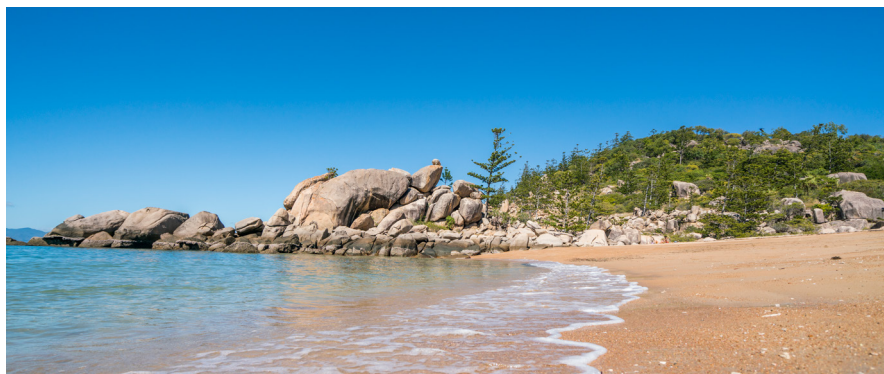


MAGNETIC ISLAND: INVESTING IN A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Issue 5, November 2025



Welcome to the final issue of the Magnetic Island newsletter for 2025!

As the year winds down, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you for your continued readership throughout the year. We hope this holiday season brings you moments of peace, joy, and connection – whether you're soaking up the sun in Alma Bay, enjoying a quiet walk through the Forts, or simply spending time with loved ones. We look forward to reconnecting in 2026 with more updates and events.

Magnetic Island Project Update Goes Digital

Since March 2025, the Magnetic Island Project Update has been delivered to mailboxes across the island. To reduce the environmental impact of print distribution, we encourage you to take a digital-first approach in 2026. Scan the QR code to join our email list and let us know if you'd like to continue to receive printed copies by emailing cityprojects@townsville.qld.gov.au



Sooning Street Bridge Update (Gustav Creek Structure Restoration Work)

Progress continues with several key milestones reached in September 2025. Design drawings for the bridge piles were finalised, and local business Humes has begun manufacturing these foundations.

The project has achieved its 50% design milestone, with both the 50% bridge design and final fishway design lodged as part of the Development Application process through State and Council planning areas.

As part of community feedback received during the October MIRRA meeting, four additional pedestrian signs have been installed on the approaches to the Sooning Street bridge detour to improve safety and visibility.

On 24 September 2025, Council was advised of updated State Development Guidelines. Projects like Sooning Street, which incorporate fishway passages into their designs as part of the development approvals process, may be eligible for certain exemption – in particular if the works are funded under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) program.

Council is also undertaking landscaping maintenance and environmental remediation works within Gustav Creek, commencing Monday 27 October 2025 for one week. This includes the removal of large deadwood debris to help reduce the risk of riverbank erosion, in line with natural waterway design principles.¹



DRFA Road Inspections and Reconstruction Update

Council continues to deliver Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) works across Magnetic Island, with precast panels now installed to extend five causeways.

Three new erosion control structures, known as 'whoa-boys', have also been completed along West Point Road. These low-profile earth banks intercept runoff from roads and safely redirect to safe places where it won't cause damage. While funded by Townsville City Council, the works were delivered in coordination with the DRFA program.

Kelly Street, the final outstanding DRFA project on Magnetic Island, will proceed once the Sooning Street bridge is reopened.

Since December 2024, more than \$32 million has been invested in DRFA works across Townsville. Of this, approximately \$4 million has been spent under the Reconstruction of Essential Public Assets program to date, with a further \$10 million committed.¹



75kg of Waste Removed in Spring Clean Up Blitz

A huge thank you to everyone who rolled up their sleeves and joined The Great Spring Clean Up 2025! Timed ahead of the severe weather season, this initiative helps prevent litter from entering waterways and ecosystems. Early action reduces stormwater pollution, protects marine life, and keeps our shared spaces safe and beautiful. We had a fantastic turnout with 25 volunteers and successfully collected 75kg of waste – a great result and a testament to everyone's efforts.

Council Adopts Proposed Package 1 Major Amendment

On 15 October 2025, Council endorsed final adoption of Package 1 Major Amendment to the Townsville City Plan. This is a significant amendment that includes a range of changes focused on alignment with other planning instruments, and to support development in appropriate locations.

