

**REPORT OF THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM COMMITTEE TOUR  
OF THE Ben Scott Memorial Bird Trail ON TUESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> April 2016  
COMMENCING AT 4.00PM**

**Committee Members were picked up (Courtesy of Outback Geo Adventures) outside Council Office at 4.00pm as advised and were driven to the Ben Scott Memorial Bird Trail.**

- 1. PRESENT:** Cr Ken Barnes (Chairman), Wayne Whitby, Ken Spinks, Ian Field, Di Williams, Sue O'Halloran, Martin Kendall, Ema Suravi, Dylan Walsh
- 2. APOLOGIES:** Cr Leigh Byron (Mayor), Elizabeth White (Director Corporate & Community Development), Connie Mallet (Tourism Coordinator), Cr Steve O'Halloran, John Stevenson, Simone Carmichael, Dinitee Haskard, Bronwyn Brougham, Linda Nelson, Jo Gorman, Peter Lawler, Jo Pedler, German Ugarte, Myrtle Matarazzo

**3. OBJECTIVE OF THE TOUR:**

To assess the state of the Ben Scott Memorial Bird Trail in relation to tourism – its appeal and what is required to make it a viable tourism asset and attraction. If time permitted, they would also travel to and assess the proposed River/Bird Walk proposed by Ken Spinks.

**4. ASSESSEMENT OF THE BEN SCOTT MEMORIAL BIRD TRAIL**

**The Committee identified a number of items to bring the Bird Trail into a reasonable state:**

- 1. Water as a Priority:** A permanent supply is absolutely necessary (no water no birds). Discussion should be opened with environmental water managers. Committee member Dianne Williams has good contacts and will explore this avenue further. It is believed that her contact will be in Balranald in about 2 weeks. A time for a meeting is to be arranged
- 2. Other Identified Issues/Challenges/Suggestions include:**
  - Walking path may have to be raised in some areas to provide access when water is permanent.
  - Access by trail bike and 4-wheel bush vehicles should be restricted, e.g., boundary barrier logs. The walking track had obviously been used by both types of vehicles that had caused considerable damage. It was suggested that the walking tracks could have formations, such as large rocks, that 'meandered' enabling comfortable walking but difficult for motorized traffic.
  - Seats and table along the track essential
  - Vandalism was a recognized problem that should be actively addressed once the walk became more established.
  - The area could be made more presentable with entry signage and signage along the track.

➤ The group also saw the potential of identifying local birds, plants trees etc.

### **3. Conclusion**

Generally the group felt that if permanent water was in place the rest would follow.

## **5. ASESMENT OF THE RIVER WALK AS PROPOSED BY MR KEN SPINKS**

The group travelled from Island Road end and walked to the river bend and back into town via the hospital (Court Street) The proposed walk was from the town area to island Road, back along the levee bank to the river bend and back into town past Moore's Bus and Hospital.

### **The Committee's initial assessment was as follows:**

- a. It had merit as a 'hands on' to-do exercise
- b. Signage as originally proposed was sufficient to identify this
- c. The river bend was badly in need of a clean-up and this would have to be constantly monitored
- d. There would times in high rivers or environmental flows when it would be inaccessible
- e. The river bend did not have a 'name' investigation should be done to find out if it had a local name or one that is relevant. Printed information would have much more impact if this could be identified as (for example) "Big Bad Bills' Walk" along with the appropriate MAP
- f. There is a small cross located there with the name "Maxi". To investigate further as to its meaning.

## **6. NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2016**