

CMCA RV PARK PROPOSAL

FRANCIS STREET

TENTERFIELD NSW 2372

Prepared by:

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Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia

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Executive Summary

The Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) proposes to lease some vacant council land located at Francis Street Tenterfield, under a formal lease agreement with the Tenterfield Motor Museum.

The purpose of the lease would be to establish a low-cost recreational vehicle park for use by fully self-contained RVs only. This would expand the current CMCA RV Park network to fourteen (14) parks across Australia. CMCA has a target of at least 20 operational RV Parks.

The style of accommodation is quite different to what is offered through traditional commercial caravan and tourist parks. Minimal facilities are provided, and because all vehicles must be fully self-contained, no amenities are provided for guests.

CMCA has successfully sought development consent for two similar RV Parks in NSW, located at Temora and Gunnedah, so the Club has experience in achieving consent for this activity within the current planning framework.

CMCA undertakes all planning and construction at its own cost, pays a lease for the use of the land and contributes to any rates applicable to the land being utilised. CMCA operates each park using trained CMCA member volunteers.

This project is at no cost to council, and it will provide a positive economic impact to Tenterfield businesses over a long period of time. Based on experience, it is expected that the park would attract about 1,200 visitor nights per year, providing an economic impact of at least \$180,000 per year.

Each CMCA RV Park has the same infrastructure and operates under a consistent set of park rules, ensuring a consistent product and experience across the national network.

This proposal supports the request from CMCA for council support to provide owner's consent for the lodgement of a development application to operate a CMCA RV Park on council land. Without this consent, CMCA will be unable to lodge the development application. CMCA has support from the Motor Museum Committee to enter into a sub-lease and undertake this project on land they now manage on behalf of Tenterfield Shire Council.

Proponent Details

Name:	Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia Ltd (CMCA)
ABN:	16 095 568 157
Address:	49 The Avenue Maryville NSW 2293
Status:	Not-for-profit Limited Company
Board of Directors:	Nelson Crawshaw (Chair) Vince Calleja Paul Scully Jo Tremain Bill Daws
CEO:	Richard Barwick

Background

The Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia Ltd (CMCA) was established in 1986 as an RV lifestyle club. Since that time, it has grown to incorporate approximately 37,000 vehicles and 64,000 members. The Club became a limited liability company in January 2001. The Club is a not-for-profit with a focus on tourism activities that support its membership base. CMCA also funds public infrastructure for the RV traveller such as public dump points, with 540 now installed across Australia.

CMCA has developed a program called rvSafe that attempts to educate the traveller about how to plan a trip, safely pack vehicles and how to drive safely on our roads. This project was supported through a \$1 million grant from the NSW Government.

As a not-for-profit organisation, CMCA is developing a network of low-cost semi-commercial RV Parks across Australia. The intention is to provide a network of low-cost parks for self-contained vehicles only, connecting tourist destinations on traditional touring routes.

CMCA has a property acquisition policy which supports the lease or purchase of land for the operation of RV Parks where there is a business case to do so.

CMCA was approached by the committee of the Tenterfield Transport Museum to gauge our interest in establishing a low-cost RV Park on unused land that they lease from Tenterfield Shire Council at Francis Street. The RV Park is considered complementary to the museum functions, and it is expected that many of the potential park guests will frequent the museum and utilise its facilities.

In response to this request, Sean Constable made a presentation to the Tenterfield senior council staff and councillors on 8 March 2023. This presentation was positively received and since that time CMCA has been trying to progress the project.

The site investigation in March identified a potential parcel of land within the site that could be used by CMCA to establish an RV Park. Although not an ideal parcel of land, CMCA is prepared to invest in this project to achieve a number of outcomes:

- Expand the CMCA RV Park network into northern NSW to link some of its existing parks.
- To support the activities of the Motor Museum.
- To offer an alternative accommodation style to the existing offering within Tenterfield.
- Increase the visitor economy within Tenterfield and the surrounding region.

CMCA pays for all costs associated with the preparation and lodgement of any development application and permits, funds all construction within the site and funds the cost of operation of the RV park from site fees.

Strategic location

Tenterfield is located on the New England Highway within the Northern Tablelands region of NSW. The town is only 20km south of the NSW/QLD border town of Wallangarra.

A rural service town with a population of approximately 4,000 residents, it supports the surrounding rural landscape and farming activities. The town sits on the junction of the Bruxner and New England Highways, providing routes East/West and North/South.

