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## **9.25 Australia Day Celebrations 2023 (Updated)**

**Report Author:**                    **Manager Governance and Corporate Performance**  
**Authoriser:**                        Director Corporate Strategy and Resourcing

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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide a further update for item 9.24 of this agenda in relation to Australia Day Celebrations 2023.

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### **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION**

#### **THAT:**

- 1. Council engage 'Experience Nature' and provide the funds allocated under the Australia Day budget allocation to the event.**
- 2. The Citizenship Ceremony, including the announcement of the Citizen of the Year, take place at Berrima, with the Civic Centre to be used in the case of inclement weather.**
- 3. Following this year's event, a review be undertaken in conjunction with local businesses, residents and Berrima Residents Association to inform a request for quotation for future events in the Berrima Village.**
- 4. A report be provided to Council no later than April 2023 setting the review and brief for the conduct of the Australia Day Celebrations in Berrima Village.**

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### **REPORT**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Since the agenda for this Council meeting (16 November 2022) was finalised on Wednesday 9 November 2022, there has been some changes to the proposed Australia Day 2023 celebrations.

On Thursday 10 November 2022 Council received written advice from the previous Australia Day operator that they did not wish to continue for 2023. Given the significance of the Australia Day celebrations for the local community and Berrima Village businesses, Council has sought alternative arrangements for Australia Day 2023, this is outlined in the body of this report.

#### **REPORT**

Following the advice from the previous Australia Day operator that they did not wish to proceed for 2023, Council contacted the Berrima Residents Association (BRA) to discuss alternative arrangements for Australia Day 2023. At this time, it also became apparent that a Development Application (DA) for the Australia Day event had not been approved since 2018.

Berrima Village is surrounded by bush fire prone land and as such much of the Berrima Village area requires a DA approval to hold an event. There are some areas within Berrima Village which are not identified as bush fire prone land and therefore does not require DA consent to hold an event.

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As a result of this information, the General Manager, along the President of BRA and key Council staff met in Berrima Village on the evening of Thursday 10 November 2022 to walk through Berrima Village and determine the suitability of the areas of land not identified as bush fire prone to hold Australia Day celebrations in 2023.

On Friday 11 November 2022 Council met with an experienced and local event operator 'Experience Nature' to discuss the feasibility of holding the event given the lead time and context. The outcome of this meeting was positive, and it was determined that a refreshed approach to Australia Day celebrations could proceed in 2023. The scope for the event was a vibrant village market showcasing the very best of Berrima, family-friendly fun and children's activities, tastings by local wine and whiskey producers, and a show casing of classic cars.

On Monday 14 November 2022 the Managing Director of 'Experience Nature' provided Council with an event brief for Australia Day 2023, this brief is included in **Attachment 1** to this report. The brief identified five (5) main areas for activation and attraction open to visitors on Australia Day 2023 alongside the existing historical buildings, retailers, and food venues, these would provide activation, attraction and support Berrima Village vendors as follows:

### **Activation**

- The Berrima Pound (West side on Argyle Street only) is suggested as a family friendly area.
- The Slip Road outside Mrs Oldbucks that connects Old Hume Highway to Wingecarribee Street (residents can access Wingecarribee Street via Schotts Lane to Oxley Street) which could offer wine tastings, market stalls and outside seating.
- Inside the Anglican Church Village Hall is an area earmarked for free movie for the family by day and a venue at night with a classic screening of a film.

### **Attraction**

- Berrima Marketplace for all to picnic and enjoy the shady trees, BBQ areas and accessible children's playground.
- Berrima Marketplace Park playground for families to picnic and access to the River Walk.

### **Berrima Village Vendors**

- Existing Berrima business will be offered first right of refusal to extend their offering beyond their retail premises for the event in one of our three Activation Zones.
- Local business that are not in the village precinct but part of the area such as Bendooley Estate, Tertini Winery, Zen Oasis, Joadja Distillery and Joadja Winery will also be encouraged to be present on the day.
- Additionally, local business will be encouraged to create ways to attract guests to utilise the exiting parklands at Berrima Marketplace.

Further details will be made available on Council's website as Council continues to collaborate with 'Experience Nature' and BRA to confirm the program of events for Australia Day 2023.

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## **COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION**

### **Community Engagement**

Nil

### **Internal Communication and Consultation**

Executive

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### **External Communication and Consultation**

Berrima Residents Association and 'Experience Nature'

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### **SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT**

#### **Environment**

There are no environmental issues in relation to this report.

#### **Social**

There are no social issues in relation to this report.

#### **Broader Economic Implications**

The refreshed Australia Day Celebrations for 2023 is designed to create activation and attraction to support Berrima Village business and vendors.

#### **Culture**

There are no cultural issues in relation to this report.

#### **Governance**

There are no governance issues in relation to this report.

