

Killaleea

NEWS UPDATE ISSUE 1
August 2007



A new direction for a much loved place

As reported widely in the media over the past few months, the Killaleea State Park Trust has negotiated a development agreement with Killaleea Coastal Investments (KCI). This agreement is about providing eco-tourism accommodation in a small area of the Park to make more of the Park accessible to more people in NSW. An announcement was made by Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly, in April this year.

Since the announcement, many groups and individuals have indicated strong opposition to private development on public land. Concerns have been expressed that any development will prevent Park users from enjoying the park in the way they do now. Local residents have requested the government to reconsider its policies regarding Crown Lands.

This newsletter is the first of a series of updates on the project to keep the community informed.

What is Killaleea State Park?

Killaleea State Park is a beautiful 265 ha piece of coastal Shellharbour between Bass Point and the Minnamurra River. The Park includes popular surf spots known as "the Farm" and "Mystics", a wide range of natural ecosystems as well as camping and picnic facilities. It also houses an environmental education centre used extensively by schools.

The Park is owned by the people of NSW (Crown Land) and managed by the Killaleea State Park Trust, appointed by the Minister for Lands (Tony Kelly). The Trust Board includes representatives from both Kiama and Shellharbour Councils and a number of community volunteers.

Killalea State Park is one of 10 State Parks in NSW. A State Park (formerly called a State Recreation Area) is a reserve which provides the public with a variety of recreation and nature study opportunities. A State Park is not the same as a National Park.

Why does the Park need to change?

Right now the Park only provides very basic services such as a kiosk, rudimentary barbecue and picnic facilities, a demountable education centre and spartan bunkhouse, limited parking and a narrow, steep track to the beach. For more people to be able to enjoy the Park, additional facilities are needed such as walking trails and boardwalks, good access to the beach, viewing points and a wider range of accommodation. To provide these the Park Trust needs a commercial partner.

Finding a partner

In 2002 the Trust decided to explore a partnership with a private investor to provide the funds to upgrade the Park's facilities. Various Expressions of Interest were received and the successful proponent was chosen. After a period of negotiations, the development agreement was signed with Killalea Coastal Investments (KCI) this year.



The initial concept

The initial concept included 202 single storey eco-lodges designed to touch the earth lightly. These would be

contained in 3 separate zones in the Park. The zones cover an area less than 7% of the total area of the Park. To support the accommodation, additional facilities would be added such as restaurants, café, conference centre and recreation facilities.

Refining the concept

A project team must now finalise its detailed plan into a DA. To help inform this process KCI is listening to the aspirations and concerns of Park users. KCI is working towards lodging the DA within the next 12 months.

If the DA is approved KCI will sign a 52-year lease with the Killalea Park Trust allowing for 2 years of construction and development and 50 years of occupancy for the individual lodges. Each lodge will have occupancy rights contained in a 50 year lease signed between the individual lessee and the Killalea State Park Trust.

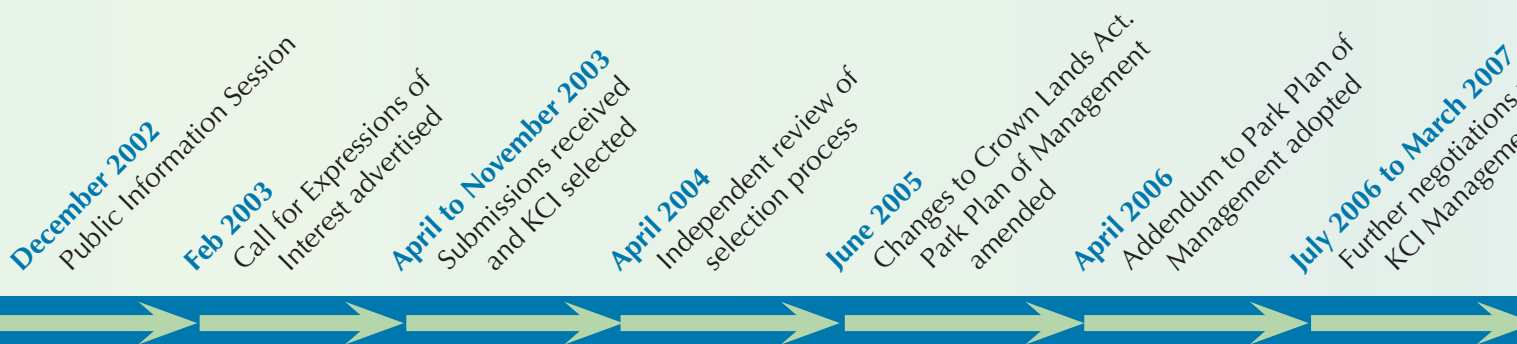
How the Park benefits from the concept

Improvements to the park associated with the project include:

