



Plan to boost tourist numbers Come camp here

TOURISM

BY ASHLEIGH TULLIS

WARRAGAMBA businesses can look forward to a boost when camper vans start rolling into town to stay for a few nights.

Warragamba will become the first town in the shire to offer RV and camper van drivers a place to stay.

Councillor Matt Gould's wants the council to create RV friendly short term camping areas. The idea was supported by all councillors at the last council meeting.

The council will develop a strategy and infrastructure so villages can obtain a "RV Friendly Town" certification from the Campervan and Mobile Home Club of Australia.

This will mean villages will have everything grey nomads need to stay for a few nights and those villages will be endorsed by the camper van club.

Cr Gould said Warragamba would be used as a pilot site because it had 95 per cent of the facilities needed to gain certification.

"Grey nomads come to see the shire's attractions but have no-where to stay for a couple of nights so they keep driving to other areas," he said. "We are missing out on that revenue source.

"Warragamba already has

a dump point where waste can be disposed. The picnic areas are also perfect.

"All the council needs to do is change the parking bay sizes and remove the signs that say people can't stay in the town. Then the council can apply for certification.

"Warragamba's tourism is a significant issue and shops are shutting so the town desperately needs economic stimulus and this idea is easy to implement."

Cr Gould said a similar idea was raised in the past but some residents were worried about the wrong type of people staying for weeks.

"The accommodation would be limited to short stayers - about 48 hours, which is perfect for grey nomads to look at the dam, shop and eat at restaurants."

He said the short stay would be largely self-policed and he was confident residents would notify the

council if motorists were out-staying their welcome.

Cr Gould said he would like to see the camping areas rolled out across the shire.

"RV friendly towns would be a real boost for the community and will help us attract eco-tourists," he said. "Picton, Warragamba and

Appin have dump points so we need to look at what other criteria is needed to make them RV certified."

The council will consider making Bargo RV friendly after a strategic plan is adopted to entice motorists into the shire who are driving along the highway.



Lou and Joe Read are pleased their late son Cr Shane Read's camping area idea will be carried out by Cr Matt Gould and mayor Judith Hannan.



Shire welcomes campers

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COME CAMP HERE: Lou and Joe Read are pleased their late son Cr Shane Read's camping area idea will be carried out by Cr Matt Gould and mayor Judith Hannan.



Murray caravan park is looking good

By Monique Kuzeff

THE pre-election promise of Councillor Murray King to bring back a caravan park on the banks of the Murray River is looking promising, as council supported the idea and an investigation in to potential site options on Monday night.

Cr King opened discussion saying that while Albury was a river town, it did not have an area to park recreation vehicles, but such a development would increase tourism “exponentially”.

“Most river towns from Albury to South Australia have caravan parks or recreational vehicle parks on the banks of the Murray,” Cr King said.

“Development of this type of facility would increase tourism exponentially and promote the town exponentially.

“Albury needs this type of facility.”

Council agreed to identify

potential locations moving into the New Year, with the report deadline brought forward to 28 February.

Cr Cohn questioned whether the report would also include “associated risks” such as environmental and flooding risks.

General Manger Frank Zaknich said that such issues would be addressed, including financial and economic risks.

Mr Zaknich said only “preliminary insights” into potential outcomes would be noted in the report due to the shortened timeframe.

“Obviously we won’t go in to a lot of detail ... but it will give council essentially an understanding of potential options and locations,” Mr Zaknich said.

While Cr King said that having the caravan park in close proximity to the Murray River and Albury CBD was an “ideal situation”, he did not want to “rule anything out”.

“Hopefully we can explore the benefits and the non-benefits of each of those scenarios,” he said.

Mr Zaknich said that the Murray River Experience masterplan identified a site that was in close proximity to the Murray River, but not to the CBD.

“There’s a mix of possible sites but obviously we need to look at the ownership of those sites.

“I think we have enough there to work with in terms of the scope that the motion is looking for and we will identify what existing information we have.”



Cr King's pre-election commitment to bring back a caravan park on the banks of the Murray River was discussed at council on Monday. 162540 Picture: MONIQUE KUZEFF



Council rules against one night stop

Cecilia Allen

MANJIMUP Shire Council has voted against a proposed overnight vehicle stop in the Manjimup light industrial area.

At the last council meeting, councillors ruled against an overnight rest stop for long vehicles, trucks and recreational vehicles, which was to be funded as part of the Manjimup Town Centre Revitalisation Project.

Manjimup Central Caravan Park and Deli owner Garry McWilliam was pleased with the decision.

"The council did a good job going through the public submissions and considering the negative effect the overnight stay would have on caravan parks and local accommodation business," he said.

Mr McWilliam said the overnight bay would have taken away 80 per cent of his one night stays from Monday to Friday.

"All RVs are welcome at our caravan park," he said.

"It would be hard to gauge exactly how much income would be lost, but we would have about five acres which would be no real use."

However, Paddy Pemberton, a member of the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia, said an overnight rest bay would provide business for the town.

"On average every time someone stops in a town they spend \$100 a

day and that's an old statistic so it could be more now," he said,

"People who are stopping overnight don't want to spend on things they don't need such as swimming pools and laundry facilities.

"People talk through the internet and if they can see the town is not RV friendly they will bypass."

Other concerns raised at meeting were the possibility the overnight vehicle stop would be used by backpackers who would stay longer than one night, litter, high maintenance costs and the location being unsuitable.

Shire president Wade DeCampo said about \$500,000 had been allocated to the project.

"We'll now do a budget adjustment and use the money elsewhere," he said.

Cr DeCampo said the council may look at the construction of an overnight vehicle stay at a different location in the future.