

Place Planning

Frequently Asked Questions

What are Byron Shire's Place Plans?

Byron Shire Council has been creating Place Plans and Masterplans for its towns and villages for around 10 years.

Within the Byron Shire, Council has so far completed place plans for Byron Bay, Bangalow, Mullumbimby, the Byron Arts and Industry Estate and Federal (in draft).

What is a Place Plan?

Place Plans are strategic documents that describe a vision for a neighbourhood, town or village for the next 20 years.

They are important strategic documents that can contain (but aren't limited to) a set of principles, a vision, themes, and actions related to

- streetscape upgrades,
- transport and access,
- planning controls,
- resilience, safety,
- events,
- character, and
- community building.

It is usually developed collaboratively between community members and Council staff, sometimes with the involvement of a consultant.

Why undertake place planning?

Place planning can help a community to establish a clear vision for their town or village and prioritise and think through projects that might contribute to achieving that vision.

It is place specific, unlike a residential or rural strategy, which means it can be more tailored to an individual community's needs and priorities.

How are Place Plans created?

There are lots of different ways to create place plans but the one thing that unites these processes is strong involvement by the community in the creation of the plan.

Byron Shire Council has created place plans through

- working with guidance groups of 15 to 20 representative members of community,
- consultant led processes, and
- the community led model, where the community is in charge of creating the plan and supported by Council.

Different models will be appropriate for different communities. It is not a one-size-fits-all approach.

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Community members often take part in workshops and brainstorming sessions to come up with the vision, principles, and actions for their community.

The draft document is then exhibited to the wider community, who have an opportunity to comment, question or affirm the key parts of the place plan.

How long do Place Plans take to develop?

The creation of a place plan can take anywhere from 18 months to 3+ years depending on the method used and the complexities of the place.

What can a Place Plan do?

Place plans are Council documents that are designed to help each neighbourhood, town or village shape their own future.

The Place Plan process allows a community to take stock of where they are now, where they want to go and how they propose to get there. The plans paint a holistic picture and often focus on what gives the town/village a unique sense of place.

Place plans **can** do the following.

- Identify projects that might later be included in Council’s operational plan and Delivery Plan
- Identify projects for grant funding
- Inform potential changes to Local Environmental Plans (LEP) and Development Control Plans (DCP)
- Set out a vision for the preferred look/feel/vibe for a place

Place plans **cannot** do the following.

- Directly change the LEP or DCP
- Automatically secure funding for projects
- Be a wish list for projects that are unlikely to be funded or achieved.

While Place Plans are usually long-term documents that focus on the next 10 to 20 years, they often have a built-in review process every 5 years or so.

Place Plans link to other strategic planning documents such as residential land use, rural land use and employment land use strategies. They must be consistent with these strategies.

