

## Bowen and Abbot Community Reference Group Meeting Minutes

5.30pm Thursday 5 March 2026 – Bowen Community Centre

### Chair:

Chair North Queensland Bulk Ports Chief Executive Officer, Brendan Webb

### Attendees:

<p><b>Recreational representatives</b> Cheryl Bullemor</p> <p><b>Community representatives</b> Richard Roberts Glenda Robertson Lorraine Maltby</p> <p><b>Business representatives</b> Barney Menzies – Chamber of Commerce</p> <p><b>Environmental Representatives</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Whitsunday Regional Council representative</b> Jonathan Cutting</p> <p><b>Juru Enterprise Limited</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Youth representative</b> N/A</p>	<p><b>Port Industry Representatives</b> Damien Dederer – Abbot Point Operations Clint Mason - Engage Marine</p> <p><b>NQBP Representatives</b> CEO Brendan Webb Senior Advisor Community Relationships Emilie Power Community Relationship Advisor Ange Julian Indigenous Program Manager Julie Keane Port Supervisor, Bowen James Miller Senior Project Manager Stuart McDonnell</p> <p><b>MSQ Representative</b> Alex Cramb – (Strategy &amp; Planning - Boat Harbours) Max Haste – (Townsville - Waterway Operations)</p> <p><b>Guests</b> N/A</p>
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**Apologies:** Mayor Ry Collins Whitsunday Regional Council, Bradley Stout Juru Enterprises (JEL) Matt Bowkett Engage Marine, Mark Smith – North Queensland Export Terminal (NQXT) James Gilmour - Gilmour Space, Stephanie Cora.

Item	Discussion	Action
1. Acknowledgement of Country, meeting open, agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting opened at 5.35pm</li> <li>• Community Reference Group members were welcomed by Chair/NQBP CEO, Brendan Webb.</li> <li>• An Acknowledgment of Country was provided by Brendan.</li> </ul>	
2. Welcome and introductions	<p><b>Presented by CEO (Chair), Brendan Webb</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologies were recorded from Mayor Ry Collins Whitsunday Regional Council, Bradley Stout Juru Enterprises (JEL) Matt Bowkett Engage Marine, Mark Smith – North Queensland Export Terminal (NQXT) James Gilmour - Gilmour Space, Stephanie Cora.</li> <li>• Welcome to NQBP Senior Project Manager Stuart McDonnell</li> <li>• About NQBP – a Queensland Government Owned Corporation managing the ports of Mackay, Hay Point, Abbot Point and Weipa.</li> <li>• The ports support regional industries, handle a significant proportion of Queensland’s international trade and operate within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.</li> <li>• NQBP operates commercially on behalf of Queenslanders and is accountable to its shareholding Ministers.</li> <li>• NQBP’s shareholding Ministers are the Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads.</li> <li>• Overview provided on the role of the CRG as a two-way engagement forum providing community insight to inform NQBP decision-making.</li> <li>• Members were encouraged to share information between the CRG and their community organisations and to contribute agenda items or feedback where relevant.</li> <li>• The importance of active participation and information sharing was noted.</li> </ul>	
3. Conflict of Interest	<p><b>Presented by CEO (Chair), Brendan Webb</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion around conflicts of interest was held and Conflict of Interest register reviewed.</li> <li>• No concerns were raised.</li> <li>• No conflicts of interest were declared for this meeting.</li> </ul>	