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### **COUNCIL BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Council has an annual budget allocation of \$29,600 for Australia Day. As in previous years Council is applying for funding through the Australia Day 2023 Community Grants. Should Council not be successful in obtaining grant funding the budget allocation will be utilised to cover the cost of the Citizenship Ceremony and Australia Day event.

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### **RELATED COUNCIL POLICY**

Nil

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### **CONCLUSION**

This report provides an update on Australia Day celebrations for 2023 which includes a refreshed approach for a family friendly event that works closely with business and producers in Berrima Village and the immediate surrounds.

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### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Australia Day 2023 Brief [9.25.1 - 4 pages]

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## **AUSTRALIA DAY IN BERRIMA 2023**

*Prepared by Amanda Fry Founder and Managing Director Experience Nature*

For over 20 years Australia Day has been celebrated in the historical town of Berrima in the Southern Highlands and has grown to become one of the biggest tourism draw cards for this village. The wildfires of Summer 2020, waning parade viewing numbers and the subsequent Covid 19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the event in recent years and has reshaped its future.

With the voluntary exit of the past event manager, Wingecarribee Council have decided to step in to ensure that Australia Day is still a great reason to visit Berrima Village. Part of that is finding new ways to attract visitors.

The Citizenship Ceremony is traditionally held outside the Courthouse in the morning and the parade follows with market stalls. In 2023 we anticipate the citizenship ceremony will still be held in the village and intend to create new activations to attract visitors on this crucial public holiday.

As the Wingecarribee Council appointed Event Manager for 2023 I suggest the following for Thursday 26 January 2023 to keep this event alive as it grows and reforms in the future. I would also request transparency around a tender process for 26 January 2024 and beyond so everyone knows that they can contribute.

### **The VILLAGE**

There are 5 main areas for activation and attraction open to us for visitors on Australia Day 2023 alongside the existing historical buildings, retailers, and food venues.

### **ACTIVATION**

1. The Berrima Pound (West side on Argyle St only) – suggested as a family friendly area
2. The Slip Road outside Mrs Oldbucks that connects Old Hume Highway to Wingecarribee Street (residents can access Wingecarribee Street via Schotts Lane to Oxley St) which could offer wine tastings, market stalls and outside seating
3. Inside the Anglican Church Village Hall – an area earmarked for free Movie screens for the family by day (Australian stories such as Babe, Stormboy and Blinky Bill) and a venue at night with a classic screening of a film such as Strictly Ballroom. We hope to work with the BRA to bring this to life as well as local business. Wingecarribee Council will provide the screen.

### **ATTRACTION**

4. Berrima Marketplace for all to picnic and enjoy the shady trees, BBQ areas and accessible children's playground
5. Berrima Marketplace Park playground for families to picnic and access to the River Walk.

### **VENDORS**

Firstly, we would like to offer existing Berrima business first right of refusal to extend their offering beyond their retail premises for the event in one of our three Activation Zones. It would be wonderful to see Diego at the Berrima General Store do another lamb on the spit to offer a takeaway option to visitors OR have Peppergreen Estate set up wine barrels for outdoor wine tasting on the slip road

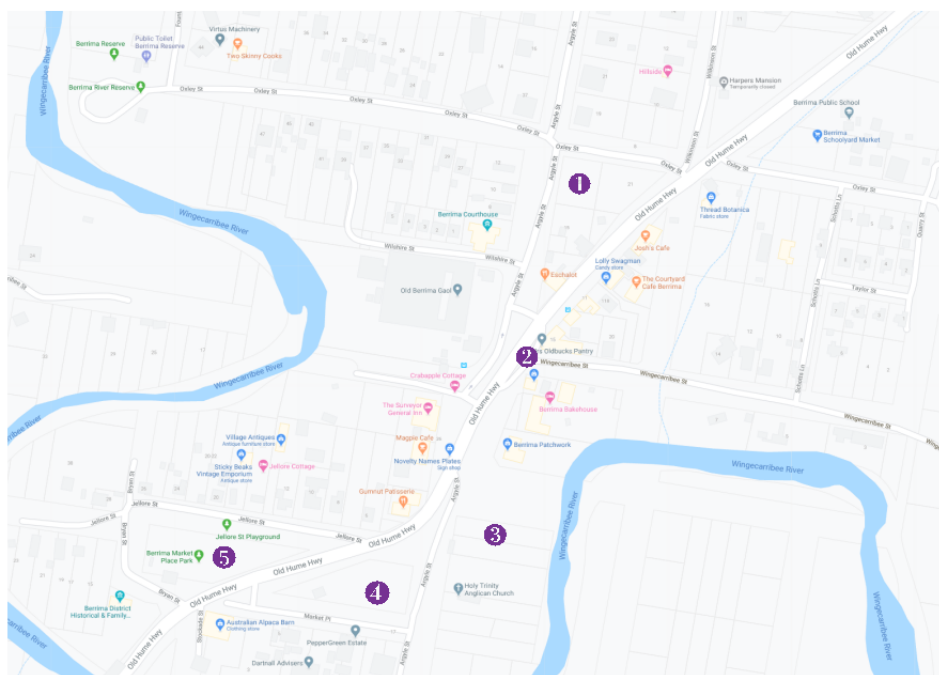
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outside Mrs Oldbucks alongside other local wineries. A chance for adults to taste local whilst the kids take in a movie at the Village Hall.

