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FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

This document has been drafted by the original steering committee to answer many of the frequently asked questions. We hope that it provides you with all that you need to make the decision to go to the next step.

Should you have any questions that are still left unanswered, we shall be only too pleased to assist.

About 'Community' (Common Unity)

Q – What is an intentional community?

A – We have a document known as the '10 reasons to create community' available on this website. We would suggest that you read this document as it outlines our intentions quite well.

Q – Is this some kind of 'Cult' ?

A – Absolutely not. This is a non-sectarian Community. All are welcome to apply who follow three simple principals;



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Q – What does Bhula Bhula mean?

A – Bhula Bhula is the local (ab)origine language for ‘Together in Harmony’.

Q – Why do you refer to Aboriginals as Origines?

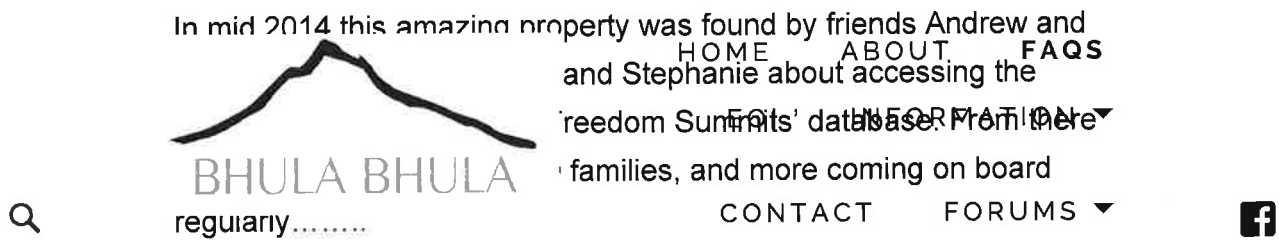
A – ‘Ab’ means the opposite of, so from our research, and the advice from a National Icon known as Gunham Badi (aka Mark McMurtrie) we refer to them as the Origines of this land. You can watch Gunham’s talk at the Freedom Summits 2014 event here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kERy2PpnTs>

How This Project Began

Q – Who and how did this project start?

A – This project was initially started by Mark Darwin and his partner Stephanie Humble. Mark and Stephanie have been passionate about bringing their children up on an intentional community for 5-6 years now, and have spent thousands of hours researching communities, and actually searching for land on the East Coast of Australia.

Since then, they formed a core group with two other families, and set about forming the original ‘Steering Committee’ who were key to Bhula Bhula gaining the traction needed to launch.



Q – What exactly does the ‘Steering Committee’ mean?

A – The group of people responsible for the initial works necessary to get this huge project off the ground. The list of works are, but not limited to;

- The formation of the Steering Committee itself,
- The search for appropriate land,
- Conducting Due Diligence on various properties,
- Negotiations with Real Estate Agent(s),
- Creation of Mission Statement,
- Creation of the ‘Offer’ to incoming parties,
- The assistance with the drafting of Legal documents such as the Company Constitution, Trust Deeds, By-Laws and so forth,
- Seeking of the rest of the parties (families/groups) to form the entire community,
- Assessing information about town planning,
- Investigating Council guidelines etc,
- Water management,
- Power,
- Plot allotments,
- Conflict resolution and Arbitration processes,
- Consultation with Gunham Badi and local Origine elders,
- Overall management until settlement of land and the first 12 months of operation,
- Liaison with the Founders of Organic Farm Share and other such groups Re: a JV on the front block,

Q – Is the Steering Committee still in effect?

▲ – Not as such. There are now several internal committees with vari-
To date they are;



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-internal and external dispute resolution

-legal

-financial

-building standards

MARKETING

-vote counting

-sales and marketing

-commercial area

-communications and meetings

-IT

SERVICES

-environment

-energy

-water management

-waste removal

OH&S

-security and visitors

-fire & safety



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-Health

-education

-community centre

-healing centre

-roads and fencing

-farming/brewing(?)

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

The Property.

Q – Where is the property?

A – The property is situated in between the gorgeous towns of Uki and Nimbin at Mt Burrell. This is in the lush area known as the Mt Warning caldera in Northern NSW. The exact address is kept private, but will obviously be disclosed to those who complete an 'Expression of Interest' form and wish to inspect the property.