4. Actions Register	<p><b>Presented by CEO (Chair), Brendan Webb</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All actions from the previous meeting were closed out.</li> </ul>	
5. CEO update	<p><b>Presented by CEO (Chair), Brendan Webb</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on the Port of Mackay container depot project, construction commenced 27 January 2026 and completion expected late 2026.</li> <li>Members discussed potential impacts for regional trade, including sugar exports and containerised freight.</li> </ul> <p><b>Question</b> – What customs and biosecurity requirements will apply to the container depot?  <b>Response</b> – <i>NQBP advised Customs, Border Force and Department of Agriculture and Fisheries requirements will apply.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledgment of outgoing apprentices and appreciation extended to their mentors.</li> <li>Welcome to the 2026 apprentice intake, with apprentices now employed directly by NQBP.</li> </ul> <p><b>Question</b> – Do apprentices receive full-time roles after completing the program?  <b>Response</b> – <i>Not in all cases, however NQBP supports pathways into employment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update provided on the Regional and Rural Forum in Bowen hosted by the Hon. Dale Last MP.</li> </ul>	Action – Circulate NQBP economic impact study to CRG members.
6. Infrastructure	<p><b>Presented by CEO (Chair), Brendan Webb</b></p> <p><b>Bowen Jetty project update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning progressing for a new public jetty to replace the existing Bowen Wharf.</li> <li>Geotechnical investigations and environmental baseline studies completed to support approvals.</li> <li>Reference design underway with completion expected mid-2026.</li> <li>Expressions of interest for design and construction expected later this year.</li> </ul>	

- Construction anticipated to commence in 2027 with completion targeted for late 2028, subject to approvals.
- NQBP confirmed the project will be constructed within the existing footprint with no dredging required.
- Further community engagement will occur as planning progresses.

#### **Port of Abbot Point Towage**

- NQBP is progressing a business case to replace the commercial arm alongside the proposed public jetty.
- Existing infrastructure is approaching the end of its service life.
- The commercial wharf will have a dedicated project budget separate to the public jetty.

**Question** – Will towage infrastructure need to relocate during the construction?

**Response** – *NQBP advised an interim solution is being investigated.*

#### **Reference Design and Engineering**

- Reference design (Front End Engineering Design) is underway to define the project scope and support approvals and tender documentation.
- Design contract awarded to Wallbridge Gilbert Aztec with work continuing through to mid-2026.
- Work completed to date includes geotechnical investigations, environmental studies, layout development and services and amenities design.

#### **Procurement and Tender Process**

- NQBP outlined how the Queensland Procurement Policy guides procurement processes.
- Evaluation panels assess submissions against project criteria, including opportunities for local suppliers and Indigenous employment where relevant.

	<p><b>Port Land Use Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NQBP is updating the Port of Abbot Point Land Use Plan to align with the Queensland Government Port Master Plan.</li> <li>• Preparation of the Statement of Proposal is underway with government consultation to follow prior to public consultation expected mid-2026.</li> <li>• Final approval will be provided by the Minister for Transport.</li> </ul> <p><b>Question</b> – How does the Land Use Plan link to the Port Master Plan?</p> <p><b>Response</b> – <i>The Master Plan sets the planning framework and zones which the Land Use Plan must reflect.</i></p> <p><b>Climate Resilience Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NQBP has completed a climate resilience risk assessment across all ports considering flooding, storm tide, sea level rise and coastal erosion.</li> <li>• Assessment confirmed ports are currently in a strong position with no urgent infrastructure upgrades required.</li> <li>• Findings will inform future infrastructure planning.</li> <li>• New infrastructure such as the Bowen Jetty will consider future sea level projections.</li> </ul>	
7. Operations update	<p><b>Presented by Port Supervisor, Bowen – James Miller</b></p> <p><b>Maintenance and operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild dog trapping will occur at Abbot Point between 16–25 April 2026.</li> <li>• Members were encouraged to report maintenance issues directly to NQBP.</li> <li>• Bowen Jetty is inspected daily and routine maintenance continues.</li> <li>• A damaged jetty pylon will be repaired following impact from a visiting vessel.</li> </ul> <p><b>Question</b> – Glenda – A Facebook post suggested a wire had been strung across part of the jetty. Was NQBP aware of this?</p>	