The town has a large number of public open spaces and walking tracks that follow Tenterfield Creek which bisects the town.

The Tenterfield Transport Museum leased land is identified as Village Zone within the Tenterfield Shire LEP 2013. This zone provides flexibility of uses for land within the town.

The Transport Museum would need access to the RV park land for 2 days during their annual show and shine event, during which time the park would need to be closed to bookings to facilitate guest parking for the Transport Museum event.

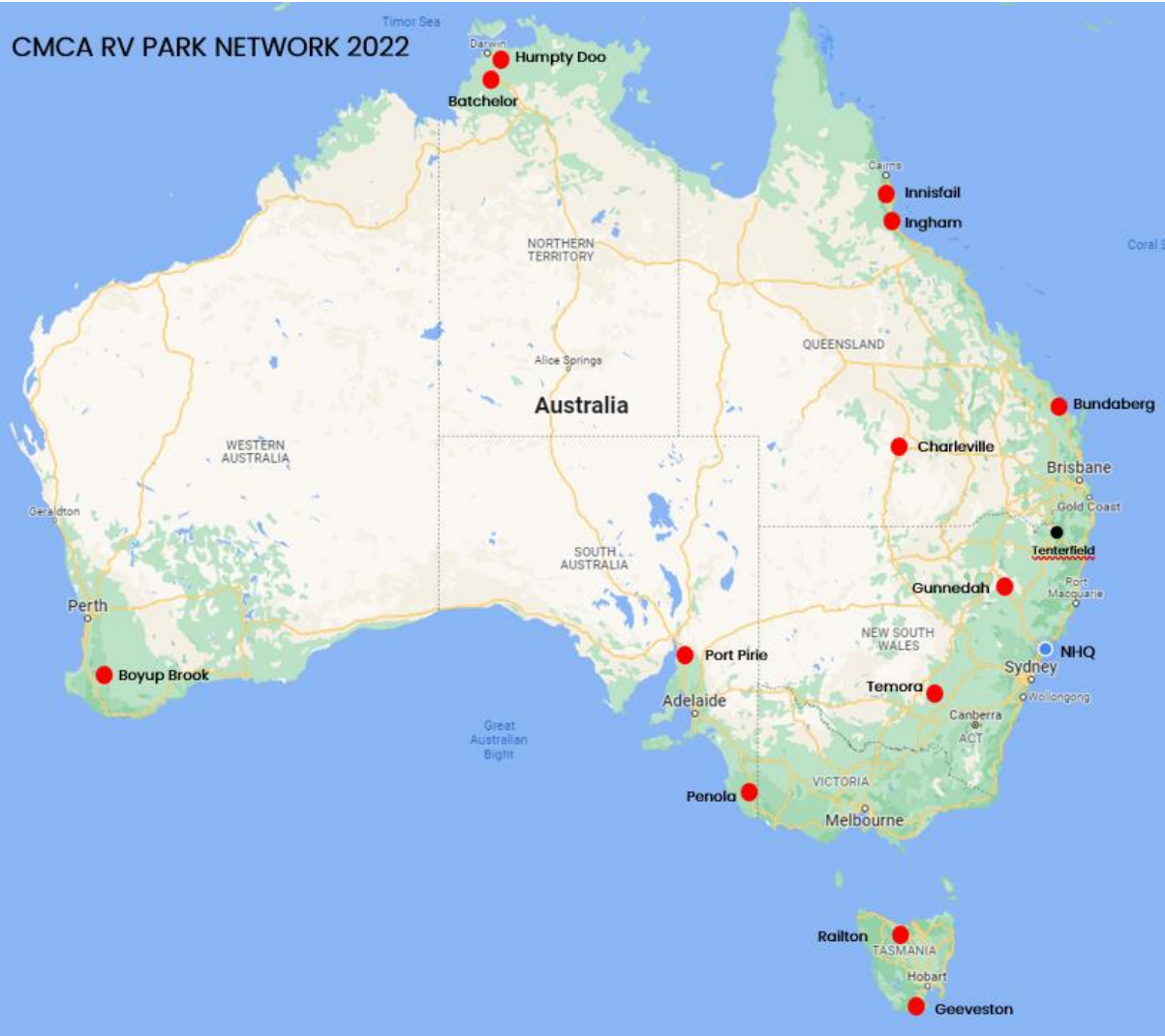


Figure 1: CMCA RV Park network

Site Characteristics

Given the slope of the lot towards Tenterfield Creek, the actual usable land is significantly impacted by the slope of the land. The presence of council pumps also reduces the available area because vehicles and guests would need to be kept away from these assets. The park would operate on land above the flood area of Tenterfield Creek.

