Animal Care Australia
2026

30th October 2026

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Ballina Shire Council

Email: council@ballina.nsw.gov.au

**Re: Companion Animal Management Plan 2026-2030**

Animal Care Australia (ACA) is a national incorporated association established to lobby for real animal welfare by those who keep, breed and care for animals. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.

Animal Care Australia is currently recognised by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and the NSW Office of Local Government as a key stakeholder in reviews of the NSW Prevention Of Cruelty To Animals Act, Companion Animals Act and the Companion Animals Pet Registry. Animal Care Australia directly consults and advises during these reviews, including revision of Regulations and Codes of Practice for the keeping of all pets.

Animal Care Australia encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale, and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species, including pets, companion animals, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation.

Animal Care Australia is engaged with state governments to develop more appropriate model Local Laws and model Subordinate Local Laws governing the keeping of animals in each state. Nationally, Animal Care Australia is finding Local Councils placing restrictions and permit requirements on their residents which do nothing to improve animal welfare and tend to lead to greater non-compliance.

Animal Care Australia DOES NOT SUPPORT the single use of surveys as a means of consultation. It is inappropriate for Council to claim you have consulted when organisations are not actually able to lodge a written submission. Surveys are misleading and provide irresponsible statistical analysis, regardless of how well structured a survey may be.

It is vital that Councils support the keeping of all pets within their shires/municipalities and that Councils consult with the appropriate stakeholders when looking to address the many myths or phobias that are expressed by uneducated members of the public, in relation to the keeping of some animals.

Overall, Animal Care Australia find that this Plan has been well thought out and has many sensible goals and actions that we fully support.

That said, there is room for improvement in the following areas:

- Surrender fees charged by the animal shelter/pound - $240 for dogs, and $190 for cats.

  This may inadvertently encourage other methods for owners to relinquish pets they can no longer keep – such as dumping or worse.

- Open days at the animal shelter – currently 2 in 4 years.

  Annual open days or even bi-annual days may result in more engagement with the community. Any opportunity to educate the community is a good opportunity, especially when it is not as a result of a compliance issue.

- Training for authorised officers.

  This Action is vague and does not reflect the actual training requirements for Animal Management Officers. Animal Care Australia suggests that at least senior officers gain a Certificate IV in Government Investigations (PSP40416). Other officers should hold at least a Certificate II (or III) in Animal Care and Management, a Handling Dangerous Dogs course completion, and a Conflict Management course completion.

  There are many other courses that could be included in a list of qualifications that authorised officers should hold – it would be good to know exactly what qualifications are required of those enforcing compliance in animal management.

- Recognition of "community" or "colony" cats in suburban areas.

  This is implied in the wording used in the cat management section of the Plan but may require formal recognition of this "class" of cat as distinct from owned/stray domestic cats or truly feral cats in order to provide clarity for all parties dealing with cats, from council officers, to shelter staff and to rescues who may end up taking on some of these cats for rehoming.

Animal Care Australia would welcome the opportunity to consult with Council as an animal organisation (in this case a national animal welfare organisation) on all aspects of animal management and in particular educational material promoting and encouraging responsible pet ownership.

Should you require further details please do not hesitate to reach out as we would be happy to meet with you and further discuss this matter.

Kind regards,



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**About Animal Care Australia**

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation and Australian Registered Charity, Animal Care Australia encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale, and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species, including pets, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation, and in particular native birds, reptiles, and mammals.

Animal Care Australia was founded in early 2018 to establish an organisation run solely by volunteers to lobby for real animal welfare. With extreme animal rights and animal liberationist ideologies influencing government legislation, regulation, and policy at our expense and to the detriment of our animals and pets, it has become necessary to provide government with a balancing voice.

By uniting the broad spectrum of animal groups, collectively we offer an experienced, sensible approach to animal welfare.

By educating our members and the public about the importance of treating animals with kindness and respect for their needs and promoting the humane treatment of animals to improve animal welfare outcomes, Animal Care Australia is in the unique position of lobbying and advocating for all animals within our care.

Animal Care Australia provides priority to the following:

- advocating for stronger welfare outcomes
- advocating to increase education of the public in animal welfare and best care techniques
- educate the public on handling their animals with kindness & respect and the importance of their needs
- educate the public in the differences between animal welfare and animal rights