	<p><b>Response</b> – NQBP advised no reports had been received and daily inspections had not identified any issues. Please pass on any information like this to NQBP staff when you see it so it can be investigated.</p>	
8. Environment update	<p><b>Presented by Indigenous Programs Manager, Julie Keane</b></p> <p><b>Tangaroa Blue Beach Clean-Up Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In December 2025, Abbot Point beaches were surveyed with Juru Land and Sea Rangers.</li> <li>• A total of 2,102 debris items (103.6kg) were removed, mostly plastic.</li> </ul> <p><b>Feral Animal Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerial feral animal management programs were undertaken in July and November 2025 across approximately 50,470 hectares.</li> <li>• 301 feral pigs, 6 wild dogs, 1 feral cat and 5 feral deer were removed.</li> <li>• A further wild dog trapping program is planned for April 2026.</li> </ul> <p><b>Turtle Monitoring Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turtle monitoring occurred between October and December 2025.</li> <li>• Just over 40 nests were recorded with approximately 94–95% hatch success.</li> </ul>	
9. Indigenous Program	<p><b>Presented by Indigenous Programs Manager, Julie Keane</b></p> <p><b>Indigenous Program Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NQBP renewed a five-year land and sea management contract with Juru Enterprises Limited.</li> <li>• A new storage shed is being constructed at the Port of Abbot Point to support operations.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NQBP continues supporting education initiatives including CQUniCares scholarships and bursaries.</li> </ul>	
10. Community update	<p><b>Presented by Senior Advisor Community Relationship, Emilie Power</b></p> <p><b>NQBP Community Fund</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recipients of the 2025 NQBP Community Fund were announced in November 2025.</li> <li>13 organisations across Mackay, Hay Point, Bowen and Weipa shared \$100,000.</li> <li>Funding supports initiatives focused on women’s health, youth wellbeing, disability inclusion and mental health awareness.</li> </ul> <p><b>CRG Sponsorship Allocation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CRG members have an annual allocation of \$5,000 for community donations and sponsorships.</li> <li>Nominations received include Bowen Community Centre events, Bowen Volunteer Expo, Bowen Homelessness and Community Services Expo, and Community Centre Open Day and Program Showcase.</li> <li>Nomination period extended to Friday 13 March 2026.</li> <li>With successful recipients announced the week of 23 March 2026.</li> </ul> <p><b>Question</b> – Glenda – Can funding be provided as a donation rather than a grant?</p> <p><b>Response</b> – NQBP confirmed the funding is provided as sponsorship.</p> <p><b>CRG Feedback Survey</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results of the 2025 CRG feedback survey were presented.</li> <li>Thank you to our CRG members for their participation and ongoing feedback.</li> </ul>	
11. General business	<b>Maritime Safety Queensland (Alex Cramb)</b>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on the Bowen State Boat Harbour Master Plan being developed with consultant.</li> <li>• The project will progress through draft planning in 2026, public consultation in late 2026 and finalisation in early 2027.</li> </ul> <p><b>Bowen State Boat Harbour master plan – project update</b></p> <p>Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) is developing a master plan for the Bowen State Boat Harbour which will provide a long-term vision and strategic framework to guide development and decision-making over time.</p> <p>The master plan will ensure the Bowen State Boat Harbour continues to support sustainable maritime and tourism activities and access to Queensland’s waterways.</p> <p>MSQ is working with specialist firm Arup to develop the master plan in three key phases:</p> <p><b>Phase 1 - Draft master plan development (early – late 2026)</b>  <i>The project team will carry out technical studies and site assessments, meet with key stakeholders, and identify opportunities and challenges for the area. This work will help shape the draft master plan.</i></p> <p><b>Phase 2 - Community engagement (by late 2026)</b>  <i>Once a draft is ready, MSQ will share it with the community for feedback. Everyone will be able to have a say through surveys, workshops and pop-up sessions.</i></p> <p><b>Phase 3 - Final master plan (by early 2027)</b>  <i>MSQ will review all feedback, make any necessary updates, and finalise the master plan before it’s released to the public.</i></p> <p>To register for updates, please contact the project team at <a href="mailto:BHSP@msq.qld.gov.au">BHSP@msq.qld.gov.au</a> or visit <a href="http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/BowenStateBoatHarbour">www.tmr.qld.gov.au/BowenStateBoatHarbour</a></p> <p><b>Maritime Safety Queensland (Max Haste)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSQ also provided an update on the derelict vessel removal program, including progress to remove the vessel <i>Seven Wonders</i> and a vessel located on Key Street.</li> </ul>	<p>Action – Consider development of short visual updates for CRG members to share with community groups.</p>
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	<p><b>Abbot Point Operations – (Damien Dederer)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul> <p><b>Engage Marine – (Clint Mason)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vessel inspections are scheduled for mid-July.</li> <li>• A spare vessel will be deployed to ensure three tugs remain operational.</li> </ul> <p><b>Whitsunday Regional Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council provided updates including the Build Bowen sewer infrastructure project, Bowen Pool solar project, parks renewal program, regional roads reseal works and Rose Bay water main upgrades.</li> <li>• Whitsunday Business Awards nominations open in April.</li> <li>• Rates payments are currently due with the discount period ending 13 March 2026.</li> <li>• (See attachment for further information).</li> </ul> <p><b>General Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members discussed opportunities to better share port information with the community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Question</b> – Glenda – Could NQBP provide short summaries or one-page updates for CRG members to share publicly?</p> <p><b>Response</b> – <i>NQBP will consider developing visual communication materials to support this. CRG members are encouraged to share meeting minutes with their contacts.</i></p>	
12. Next meeting	<b>Next meeting to be held on Thursday 16 July 2026</b>	
13.	Meeting closed at 7.45pm	