The usable land is shown in the hatched area above, which covers an area of about 5,500m². CMCA experience with other park layouts suggests that an area of this size would accommodate approximately 20 RVs plus other infrastructure.

Although below what is considered a viable park for CMCA, the Club is prepared to invest in the project to support an RV Park in the north of NSW, connecting our existing and future RV Park network between Victorian and Queensland.



Figure 2: Aerial photo of site showing council water pumps and proposed site boundary

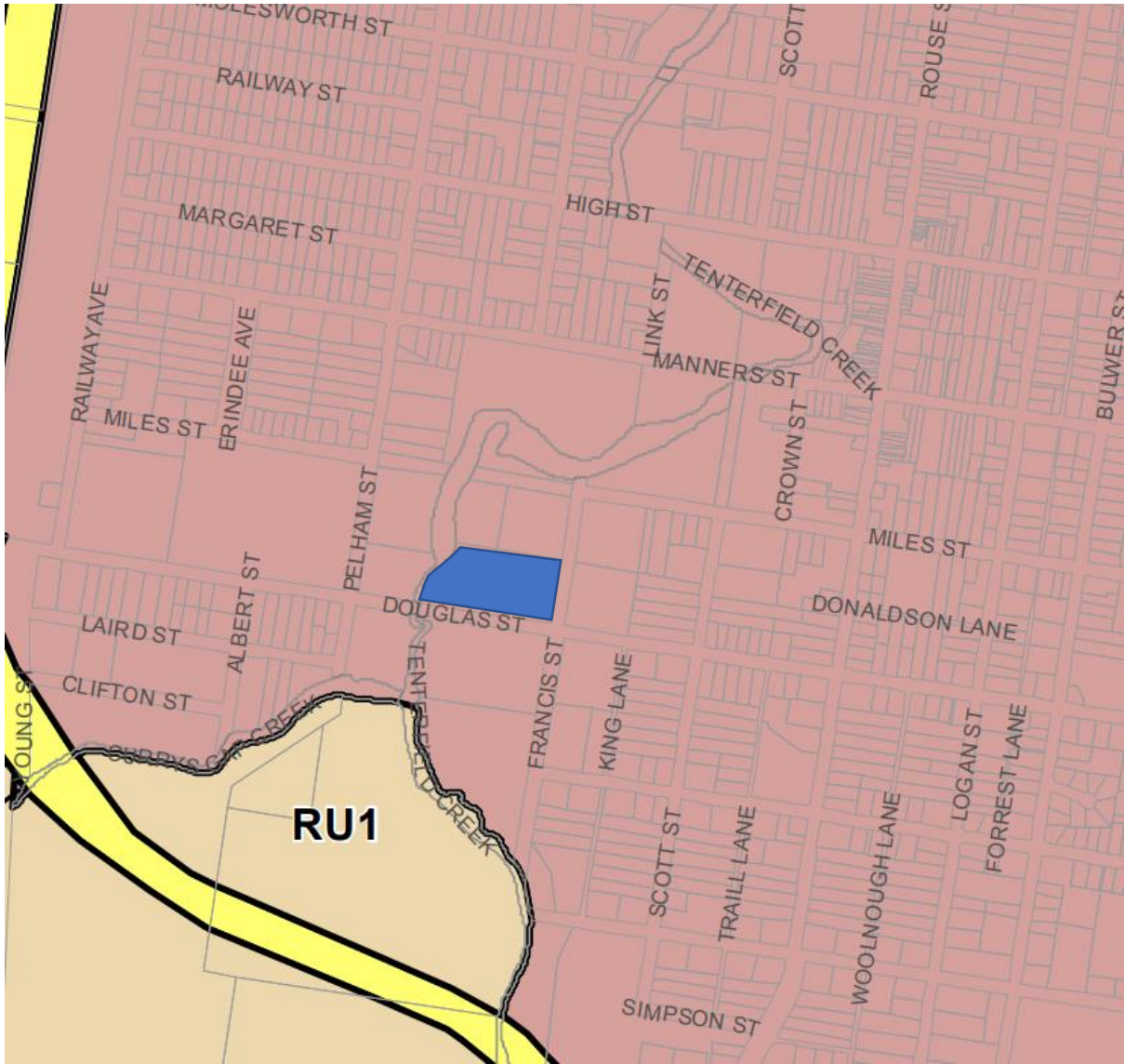


Figure 3: LEP map showing proposed site within the Village Zone



Figure 4: Site layout showing custodian site, shelter, storage shed, dump point and internal driveway

