened a trial RV stop at 17 Mary River Rd, Cooroy.**

*PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED*

# RV stop will boost tourism

NOOSA Council has opened a trial RV stop in Cooroy to support hinterland tourism.

The Cooroy RV Stop, at 17 Mary River Rd, opened on Saturday and offers motorhome travellers easy access to Cooroy from the highway and serves as a gateway to the hinterland, complementing Tourism Noosa's Country Drive initiative.

The facility caters for up to 40 fully self-contained recreational vehicles (RVs), and includes a chemical toilet dump point.

Noosa Council executive officer Narelle Reid said council saw the project as an economic development opportunity for the town.

"Chamber of commerce, community groups and residents called for an RV stop in Cooroy to encourage the growing motorhome tourist market to stop in and explore Noosa's hinterland," she said.

"Council is pleased to be able to support economic development in Cooroy and surrounding towns with this initiative, which we hope

fulfils a need for a low-cost no-frills option for self-drive visitors."

Council chose the site behind the Combined Coastal Car Club in walking distance of Cooroy's main street.

Council will assess the RV Stop's success in 12 months.

A caretaker will manage the stop that offers fully self-contained RVs a maximum four-night stay at \$10 per vehicle per night.

To book, visit [www.noosa.qld.gov.au/cooroy-rv-stopover](http://www.noosa.qld.gov.au/cooroy-rv-stopover).



# Free camping set to stay after back-flip

## Honesty boxes thrown out in council meeting

By **JAYDEN BROWN AND DANE LILLINGSTONE**

COUNCILLORS have back-flipped on a decision to charge a \$10 fee to campers at parks in Dalveen and Allora.

The unpopular decision, passed at the November council meeting, would have seen campers at Dalveen's Jim Mitchell Park pay per night via an honesty box system.

Cr Jamie Mackenzie moved a motion to overturn the decision at the general council meeting in Warwick.

"Free campers certainly spend money in the local area," he said.

"Free campers generally don't like paying for council boxes but they're more happy to open their wallet for not-for-profit groups."

He said there had been no indication of the cost or benefits of having the honesty boxes in place.

Cr Mackenzie's motion to bring back free camping had widespread support, with councillors voting 6-3 in favour. Among the

supporters was Cr Vic Pennisi, who said his concern was that no one knew of the true cost to council.

Cr Pennisi suggested council discuss options through the park rationalisation process.

"During the park rationalisation process the Dalveen community said they wanted to be part of the operations of the park."

Other issues raised by councillors included theft and vandalism of the honesty boxes and safety of council staff.

While Allora-based Cr Glyn Rees said he understood the concerns of councillors, he believed a voluntary charge for campers wasn't a "big demand".

"I am more than well aware of the economic benefit of campers and campervan travellers. But there are costs and I don't think it all should be ignored," he said.

"Council has been

maintaining that park for years – the toilet we have there comes at a significant cost."

There were examples of the camping being misused, according to Cr Rees, who said vegetable pickers had been showering and washing their clothes on site. Cr Rees also raised concerns about community groups running the parks.

"Community groups in Allora are already dealing with significant workloads in running their own organisations," he said.

Mayor Peter Blundell and Cr Neil Meiklejohn also voted against the return to free camping.

President of the Dalveen Sports Club Phil Zikan was against the fees from the start.

"It is pleasing that this ill-conceived plan, with no apparent financial analysis attached to it, has been rescinded," he said.

"What is less pleasing is that this represents yet

another rear-guard action being fought by small communities against a council that doesn't understand the meaning of the word 'consult'."

Under the motion, council will not change its policy for the next 24 months and will continue to permit free roadside camping where it has occurred at Mitchell Park, Dalveen; Dalrymple Creek, Allora; and Sports Reserve, Leyburn.

Council will undertake further consultation with relevant stakeholders with a view to handing over control and maintenance of existing public camping at Dalveen, Allora and Leyburn to community groups.



Cr Jamie Mackenzie

Free campers certainly spend money in the local area.





# Rally boost worth \$1.3m: City report

THE Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia's national rally in October injected almost \$1.3 million into the economy, according to a City of Albany report.

A post-event evaluation by the City found the event, which attracted more than 600 recreational vehicles and 1,188 visitors from across Australia, injected an estimated \$1,283,193 into the region.

The City committed \$100,000 in-kind support and \$60,000 cash sponsorship to the event, which also received \$40,000 sponsorship from the Perth Convention Bureau, \$20,000 from Tourism WA and \$10,000 from the Great Southern Development Commission.

"The CMCA rally was a fantastic success for Albany and we were thrilled to host it," Albany Mayor Dennis Wellington said.

"Hosting the rally has been an economic success for Albany and the region, generating a significant return on investment and showcasing what our wonderful city has to offer."

The economic value of the event is based on an estimated direct visitor spend of \$874,368 calculated by the number of visitors each spending

an estimated \$92 per day over eight nights, as well as an estimated spend of \$408,825 by CMCA organisers over the rally period.

The Albany Chamber of Commerce and Industry worked closely with the City in attracting the CMCA rally to Albany.

Major beneficiaries were local hospitality, supermarkets, retail businesses and visitor attractions.

Many businesses provided positive feedback about the rally's success.

"Overall, it is a very positive result for the community and adds to Albany's growing reputation as a tourist destination with world-class attractions and experiences," Mr Wellington said.

"We hope those who came to Albany for the rally thoroughly enjoyed their stay and will return in future, and will also tell their friends and family what a wonderful place our city is and encourage them to visit too.

"While we can measure the immediate economic boost the rally provided, the long-term flow-on benefits from word of mouth promotion for Albany is invaluable."