



**Online Submission on the Draft HFB 2024-25 Business Plan**  
**17 May 2024**

The 5049 Community Association has reviewed the **Draft Holdfast Bay 2024-25 Annual Business Plan** with a main focus on the proposed Jetty Road, Glenelg upgrade and its impact on Council's ability to fund future projects and activities in Seacliff and Kingston Park.

**We do not support the Transforming Jetty Rd Glenelg project (and special levy) under the current funding model. We would support a staged upgrade with the first stage to deliver the Coastal Zone with Council committing no more than \$10 million to the project.**

Here are a few **general comments** which we would like to make before commenting on the Business Plan:

- The engagement and liaison process with Council and Administration is very important to our Association and we acknowledge the trusted and productive working relationship we enjoy. For our part we will continue to collaborate and assist Council by organising forums and facilitating participation by the community, submitting reports on issues of community interest and concern, promoting Council initiatives, providing community feedback, and advising of maintenance and safety issues.
- The HFB Liaison Task Group of 5049CC has met twice this year with Seacliff Ward councillors to discuss priorities for the local community. We have identified a number short and medium-long term projects that we would like to see proceed (see below). We are very concerned that no capital projects of any size will be considered in Seacliff Ward for the next 3-5 years, at least, should the Jetty Road, Glenelg project proceed as proposed.
- 5049CC is very pleased that the Kingston Park Kiosk/Café is now finally open and receiving overwhelming support from the local community and visitors. The only disappointment is that the dining area is not large enough to cater to the large number of customers during peak times! We are also pleased that construction of the Seacliff Plaza Amenities Block has commenced and look forward to the opening of this new facility in October.
- Given the cost-of-living pressures affecting many residents in Holdfast Bay, in particular retirees, a proposed average rate increase of 7.1% (including the 2.3% special levy) in 2024-25 is unwarranted at this time. The 7% decline in real disposable per capita incomes in SA in 2022-23 is the largest on record. Against this background Council is proposing to borrow \$30

million, taking total debt up to \$60 million, to fund a “five-star” project for which, according to the Prudential Report, is not financially viable.

- Council’s Quality of Life Survey (2023): The overall approval rating of 8.55/10, as a Place to Live, is slightly lower than the 2021 survey (8.7/10) but is still a good score. It is concerning however, given the current situation, that the item rated poorest was Council’s financial management at 6.95/10. Maintaining Roads (7.1/10) and Cycle Paths (7.55/10) continue to rate low indicating that further improvements are still required in these areas. What specific plans does Council have to improve performance in 2024-25 in these key areas and when will the next survey be taken to gauge performance?

### **Jetty Road Glenelg Project:**

The 5049 Coastal Community Association advocates for urban renewal to generate economic prosperity and community development. However, we **do not support** the Transforming Jetty Rd Glenelg project (and special levy) under the current funding model. Our position is the same as the Holdfast Bay Resident’s Alliance and we concur with issues they’ve raised in their submission.

- Jetty Road, Glenelg is described as a five star “once in a generation” project, yet this generation has already paid for significant upgrades to Jetty Road and Mosley Square in the past 10 years (eg. street and tree lighting, footpath upgrade, tram platforms, allied lane ways and statues, etc.). More recently Chapel Plaza underwent a \$3 million upgrade.
- There are significant elements of the current proposal that have not been informed by the approved 2017 Jetty Road Masterplan. Does the current proposal comply with the Local Government Act? A new Masterplan and consultation period maybe warranted. The 2017 Masterplan included:
  - Nine discrete projects staged over 10 years.
  - Coast zone to be the first project area.
  - Council to seek funding support from other sources for each implementation stage. Council funding to be no more than 50%.
  - Each project to be subject to further review by Council prior to commencement.
- The major beneficiaries will (potentially) be the Jetty Road traders, local Glenelg residents and visitors. There is no direct benefit to the residents of 5049 (Seacliff and Kingston Park), yet residents of these suburbs are being asked to contribute to the cost of the project on an equal basis as the “locals”. Many residents of Seacliff and Kingston Park avoid Jetty Road Glenelg because it is a busy, crowded area preferring local areas in Seacliff and Brighton. We are advised that Council allocates money/projects based on Community needs. This is not considered a community need by 5049 residents.