- 8m gated entrance with cross over
- 14m length sites x 8m wide
- 6m wide driveway – 130m long
- Park dump point
- Water points
- Power and water to Custodian Site
- Barbecue shelter with concrete pad 9m x 6m
- Storage/garden shed
- Camp sites may be restricted due to slope of site towards the creek

Would need to maintain access to council pumps and water infrastructure.

Detailed site plan

Based on the proposed area available for use as an RV Park adjacent to the Motor Museum, the following site plan is provided as a guide. A survey plan of the site has not been provided as yet, nor has a plan of council underground assets, although these have been requested.



Figure 5: Possible site plan



Figure 6: Showing new water tank and shed slab with council pumping station at left, all outside the proposed park area



Figure 7: Proposed park entrance with double gate. Concrete or gravel crossover, 8m wide entrance.

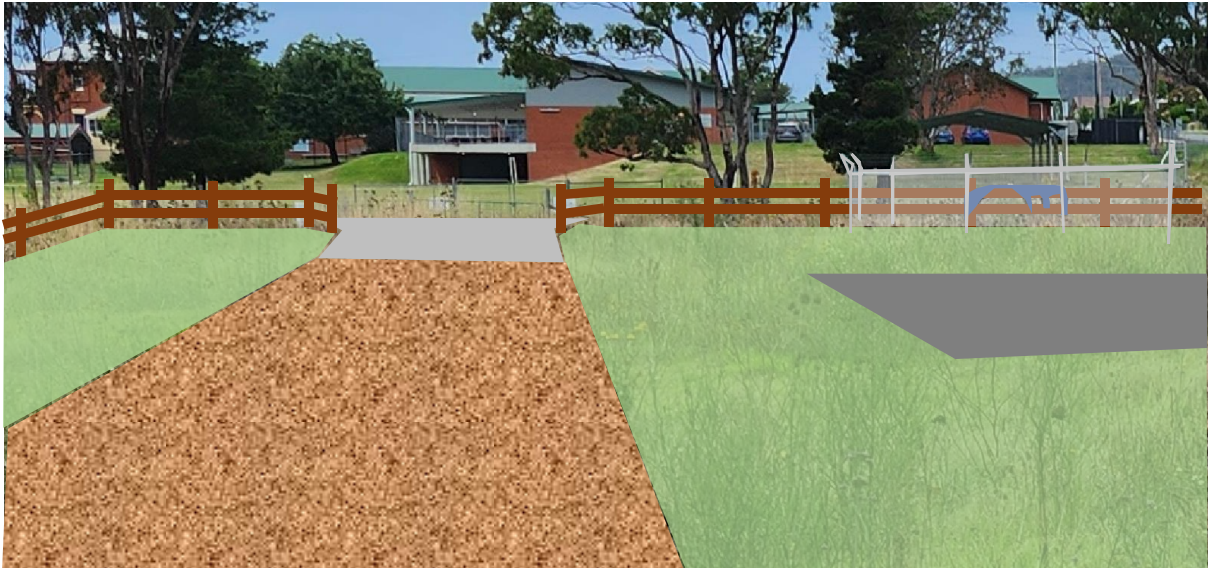


Figure 8: Proposed internal driveway and entrance



Figure 9: Showing proposed location of barbecue shelter and front timber fence

The communal shelter is located to reduce the impact of access to camping sites and to be a reasonable distance from neighbouring properties. LED lighting would be provided to the shelter and attached under the roof line.

A small garden shed would be installed near the caretaker site to house small grounds maintenance equipment safely.