Q – Is there water on the property?

A – Yes, the property borders the fresh water section of the Tweed River (in fact there is a gorgeous water hole as pictured on the website) and several good quality dams. There is also the possibility of drilling for water, which many neighbouring properties have done very successfully. Rainfall in this area is also very sound.



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property? EOI INFORMATION ▼

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A – Yes, a bitumen road to the homestead which is around 600 meters long. There are also many roads that virtually cross section the land, and are of good quality for dirt roads. One of the Steering Committee members Andrew has done extensive excavation and road work in the area, and he has stated that there is good quality road base material on the land which is very encouraging. The roadways may need some work in areas, and the main roadways will need work once we inhabit the property, but this will all be assessed and submitted to the community in time.

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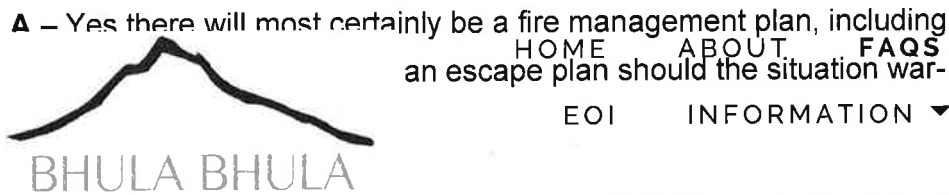
Q- Is there power on the land?

A – There is mains power to the homestead, but nowhere else. It is the view of the Steering Committee that we will generate our own power, but whether that is done as a group, or whether we will all be responsible for our own power is still on the table for research and discussion.

Q – Will there be a 'Community Centre'?

A – Yes, most certainly. We see a functional community centre as being a vital part of this community. It will provide many things such as a meeting place, a good quality kitchen, wood fired oven and conventional ovens/stoves, areas to hold functions, etc. Our research to date indicates that virtually all successful communities have a great Community Centre and regular social activities.

Q – Is there a fire management plan?



A – Yes there will most certainly be a fire management plan, including an escape plan should the situation war-

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Financials.

Q- How is this project being funded initially?

A – This project is being funded, like most developments, in various stages. Each stage requires and incorporates different levels of participation, monetary commitment and risk. The agreed goal of the Community is to extinguish all debt and have the property unencumbered, and this has now been achieved just two months after settling on the land. Any Units in the Trust that are sold now are for the necessary funding to carry out certain infrastructure such as the construction of a Community Centre, upgrading roads, building dams etc.

Q – Will there be any further funding required?

A – Yes, but only by due process of voting and Agreement by the community as a whole, and in line with the voting policies in the Trust Deeds and/or By-Laws. It has been discussed that a maximum of 36 Units be offered, but less if possible. Currently Bhula Bhula has cash reserves, and once fully subscribed this amount will be substantial enough to carry out some incredible works which will create a wonderful environment for all to enjoy, children, adults and the elderly. Being that this website is somewhat open to the public, the full financials can be demonstrated to those who complete the EOI (Expression Of Interest) and meet with one of the Bhula Bhula Team.

Q – How many Unit Holders are there in the Trust to date?

A – At this point in time (being September 2015) there are 26 Unit Holders.



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g costs, such as levies to cover Council
tc?

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A – In the short term there are likely to be ongoing expenses yes, but these will be divided by the various parties to the community. The aim of course is to have sustenance (income) generated by the community as quickly as possible through various means, and this will be outlined further in this document.

Legal Aspects.

Q- Who is the Law firm handling the community affairs?

A – The Lawyer is Wroth Wall from Wall and Company Lawyers in Stuart Street, Mullumbimby NSW. Wroth came recommended through a couple known well to Mark and Stephanie from the Steering Committee who live on a well organised and highly successful community near Mullumbimby known as Mevlana. Wroth wrote and has continued to manage the Legal requirements of Mevlana for over 25 years, and has also been instrumental in the Legal work for over 100 other communities. So his experience is unsurpassed in Australia, and perhaps the world. Bhula Bhula also has two Lawyers who have joined the Community, and they will work closely with Wroth for all ongoing Legal requirements.

Q- What is the Legal structure for Bhula Bhula Community?