Secondly, we want to encourage local business that are not in the village precinct but part of the area to be present on the day such as Bendooley Estate, Tertini Winery, Zen Oasis, Joadja Distillery and Joadja Winery are such examples.

And lastly, we encourage local business to create ways to attract guests to utilise the exiting parklands at Berrima Marketplace for example Peppergreen Estate might offer Picnic Boxes and Schmokin take away burger meals from their courtyard. The Galleries could have artists in residence creating works for guests to watch. Part of the event budget will also be spent on bringing in artisan craftsman from the region into the village to create more interest in coming to and staying in Berrima for the day.

We have not spoken to the local Berrima business at this stage with the exception of BRA and Explore Berrima. Explore Berrima has agreed to be our local media partner and we will invest from the budget in creating a destination page for this event on their website. National Trust will activate at Harpers Mansion and the BRA will help us with the Village Hall Movie option and other activities.



### **TRADITION AND CHANGE**

One of the highlights of the parade in the past has been the vintage cars and we know car enthusiasts will travel for this event. So, we will be arranging with our friends at the BRA to have vintage cars legally parked around the Marketplace with the owners on hand so we can keep that sense of community within the Australia Day celebrations.

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The Wingecarribee Council will be offering a 'Cuppa with the Council' outdoor lounge area to offer community engagement on the day.

And we hope to have local Wildlife Rescue represented as well as other vital community groups. Berrima Bushcare and Berrima Landcare will be invited to present at information stalls.

Additionally, we have the support of the Berrima Residents Association (BRA) and aim to engage all local residents to be involved in the day's celebrations.

Beyond food and beverages, we will also encourage different experiences e.g. local historian Chris Thompson did a great talk during our event Wander the Wingecarribee about the goal and history of the Germans in the village. Free talks all over the village about the heritage and history would offer some wonderful ways guests can enjoy the day. (see attached booklet) Harpers could do gardening talks and putting workshops and so on.

We need as many free events for people to attend as we can to get people excited to be part of the day.

Perhaps the Motel can offer accommodation plus movie night tickets as part of their package that weekend.

There is considerable scope for the Berrima Museum and the Berrima District Historical and Family History Society to be involved in the celebration on the day. Investigating family history is very popular and could be a focus of the day, with local genealogists giving talks.

As event manager my job is to work with each retailer to find an activation that helps them extend their business. I would love the Storybook Alpaca team to offer an experience in the Pound on the day with support from the Courtyard café.

### **MARKETING**

We also need a theme for the event – a hook for marketing. For my event in 2021 I used Connect with our Stories.....I think we can rework this to offer a nice connect to place in line with the direction of the new council team and regional marketing.

We need a proposition to go to market. This is vital to the success of the day.

### **FEES AND BUDGET**

Historically there has been a charge to have a market stall and this year that will be waived. Instead, we simply request a consistent look and feel for all activations with an option of pop ups or market umbrella stands. And if vendors do not have this, we can supply some as well as direct them to where they can secure this. Information on this to be shared as we consult with each individual business. We still need to maintain the vibrancy of the village and asthenic appeal.

At present we have a \$25,000 plus GST budget and request a further \$15,000 plus GST if the grant the council has applied for is successful.

The existing budget can cover partnerships with The Fold and Explore Berrima (which is to include paid social media ads) assistance with activations, paid performances (live music) or attendees (e.g. Blacksmith) and event management fees.

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The additional budget would go a long way to extending the marketing of this event opening up a possible WINTV partnership, 2ST outside broadcast on the day and access into Sydney and Canberra media.

Activation of local venue channels across social media and newsletters will be vital in getting the word out that Australia Day in Berrima is la party everyone is invited to attend. I will work closely with Council's Place Officer and Explore Berrima on meeting with all local business as fast as we can once approval locked in. We want local village businesses to really own this event.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- We invite an ambassador to attend during the day and create a public opportunity from this. <https://www.australiaday.org.au/get-involved/ambassador-program>
- Musical performance in the Pound (West end only on Argyle St) as well as the Surveyor-General pub who traditionally does this in their outside BBQ area
- RFS to have an activation where kids can learn about fire equipment and put on uniforms etc
- Local dog clubs, car clubs and other interest groups to find way to be involved. Love to do a dog training demonstration or get a local farmer to shear some sheep for the kids