Terrain and C4 State their positions on need for action at Mission Beach

Terrain Natural Resource Management Mission Beach Local Area Planner Tony O'Malley provided the following information.

It is Mr O'Malley's understanding that following three adult cassowary "road kills" in six months at Mission Beach, Main Roads held a workshop on February 18 to discuss a suite of actions that could be implemented at a preferred location if funding became available.

The following organisations attended: Main Roads, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Terrain, Department of Infrastructure and Planning, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Wet Tropics Management Authority, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation (C4), CSIRO, Mission Beach Community Association, Mission Beach Agriculture and Conservation Committee, James Cook University, Djiru traditional owners and MiCorp Property.

On February 28, the Main Roads Minister announced that funding would be provided to implement a cassowary crossing trial.

On March 16, Main Roads presented the proposed Cassowary Drive trial to Mission Beach Community Association for feedback.

On March 26, the Main Roads Minister announced the trial would be implemented.

The trial was constructed in May.

Terrain last week announced the release last week of the Mission Beach Habitat Network Action Plan.

Three years in the making, this is a non-binding plan that "sets out what we need to do to ensure that the rainforest, cassowaries, agricultural lands, village atmosphere, Djiru culture and other special values of Mission Beach survive and prosper".

Priority tasks include incentives for voluntary habitat protection on private property, for which Terrain NRM has recently applied for $1.5 million Caring for Our Country funding.

"The ongoing participation by local people, businesses, scientists and all levels of government has made this a very practical plan that's already working and I really thank everyone for being part of it," Terrain Chief Executive Officer Dr Allan Dale said.

"But there's plenty more to do and Terrain is committed to keep working with everyone to help manage Mission Beach's outstanding natural resources."

C4 media co-ordinator, Liz Gallie said the willingness of the Queensland Main Roads Department to trial traffic management solutions at Mission Beach was most welcome.

"But it is being questioned by the increasingly concerned community why the speed limit cannot be simply lowered throughout the township given the multiple deaths at known locations," she said following Saturday's cassowary death.

"It may be a case of not enough soon enough.

"This is an endangered species we are talking about.

"If the cassowary is allowed to be lost at Mission Beach, the Cassowary Coast Region will lose… a major part of its tourism economy and appeal.

"For over two decades there have been countless plans developed and hundreds of thousands of dollars spent in the name of cassowary management and protection and yet the known threats to their survival are increasing.

"This is a moral issue that really concerns all of us and should be important news in the national papers for everyone to see."

Ms Gallie added that C4 did not agree with actions, such as the rumble strips, that came at the expense of humans.

"Everyone agrees on the need to protect cassowaries but any decisions made must take into account the views of residents," she said.