One aspect of the amendment is a change in level of assessment from impact assessment to code assessment for the uses 'Nature Based Tourism' and 'Environmental Facility in the Environmental Management and Conservation Zone', and has been of

particular interest to the Magnetic Island community. The change does not relate to land on the island only, it also affects significant areas on the mainland.

Council initially proposed this level of assessment change in 2022. In 2024, based on submissions received during the public consultation phase of the amendment, it was decided to seek final ministerial approval for the amendment without the change.

The Minister's endorsement of the amendment, however, included a condition requiring that the change in level of assessment be included. The reason given was that the change aligns with the state government's intent to support eco-tourism through its Destination 2045: Queensland's Tourism Future initiative.

Council will have an opportunity to further consider the potential implications of the change as part of the City Plan Review, and will engage with the Island community and the State Government as part of that process.

Learn more by visiting haveyoursay.townsville.qld.gov.au and searching 'Townsville City Plan – Package 1 Major Amendment'



Image: queensland.com

Maintenance Dredging at Nelly Bay Harbour

Since postponing dredging work to prioritise significant roads and bridge restoration work in the Nelly Bay area, Council has been reevaluating options for the treatment and management of dredged materials. This has included work to explore whether there are any changes to the feasibility of the options initially assessed. The use of Council's site at Kelly Street in Nelly Bay remains our preferred option and has the required permits and approvals in place. Following preliminary discussions with federal and state government, there may be a feasible option for sea dispersal of the dredged material. We are at early stages of discussions on this alternative – it would need to meet all the criteria of sustainability, including environmental and cost, and we would need to be confident that we were able to secure the required approvals and other permits. We've found no changes impacting our assessment of other options, which remain unfeasible. Council will continue to work with relevant partners to explore possibilities around sea dispersal, and will keep the community informed if this work suggests changes to our current proposal.



Refurbishment of the Alma Bay Female Toilets

The female toilets at Alma Bay will be closed for refurbishment of the building facia and roof structure, with the upgrade expected to begin early November 2025. The disabled toilet facilities will be available as an alternative. The male toilets will remain open. Thanks for your patience while we improve these amenities to better serve our community and visitors.



Picnic Bay Amenities Transformed by Local Artist's Mural

Magnetic Island's vibrant spirit has been captured in a new mural by local artist Gema Fernandez Cabezas. Titled *Maggie*, the artwork is a visual tribute to the island's unique harmony between land, sea, and sky. Featuring sun-warmed granite mountain shapes, a dreaming koala, drifting sea turtles, coral gardens, wallabies, and a watchful kookaburra, the mural reflects the deep connection between the island and the Great Barrier Reef. Through flowing forms and vivid colour, *Maggie* invites us to celebrate – and protect – the natural richness of this treasured place.

Power Progress at Picnic Bay Amenities

The new amenities block at Picnic Bay is one step closer to opening, with switchboards now successfully installed. Final power connections are scheduled to be completed in late October 2025. Once connected, Council will carry out commissioning and final inspections. If all goes to plan, the facility is expected to be open for November 2025. We look forward to the community being able to enjoy these new facilities soon!²

Final Testing Underway for Picnic Bay Reservoir

This project was to renew the reservoir to ensure the long-term reliability and safety of the water supply for the Magnetic Island community. The works involved a roof replacement, structural upgrades, and access improvements. Construction works are almost complete, and Council is currently finalising commissioning and preparing to bring the reservoir back online.

Improvements Coming for the Nelly Bay Boardwalk

Council is preparing to upgrade the Nelly Bay Boardwalk, running along the southeast side of the island, near the Good Ju Ju's Lookout. Council will replace the existing steel boardwalk with new fiber-reinforced polymer boardwalk. The project is currently in the tender preparation phase, with the contract expected to be awarded in January 2026. Keep an eye on our website for more information as it becomes available.



Nelly Bay Guardrail Update

Surveying works for the Nelly Bay Guardrail have recently been completed. The design phase is currently at 50% completion, with final designs expected to be delivered by November 2025. These designs will incorporate safety improvements and environmental considerations tailored to the local terrain and traffic conditions.

As part of the design process, the project team is also considering wildlife movement in the area.

They are using data from WildNet and BioMaps and are following the Department of Transport and Main Roads' Fauna Sensitive Road Design Guidelines to help guide their approach.