**Online Submission on the Draft HFB 2024-25 Business Plan**  
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- Council have advised that business vacancies on Jetty Road have halved over the last 12 months, reaching 4.8% in 3rd Qtr. 2023 which is one of the lowest rates on record. We question why they need Council and rate payers support at the present time.
- Council has secured \$10 million in funding from the Australian Government. The State Government has been unwilling to provide funding because "it does not contribute to High Street upgrades". Glenelg is the State's premier beachside resort attracting 1.4 million visitors and generating \$225 million annually. We believe that significant State Government funding under the tourism banner must be obtained to undertake the entire project.
- The \$40 million budget figure is only an estimate as tenders have not been called on the project. Given Council's history in managing major infrastructure projects it is extremely likely that this figure will be exceeded, increasing the likelihood of higher levies in years 2 and 3 and/or an extension of the special levy period. According to the Prudential Report the financial risk on the project is considered extreme.
- There are significant debt implications for the City and rate payers.... Net Financial Liabilities Ratio will exceed 100% over a five- year period, outside the Local Government Association's recommended range. The potential economic benefits to Council and rate payers from the \$40 million spend (ie. the cost benefit analysis) have not been presented to residents. The Project is not intended to be financially viable as it is the creation of public realm assets to enhance the amenity and vibrancy of Jetty Road. What is the projected increase in visitations to Glenelg on completion of the project? What shop front improvements are businesses likely to undertake to increase the appeal of Jetty Road?
- The timing of this major project is very poor with cost-of-living pressures affecting many residents in Holdfast Bay. The cash rate is the highest it's been in 12 years and rate cuts, forecast by Council, may not happen year. So, this is not the time to be borrowing money and incurring more debt.
- If the Jetty Road project proceeds new capital projects in other parts of the city will now be delayed or may never proceed. This includes Stage 2 of the Seaclyff Plaza for which a Masterplan was approved a few years ago by Council and which would cost a fraction of Jetty Road, Glenelg.
- Given the cost of the project and debt implications Council should have allowed an extended community consultation period, rather than the minimum 3-week period that is mandated. There has been a material change in the cost and funding of the project compared to the 2017 Masterplan. Council's Facebook post and email were designed, it would appear, to limit feedback by carefully avoiding any mention of the project cost and the special rates levy. Neither the Mayor or Seaclyff Ward councillors have addressed the local 5049 communities on the project. A questionnaire on the project, similar to the one sent by David Speirs, should have been sent out by Council. The lack of transparency and consultation is a very real concern.

## Online Submission on the Draft HFB 2024-25 Business Plan 17 May 2024

Following our deputation at the Council meeting on 14 May we have been advised that the \$10 million Federal Grant has conditions that require Council to allocate only \$5.5m to deliver the Coastal Zone (Moseley Square) component. Grant conditions also “imply” that Council will undertake the Transition Zone as part of the overall project though.

**On the basis of this information 5049 CC would support a staged upgrade of Jetty Road, Glenelg. The first stage would deliver the Coastal Zone only with Council committing the minimum \$5.5 million to meet grant conditions and certainly no more than \$10 million. The Transition and City zones would only proceed after additional funding had been secured by Council.**

### **Projects in 5049:**

The Draft Business Plan has an allocation for two small projects in 5049, the Wheatland Street Pocket Park and Wayfinding at Kingston Park. We thank Councillor Clare Lindop for initiating and progressing these projects through Council’s budget allocation process:

#### **Wheatland Street Pocket Park (\$20,000)**

- The \$20,000 is expected to cover all of the “civil works” by the Depot including removal of weedy trees and dolomite to create areas for planting and hopefully natural pathways. 5049 CC, through our volunteer Rail Care Group, is in a position to assist with this project with both a possible small financial contribution and with plantings in Winter 2025.
- We remain hopeful that other initiatives (eg. retaining wall creepers and Power Box artwork, etc.) may be considered to “beautify” Wheatland Street as this is a major beachside entry point in the city. By comparison to Jetty Roads in Glenelg and Brighton this street is very unattractive.

#### **Wayfinding at Kingston Park (\$8,000)**

- Signage at the entrance road to the Holiday Park and Kingston Park Reserve has been long overdue, primarily to direct visitors to the access road. The signage should be low key and in keeping with the environs and its cultural and historic significance (ie. not a large commercial sign as at the Brighton Oval). A low stone wall should also be considered as an attractive entrance feature to the access road.