A – The property has been purchased using a Trust structure, with a Registered Pty Ltd Company as the Trustee. Following is a clip done by Mark and Michal which explains a little about the Trust Deed structure <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNSwasir7dg>

Q – What exactly am I investing in?

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he purchase of Units in the Trust. This is

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The Units will then relate to your allotment on the property for private use, and also the use and enjoyment of the balance of 'Community Land' on the property.



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Q – How does that work from an ongoing management perspective?

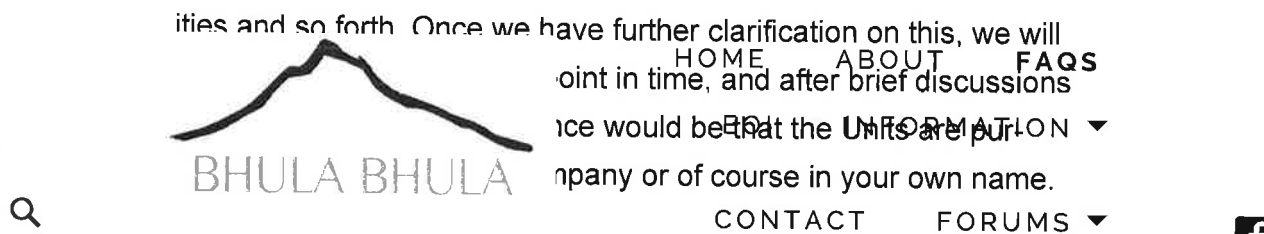
A – The project is managed through the Trustees, as with all Trusts. The Trustee the Pty Ltd company will have 3 Directors who after the initial 12 months will be voted in by the Unit holders in the Trusts. All of this finer detail will be available through the Trust Deeds. It is envisaged that the Directors (Trustees) will change every 12 months by way of voting, and that Directors may not then be able to be nominated voting for 2 years at the conclusion of a term.

Q – Can I sell my Units in the future?

A – There will of course be a process as stipulated in the Trust Deeds and/or By-Laws whereby an approval structure for incoming parties will take effect. This will not be overly prohibitive, simply a measure of protection for the existing parties to the community. You will be free to negotiate whatever price you can between the incoming party, taking into effect any capital improvements you may or may not have made to your allotment.

Q – What are the options for the purchase of these Units? Can I purchase them in my own name, another Trust, a Company, or a Foundation etc?

A – This question is still being discussed with the Lawyer. The community as a whole must ensure that it isn't put under threat by external entities, such as Bankruptcy Trustees, MIP or Government author-



Q – What are the plans for seeking Council approval?

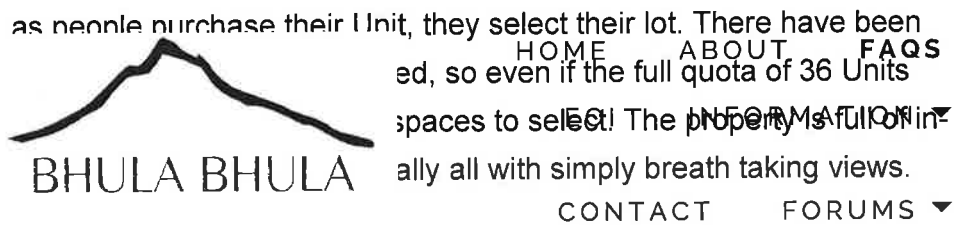
A – The Lawyer has put us in touch with a local Town Planner who is well known and respected by Tweed Council and Byron Council. Community Members will be meeting with him to discuss the various options and relative costs here. The initial advice from the Lawyer is to seek approval for a Multiple Occupancy arrangement, but to what level we are unsure at this juncture. Encouragingly, the owner of the surrounding 3,000 acre property has Council approval for a subdivision of 423 lots. This holds us in good stead as a precedent. We are meeting with this owner as he has approached us to possible extend our community with this land. These discussions are in the very infant and not to be taken out of context.

Q – Can I borrow using the Units as security?

A – This project is to remain unencumbered, other than the initial loan made privately between the community member in the short term. Should there be any projects in the future that require funding, for instance the possible 'Health Retreat', then this would be carefully researched and presented to the community for voting and approval. This doesn't mean that you cannot borrow from other means, using other collateral as security, or by personal loans. This is entirely your business, but the Units are to remain unencumbered.