Once the design is finalised, installation is anticipated to begin in early 2026. The new guardrail will enhance road safety for both residents and visitors, particularly along sections of Nelly Bay Road that are prone to erosion and limited visibility.

Exploring Future Options for Henry Lawson Bridge

Following recent service relocations, we've heard strong feedback from the island community about the bridge's importance. We understand its value to residents and remain committed to keeping the community informed as investigations progress. Updates will be shared as more information becomes available.

Magnetic Island Recycled Water Irrigation Upgrade

Council continues to progress the Magnetic Island Recycled Water Irrigation Upgrade. While construction works have not yet started, we are awaiting the final decision notice from the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA). One final matter remains under review as part of the agency's assessment process. Tender evaluations for future construction are nearing completion, and we will provide further updates once approvals are finalised and timelines are confirmed.



Horseshoe Bay Coastal Management Works

Council has been carrying out coastal management works along the Horseshoe Bay foreshore since mid-October, focusing on reshaping areas most at risk of erosion. These efforts aim to strengthen the coastline and improve long-term resilience. The project also includes enhanced maintenance of beach access points, ensuring safer and more sustainable entry for the community and visitors alike.

Living in the North Means Being Ready

Living in North Queensland means enjoying a great lifestyle, but it also means being prepared for serious natural hazards such as cyclones, storm tides, flooding, bushfires, and even events like earthquakes or pandemics. Disasters can happen suddenly and may force you to evacuate or stay home without access to water, power or communication. Being prepared helps you stay calm and act quickly. By understanding your risks, making a plan, preparing your emergency kit, and looking out for your home, pets and neighbours, you can help keep yourself and your community safe.

Stay informed this high-risk weather season: Get the latest emergency updates, weather warnings, road closures, power outages, and more through the Townsville Emergency Management and Disaster Dashboard.

Read more about preparing for a disaster at [townsville.qld.gov.au](https://www.townsville.qld.gov.au) and search 'Before a Disaster'.



Get Ready Tipping Weekend

Prepare for high risk weather season by clearing waste and debris from around your home. Friday 7 November to Monday 10 November 2025, domestic customers can drop off household waste at the Magnetic Island Transfer Station free of charge. The facility is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7am to 3.45pm, and weekends from 9am to 12noon.

Magnetic Island's Green Thumbs Making a Difference

Local gardening champions on Magnetic Island are helping protect the Great Barrier Reef – one plant at a time. By embracing sustainable gardening practices, passionate residents are reducing runoff and improving water quality in nearby marine environments.

Read more: drytropicshealthywaters.org/post/magnetic-islands-green-thumbs



Bolger Bay Bypass Installed and Operational

The installation of a new bypass at the Bolger Bay Water Pump Station has been successfully completed and is now operational. This work followed an emergent leak on the station's inlet pipe, prompting Council to act swiftly to ensure continued water supply to the community. The upgrade was carried out in late September and forms part of Council's ongoing commitment to improving the long-term reliability of Magnetic Island's water infrastructure. The Bolger Bay Water Pump Station is a critical part of the island's water network. It receives water from the Magnetic Island Subsea Water Main – the island's sole water source – and distributes it to reservoirs across the island, supplying water to around 2,700 residents.

Ario Scooters Pilots Safety Features on Magnetic Island

Ario, the e-scooter provider on Magnetic Island, is rolling out innovative safety features to improve rider and pedestrian safety. This includes a smart helmet with a built-in sensor that stops the vehicle if the helmet isn't worn. This world-first technology is being piloted on Magnetic Island, before expanding across Queensland. Scooters also use cameras and sensors to detect footpaths and automatically slow down in busy pedestrian areas. Rider behaviour such as tandem riding and speeding is monitored through trip footage, with warnings issued for unsafe actions.

Learn more: Ario.com



Nominate Now: Australia Day Awards 2026

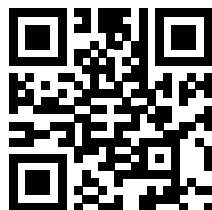
Submissions are now open for the 2026 Australia Day Awards, honouring the quiet achievers who make our community stronger, kinder and more connected. Whether it's a neighbour, friend or someone from your local school or community group, these awards are your chance to recognise those who go above and beyond to improve the lives of others. Nominations are quick and easy, and close Monday 10 November 2025.

Read more: townsville.qld.gov.au/community-support/awards-and-recognition/australia-day-awards

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