- New facilities including:
 - access to and parking at Farm Beach
 - boardwalks and nature trails throughout the park
 - BBQ and picnic facilities,
 - viewing platforms
 - kiosk and amenities block
- Upgrades to existing facilities including:
 - the environmental education centre
 - the camping area and bunkhouse
 - park fencing
- Removal of noxious weeds

Other benefits

During construction of the proposed development up to 150 new jobs will be created. The operation of the development will create 80 long-term jobs.



The role of the community in refining the concept

KCI will engage the local community throughout the DA development stage. The process is designed to provide KCI with information about community and stakeholder aspirations and concerns for the Park.

Community and stakeholder engagement activities undertaken so far have included:

- Briefing Kiama and Shellharbour Councils;
- Briefing representatives of the local business and tourism sectors;
- Liaising with the "Save Killalea Alliance" to understand its need for information and to provide relevant information through documents and briefings;
- Establishing and promoting a 1800 freecall number, and receiving calls;
- Establishing and maintaining a database to gather and analyse input on community aspirations, issues and concerns
- Producing and distributing an initial issue of this Killalea News Update.

Planned activities in 2007 and early 2008 include:

- Community meetings and information sessions
- Briefings and meetings with Councils and relevant government agencies
- Ongoing production of newsletters
- An information display
- Continuation of the freecall phone line 1800 11 00 55
- Project website www.killaleaecoeresort.com.au.

Community Attitudes – An Independent Survey

In June 2007 KCI engaged local firm IRIS Research to undertake an independent survey of community attitudes and interests relating to Killalea State Park. The survey found that.

- 3 in 4 residents visited the park in the last 3 years and 1 in 3 residents visited the park within the last month.
- 75% visit during the day on the weekend, often as part of a family group.
- The most popular activities are relaxing, surfing, picnics, and walking.
- 56% believed there should not be a gate fee.
- 80% are aware that a development has been proposed for the Park though many are not clear on the type of development.
- Almost 50% want more information on the development via media and newsletters
- Around 20% support a development, around 25% believe they could live with it and just over 50% oppose it.
- Opposition to any development was based on wanting to preserve the pristine state of the park, belief that the development is not needed and concern for over development of the area.
- Support for the development was based on obtaining benefits for tourism and the area and improvements to the park.
- Support was contingent on the environment being protected and improved.



How to participate and stay informed

If you would like to be kept informed, receive copies of future newsletters by mail or email or participate in future community engagement activities please contact Stuart Waters or Alison Garvie using the phone or email contacts below.

1800 11 00 55

twyford@twyford.com.au

For further information

For the 1998 Plan of Management and the 2005 Addendum go to http://www.lands.nsw.gov.au/recreation/state_parks/killalea_state_park

For a copy of the Development Agreement signed by the Minister for Lands in April 2007 go to http://www.lands.nsw.gov.au/recreation/state_parks/killalea_state_park

For information on Ecopoint go to www.ecopoint.com.au

For further project information go to <http://www.killaleaecoort.com.au>



The role of the Park Plan of Management

Any Development Application, in order to be approved, must comply with the existing Park Plan of Management. The full Plan, together with a summary, is available on the NSW Lands website. Key objectives of the Plan of Management are to:

- maintain the natural beauty and scenic quality of the park;
- protect areas of high conservation significance;
- plant, promote and protect native vegetation;
- improve walking and cycling trails;
- provide recreation opportunities while protecting the Park's heritage;
- provide environmental education opportunities;
- protect the scenic value of the ridge;
- preserve the view from Killalea and Mystics Beach;
- maintain and enhance Park facilities.