Q – How will the individual Blocks be allocated?

A – There is an internal map with lot allocations. Lots are chosen as with most developments which is in a timely fashion, in other words,



Q – What size blocks are we being allotted?

A – At this juncture each party will have approx. 3 acres for their private use. If the full quota of 36 Units are secured, then this means that approximately 100 acres of the 650 acres will be for Private use, and the balance will be for orchards, cattle, recreational areas, playgrounds, farming and so forth.

The Building of Dwellings.

Q – Are there any restrictions on what I can build?

A – Yes. All dwellings will need to be of suitable quality so as to ensure safety standards are met. (We are aiming for Australian Building Standards as a minimum). The design and layout of the structure and its location on the block will be up to each individual. We are very open to 'alternative' style dwellings such as Earthships, Shipping Container Homes and so forth, however, safety and other aspects are important as well.

Q – Are there any restrictions on when I must build?

A – No. We understand that some parties will be engaging in building as soon as possible, whilst others might be 2-3 years in the future. This is fine, and probably quite practical as well.

Q- Are there any restrictions on how many dwellings I can build?

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yes for inhabited structures. The agreed number of dwellings allowed (without community special approval) is still yet undecided. The Plot of land is yours to do with as you wish, so as long as safety standards are met then you can design your home the way you like and it is envisioned that most plots can have a number of separate dwellings on the block. The Constitution and by-laws will deal more specifically with this point. However, it must be said that the feeling amongst the group to date is that one main dwelling only be applicable for living in. For example, it is not acceptable to build a block of 6 flats and rent them all out.

Q – Is there a preference as to what we build?

A – Yes. Eco Friendly and as green as possible is the standard we would like to see. Earthships and other alternative examples are some of the designs people have talked about building.

Vehicles.

Q – Is it necessary to have a 4WD to live on this land?

A- No. All roads on the property will be built and maintained to a high standard (not all will be sealed) and all residential and communal areas will be accessible by standard vehicles. Having said that, the roads will take quite some time before they are upgraded to all points on the land. Also, from time to time the area can experience heavy tropical rains, and as with any rural area, caution ought to be taken where necessary.



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A – NO. NOT at this stage, however a detailed policy will be documented within the community's By-Laws, so as to stop the community from becoming a car park or car grave yard.

Q – Are there noise restrictions? For example the use of trail bikes and/or quads and other recreational vehicles?

A – Yes. Typical 'traditional' standards of noise restrictions, Levels and times will be documented in the By-Laws and will be for the benefit of all who reside on the Community. There is a plan to build a trail bike track, but this will be determined by the community in time, and will of course be earmarked for an area as far from homes as possible.

Revenue Generation for the Community

Q – How will the Community pay its ongoing expenses?

A – All unit holders will have to contribute equally to the 'ongoing running costs' initially (like rates etc). It is however, the intention of the community to enter into a commercial / Rural Lease agreement on the front section of the front block with an Organic Farm Share organisation, with the view of that lease paying all ongoing expenses moving forward from the date of the agreement being entered into.

General Expectations.

Q –What is expected of a member of the community?



A – ~ DO NO HARM ~ The fundamental rule of the community. All of
 also be set out in the By-laws / Unit
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 Company Constitution. It is expected that

BHULA BHULA ty” feeling will exist between all of those
 who reside on the block, and taking an active part in community exer-
 cises and meetings is an important part of the decision to invite you
 on to the block. There is no desire to ‘live in each others’ pockets’ or
 to be ‘communal free loving hippies’ by any means, but an active
 group mentality is vital for those times that it is required.



Conflict Resolution and Arbitration Processes.

Q –Is there a formal process in place for the inevitable conflicts that will arise?

A – A very detailed process is being written and included into the community By-Laws. It is envisaged that processes like NVC (non-violent Communication) or such like be adopted and embraced by the Community. Should disputes not be resolved by the parties, there may be the need to use the services of an Agreed mediator.

Proposed Ventures.

Q – Are there any commercial ventures proposed for the Community land ?