## **Whitsunday Regional Council update – Bowen & Abbot Point CRG meeting March 5**

### **Build Bowen / Sewer Infrastructure to Unlock Housing**

- Planning underway to deliver A major sewer upgrade project (~\$33M) will deliver new trunk infrastructure including 15km of sewer mains and pump stations.
- The project will unlock hundreds of new homes initially and potentially thousands over time

### **Bowen Swimming Pool Solar commencing soon**

- We're installing 120kw solar at Bowen Pool which will reduce energy costs while also improving shade and spectator areas. Access to western hill and grandstand will be affected, but pool access and parking no change

### **Electoral Arrangements Consultation**

- Consultation closed 22 February – over 1,412 engagements
- Unweighted average across all: Divided ~69%, Undivided ~27%, Unsure ~5%

### **Parks Regional Asset Renewal Program Finishing up**

- Over 23 playgrounds renewed and upgraded across the Region, including Bowen front beach, Hansen Park, Horseshoe Bay Park, Rose Bay, Queens Beach Park and Col Leather Sporting Complex
- Also at the sports complex our new field lighting I believe is now operable

### **Horseshoe Bay amenities roof renewal - Monday 9 to Friday 13 March**

- Temporary toilet facilities in place within the car park during the works

### **Regional Roads re-seal program upcoming**

- 12 Roads around Bowen - Mount Nutt Road, Pantall St, West St, Argyle Park Rd, Bull Cresc, Muroona St, Poole St, Sinclair, Williams, Gregory, Richmond Road, Horseshoe Bay Roundabout
- Out to tender soon – further info to be released early April regarding timing

### **Rose Bay Watermain**

- Council crews have completed important water main upgrades on a 70m section along Rose Bay Road in Bowen, boosting reliability, new fire hydrant and additional valves to reduce future service disruptions.

### **Bowen library – wine glass painting – 11 March – 10am – 1130am**

### **Whitsunday business awards – held Oct – Nov**

- Nominations will open in April. Over half of nominations were from Bowen last year

### **Development applications**

- Dynamic Health & Fitness in Queens Beach – DA to expand use to chiropractor clinic + food outlet.

- Whitsundays Paradise Estate – 49 townhouse stages proposed.

#### **Short-term accommodation**

- Planning Scheme amendment defining where STA is and isn't permitted within residential areas, consulted on late 2025, will commence from March 30, 2026.
- Local law amendment consultation for STA licences to commence next week. Amendments include refinements to complaints process and property management of BnB operations.

**Rates due – 5% discount ends 13 March**