Entrance to park

- Entrance off Francis St approximately 45m from the intersection with Douglas St
- Plenty of sight line on Francis St with width to allow through traffic when RVs are turning into the park entrance
- Internal compacted gravel driveway with new double gates attached to a timber post and rail fence for aesthetic appeal
- Park signage would be attached to the new fence or behind the fence

Landscaping

- Tree planting for screening from residential properties can be undertaken if required

Dump point

- It is proposed to locate the dump point adjacent to the entrance so vehicles can empty tanks on entry to the park and on exit. This also utilises the internal compacted gravel driveway without having to create more hard stand areas
- This would be connected to the council gravity main in Francis Street if possible
- A sullage outlet would be provided for the caretaker site

Caretaker Site

- The caretaker site is simply a concrete pad and hard stand area where a self-contained RV can be parked for an extended period
- The caretaker site is proposed near to the gated entrance/exit
- Power would be connected from the adjacent street pole

- Water will be provided via an internal supply line connected to a metered connection on Francis St, that will then provide taps to the park
- A garden shed would be installed near the caretaker site to store small equipment and tools.

Park Shelter

- CMCA would erect a shelter for park users to meet under and have barbecues
- This is an open-sided car port structure on a concrete slab

Park operation

Each CMCA RV Park is managed by CMCA using a volunteer on-site caretaker (known as a Park Custodian). Custodians are trained by CMCA and rostered to each park to ensure coverage throughout the open season.

A trained custodian, provided by CMCA, would be responsible for:

- ensuring that all vehicles are certified self-contained (as per CMCA Self Containment Policy),
- managing the CMCA on-line booking system and checking in park guests
- undertaking grounds maintenance as required or able to
- overseeing any contractors on site
- liaising with council staff as needed
- managing any emergency on site, and
- applying the rules of entry to the park, including length of stay. The CMCA booking system does not allow bookings longer than 14 nights.

The custodian is certified by CMCA through a training program and refresher courses as needed. The performance of each custodian is monitored and feedback from park users is reviewed to ensure ongoing satisfactory behaviour and management of the park by each custodian.

Waste management on site includes the use of council collection services where available. The number of bins is determined by the use of the park. Recycling is encouraged, and we will work with local community organisations that may be interested in placing can and bottle collection facilities within the park. Cardboard and paper recycling is also encouraged.

PROPOSED RENTAL

CMCA will negotiate directly with the Transport Museum Committee to establish a lease for use of the land. A 5-year plus 5-year option would be expected as a minimum.

CMCA would also pay any rates associated with the land (if applicable), waste management and maintenance of the site.

CMCA would negotiate an acceptable lease for the site prior to lodging any applications for approvals to operate the park. CMCA has provided the Transport Museum Committee with a draft Memorandum of Understanding which will determine the lease parameters.

Economic benefits

With thirteen (13) CMCA RV parks now operating in Australia and several more in the development phase, CMCA understands the economic benefit that the RV parks can provide to the towns and regions they are established in. Data is collected after each booking. This data includes the amount of spend within the town during their stay.

Road-based travellers generally have a daily or weekly budget whilst on the road. Choices are being continually made about how that budget is spent and when it will be spent. An RV requires restocking on a regular basis and requires fuel whilst travelling. To maximise the amount spent within a town you need to provide a reason for the traveller to stay longer, necessitating a major restock whilst in the town.

Currently, CMCA RV parks have a 14-night maximum stay in any 21-day period. Experience suggests that this maximum period is rarely used but the average length of stay will increase if there is a reason to stay. The average length of stay is approximately 3 nights across the entire RV Park network.

A 2019 CMCA member survey confirmed that members travel on average 106 days per year, travel 10,000km and spend on average \$542 per week whilst on the road.

Data from the CMCA RV Park surveys provides a summary of the economic impact of several parks on an annual basis.

RV Park	Sites booked	Average Length of Stay	Total Spend	Average Spend per RV Per Night
Bundaberg	7,000	2.4	\$1,700,000	\$243.67
Gunnedah	1,300	1.5	\$190,000	\$144.00
Port Pirie	2,500	1.7	\$440,000	\$176.00
Humpty Doo	3,530	3.3	\$716,000	\$225.00

The data shows that these low-cost parks can generate significant local economic activity with per night spend being above recognised tourism industry standards. The survey responses also reinforce the assumption that most of the park guests would not have stopped in these towns if the low-cost park had not been available. Only 25% of respondents suggested that they would have stopped in the town if the low-cost park was not available.

The reason for this is that with a limited budget (many retired), travellers would prefer to spend their budget on fuel, food and entertainment within the town. They cannot do this if they are paying unpowered site fees of \$30-\$40 per night or powered site fees of \$50-60 per night. They are also looking for somewhere safe to stay, rather than parking in free camp locations on roadsides or designated free camps. CMCA members are becoming loyal to the RV Park brand and will use these parks where they are available because they provide a consistent product at a price point they appreciate.