A – Yes. There is the proposed Organic Farm Share Lease at this stage, however other commercial opportunities for the community are being considered and will be brought to the Community for consideration as they become viable. (Health Retreat for example)

Q – Can I work from Home If I currently operate a small business?

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Information on 'working from home' articles

your business. (i.e. Your Clientele come to

your home.) The residential part of the community will only be accessible to the people that are living there, and their guests of course.



It has been proposed that at some stage in the future a 'health retreat' may be included as a community asset, and if so there may be other commercial opportunities that can be considered at this time.

Sewage

Q – Will each block have Sewerage facilities ?

A – Yes. No. Maybe. This topic and all options are currently being considered and we have engaged a town planner in conjunction with us to review all possible viable scenarios for the community as a whole, (one main Green plant on site) and also as individuals (Each dwelling having its own facilities or a combination of both).

Garbage

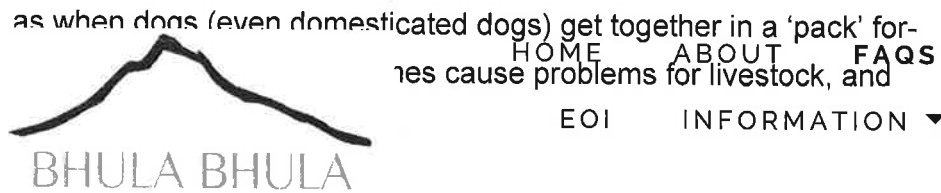
Q – What about weekly rubbish collection ?

A – Yes. No. Maybe. This topic and all options are currently being considered and we have engaged a town planner in conjunction with us to review all possible viable scenarios for the community as a whole, (one main Green plant on site) and also as individuals (Each dwelling having its own facilities or a combination of both).

Pets

Q- Can you have pets and are there any restrictions?

A – Pets are allowed, with no restrictions envisioned at this time, other than typical standards of acceptable behaviour that will be detailed within the By-Laws. Dogs will be required to be adequately housed,



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This document has been prepared in good faith, but carries with it no responsibility or liability whatsoever by the current Community Members. It is simply a working document that outlines our thoughts and aspirations to date, and all of these points and many more will be properly and legally detailed in the various documents such as the Company Constitution, Trust Deeds, and By-Laws.

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Current Facilities

Current Facilities

– Camping area

There is a great area close to the main homestead to camp for all those who have camping facilities. You should have access to power and water (hopefully).

– Homestead

This area is currently undergoing renovation. We are currently cleaning the rooms. They have two single beds in one bedroom and one double bed in the other bedroom.

– Camp Kitchen

We have created a space for all to cook in and clean up. We have a twin burner, barbeque, electric stove/oven, juicer, fridge, toaster, washing machine, gas bottles, sink (to wash up), and hopefully an outdoor shower.

– Water

There will be limited tank water available for washing up. We hope to have plenty of drinking water but it is advisable to bring extra drinking water just in case.

– Food

Please find details about the local area attached. There is a Café and of the hill but obviously please be aware

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The SPINX Rock Gate CONTACT FORUMS ▼

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Monday – Friday

8:00am – 4:30pm Friday Only 6:00pm to 9:00pm

Saturday – Sunday

9:00am – 5:00pm

Uki General Store

Monday – Friday

7:30am – 6:00pm

Saturday – Sunday

8:00am – 5:00pm

Also we will tea and coffee facilities on site so don't worry about bringing any tea and coffee unless you have a specific taste. Cups and cutlery will be supplied.

Toilets (We will have two portaloos on site, cleaned daily)

So this is a summary of our basic facilities. Please let me know if you wish to use the indoor facilities and I will ask Andrew if this is a possibility and we will try and give it to those most in need. We also have a decent sized caravan and a more than welcome to accommodate anybody how wishes to share our van with us. We have two single bunk beds available. The top bunk is obviously perfect for kids and the bottom bunk is good for any adult that may wish to use it.

Weather

It has been mightv cold in here lately. But hopefully the rain holds off
 a undercover area set up so that if it does
 something in terms of community hel-
 s a bit cold and I would suggest that extra
 clotning and blankets is a must.



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I hope this information is of use to you all. Thanks to Cath for some general knowledge of the area. I think people are going to be more well equipped for when they want to come and stay.

Aerial Photo(Boundary & Contour)

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