### **Other Projects:**

#### **Movement and Transport Plan Implementation (\$40,000)**

- Funding will enable “prompt implementation of actions and outcomes from the Plan in an agile way”.
- We await the results of the public consultation on the draft Movement & Place Plan which closed on 25 April. 5049CC made a submission.
- 5049 CC are against a blanket 40km/hr speed limit in Holdfast Bay

#### **Environment (Wellbeing, Sustainability, and Innovation sections)**

- 5049CC is supportive of Council’s efforts in this space, particularly in relation to renewable energy usage and diversion of waste from landfill. A Sustainability objective to become carbon-neutral by 2030 is commendable though we would be interested to know how this would be achieved, at what cost and how much of that will be achieved by offsets.
- \$30,000 is budgeted to compare the average biodiversity score from 2018 with the current one. The aim is to achieve an increase from 12.8% to 14% which is necessary and admirable. What is the action plan (budget) should the score not have reached the target.
- The tree canopy cover (TCC) mentioned in the COHB 5- year environmental roadmap/strategy only aims to increase cover from 15.3 to 16.8% by 2030. HFB has one of the lowest TCCs in Adelaide (and Adelaide is the lowest of all state capital cities) so a 1.5% increase is an extremely modest target. The large number of mature trees that have been lost in the past few years (eg. Sturt Road property) is a major concern. Hopefully this issue will be addressed in the inaugural Urban Forest Plan which aims to increase TCC.
- Reference is made in the Business Plan to “continue to remediate our three gullies”. What additional work (budget) is planned in 2024-25?
- Operating expenses to maintain the Angus Neil Reserve and the Kingston Park Coastal Reserve will be reduced by 32% and 52% respectively. What will this mean in terms of the upkeep of these areas?
- We are disappointed that there is no capacity within Council to maintain the verges planted by 5049CC along selected streets in Kingston Park.

#### **Kingston Park Coastal Reserve (Tulukutangga)**

- Once again there is no mention of the KP Coastal Reserve in the Business Plan despite this being a unique and extremely important asset to the City, the Community and the Kurna People.
- We are pleased that construction of the upper lookout is underway, the first step in realising the Council approved Master Plan for the Reserve.
- We are also encouraged to hear that in recent meetings Kurna representatives & the wider Kurna community have agreed “to move forward”, starting with an application under Section 23 of the Aboriginal

## Online Submission on the Draft HFB 2024-25 Business Plan 17 May 2024

Heritage Act. Time will tell whether this will finally mean a start on major works on the site, including re-establishing the Tjilbruke Spring.

- How does Council intend to fund the full scale of works, estimated to be at least \$2 million with only \$700k being carried forward from the Coastal Path "fund"? Would an application for State (or National) Heritage listing be required for additional State Government funding?
- If further delays are anticipated, then remediation work on the unsightly former overflow car park ("dust bowl") should be undertaken in the interim as a matter of urgency. The uneven surface is a possible trip hazard and Council may be liable for any injuries that occur.

### **Brighton Beachfront Holiday Park**

- Although not of direct benefit to the local community our Association recognises the importance of this income generating business to HFB Council and rate payers and that aging infrastructure needed to be replaced.
- As there is no mention of the Caravan Park in the Business Plan we assume that all improvements have been completed and that no additional expenditures are planned. We hope that Council and Park Management will help to improve the appeal of the area, including the new Kiosk, by better maintaining the grounds and existing trees and considering additional plantings where appropriate.

### **BYSC Upgrades (~650,000 carried forward)**

- 5049CC is happy to support the planned upgrades to BYSC facilities (change rooms, cold storeroom, etc.) in 2025 with funding provided by a State Government grant, matched by Council.

### **Future Projects in 5049:**

As noted earlier members of 5049's HFB Liaison Task Group and Seacliff Ward Councillors have met recently to discuss future projects and priorities in Seacliff and Kingston Park. Funding is required for these projects so, disappointingly, they are unlikely to be realised for many (5+) years if the Jetty Road, Glenelg proceeds and Government grants specific to these projects are not obtained.

- **Seacliff Plaza Stage-2** (greening, beautification of Esplanade and Wheatland St roundabout as per Council's approved Masterplan
- **Kingston Park Entrance/ Singleton Bridge** enhancement with Indigenous artwork
- **Brighton Road/ Village-** long term (10 year) campaign to create a Brighton Village amenity by re-imagining Brighton Road. Requires Council to liaise with DIT and prepare a Masterplan for community consultation.

**Other Issues:**

**Glenelg Oval Upgrade**

- It has come to our attention that Council is considering waving a loan of up to \$600,000 to the Glenelg Football Club. They are also considering rescheduling repayments on a further \$600,000. There is no mention of this in the Business Plan Financial Statements and it would in effect represent a further financial burden on Council's already significant debt burden.

**Wheatland Street Shed**

- We were advised that the matter was before the Supreme Court and that a meeting between lawyers was held on 15 April to discuss a possible agreement to avoid litigation. What was the outcome of this meeting? What provision is Council making for possible settlement costs in this case?
- Residents in 5049CC remain concerned with the impact of the SA Planning and Design Code on residential development in terms of the approval process and lack of consultation. We urge Council to continue to lobby and recommend improvements in support of more local consultation and protection of local heritage, environment and amenity.

**End of submission**