The above analysis suggests that travellers will spend more per night if they are provided with safe and convenient overnight parking, in towns that welcome them and provide them with options to increase their length of stay.

Based on the experience with other operational NSW RV Parks it is expected that the Tenterfield RV Park would attract approximately 1,200 guest nights per year. With an average spend of \$150 per RV per night, this would provide a direct economic injection of approximately \$180,000 per year for local businesses.

RV market and competition

Local caravan parks may consider that the development of an RV park in their town will impact on their business profitability. The truth is that modern caravan parks are changing their business model and are focusing on the younger demographic and family markets. Low return sites are being replaced with ensuite cabins which compete directly with local motel and hotel accommodation. Caravan parks provide facilities such as showers, toilets and washing machines, which service a different market to what the CMCA RV parks do. Commercial parks also provide powered sites.

CMCA RV parks only allow self-contained RVs. This is a distinct market segment that is growing as more RVs are manufactured as self-contained. From a CMCA perspective, to be self-contained the vehicle must:

- Be able to carry its own potable water
- Have an installed toilet or portable toilet connected to black water tank
- Have grey water tanks or a portable tote with a shut-off valve
- Have a plumbed sink (shower is optional)
- Have a sealed rubbish bin on board

Guests will also need to provide their own power supply, whether this be a generator or solar system.

The owners of these vehicle types are less likely to use commercial caravan parks and will seek out low cost or free camping opportunities. Examination of CMCA RV Park data shows that nearly 95% of guests are already CMCA members.

With over 850,000 registered RVs in Australia (Dec 2022), the drive market is significant. By expanding accommodation options within Tenterfield, it is encouraging more of the market to visit the town and stay. Any vehicles that arrive at our parks that are found to be not self-contained will be redirected to commercial parks.

By providing more options, you are encouraging a larger market to visit the town, increasing the visitor expenditure for all. Surveys of CMCA members have shown that about one third of members choose to stay in commercial parks, another third will use a combination of commercial parks and “freedom camping” whilst another third will never stay in commercial caravan parks, therefore there is a place for all styles in the marketplace. The most recent member survey (March 2019) has shown that member preference (over 70%) is for non-commercial camping or low-cost camping with minimal facilities. This reflects the vehicle fleet with over 90% of member vehicles capable of meeting the self-containment status.

Previous experience

CMCA has operational RV parks in Ingham (QLD), Bundaberg (QLD), Charleville (QLD), Innisfail (QLD), Railton (TAS), Geeveston (TAS), Port Pirie (SA), Penola (SA), Temora (NSW), Gunnedah (NSW), Humpty Doo (NT), Batchelor (NT), and Boyup Brook (WA).

A video of the development and operation of the Bundaberg RV Park is at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pVSDyq_rtA&feature=youtu.be

CMCA now has a database of over 300 volunteer member custodians who have successfully completed the appropriate training. This database of custodians is being continually expanded as more members show an interest and receive training.

CMCA appointed a Business Development Officer in March 2018. The role of this person is to work with local councils to identify sites, procure the land, get development consent and oversee the construction and operational phases of each park.

Financial capacity

Established in 1986, CMCA is the largest RV member-based organisation in Australia with nearly 64,000 members. The not-for-profit organisation holds over \$6 million in cash reserves.

In 2014 the CMCA board committed \$2 million of its member funds to develop the network of RV parks across Australia. Development and operational budgets are managed by CMCA staff at its headquarters in Newcastle.

Planning phase

CMCA will develop a draft lease agreement with the Tenterfield Motor Museum.

CMCA will engage a planning consultant to assist with the development and lodgement of a development application for the construction and operation of a low-cost RV Park on the site. This application will address matters such as flood mitigation, traffic, signage, detailed site plan, economic impact assessment, waste management and emergency management within the site.

CMCA has considerable experience in the development and operation of this style of campground and has already achieved development consent for two parks in NSW.

Construction phase

It is assumed that the use of the site as an RV park is an acceptable use with development consent. CMCA undertakes all necessary capital works within the site.

A Development Application would be required for this use. Upon confirmation by council that the land will be made available to CMCA for an RV park, CMCA would prepare and lodge a DA.

Upon receipt of Development Consent, CMCA would then engage local contractors to undertake the capital works. Based on experience, it is expected that the construction phase would take approximately 4 months from council consent.

CMCA contacts

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