

A message from Cr Aldo Antolli

Made available to attendees at the Bruny Island Community Association "Meet the Candidate" event

Cr Aldo Antolli, Candidate for Mayor | Kingborough | Sunday 9 August 2026

This statement was written for the Bruny Island Community Association "Meet the Candidate" event on Sunday 9 August 2026. I was unable to attend in person, and BICA kindly made a copy of this statement available for those present to read. The response was generous enough that I am publishing it here so the whole Bruny community can read it, not only those who were in the room.

Hello Bruny Island. Forgive me for not being there.

I am in Canberra this weekend for the fortieth reunion of my high school class, planned long before this event came together. Forty years only comes around once, and I suspect none of us will be looking any better at the fiftieth. My thanks to BICA for the invitation, and for reading this to you on my behalf. If there is another gathering before October, please invite me. I will be on the ferry.

Bruny has been part of our family life for years. My wife and I bring the caravan across and stay as often as we can. So I know your roads. I know that queue at Kettering. And I certainly know Adventure Bay Road.

Anyone who has towed a caravan down that road knows the rattle. You arrive having received a complimentary chiropractic adjustment, whether you booked one or not, and if you wear dentures you spend the whole trip wondering whether they will still be in your head when you arrive. It is a good laugh right up until you remember that some of you drive it every day, with the shopping in the back and a child in the seat behind you.

I have pushed on that road for three years, in the chamber and with officers. I am pleased to tell you it is now on the upgrade list for the next couple of years, and some of the work is already done. I will keep asking until the job is finished.

Not at a distance

None of this has been done at a distance. I speak regularly with your President, Tammy Price. With Mark Brinkman. With Danny Gruden. I have sat in your BICA meetings, and I have talked with the Friends of North Bruny about all manner of things, the Specific Area Plans among them. There are many more of you I could name, and I would only be sorry for the ones I left out.

John and Sheryl Lampkin have become good friends. We now catch up religiously as fellow caravanners around Tassie, and when we come to the island we often stay at their little park. I want to say publicly how faithfully those two serve this community. You are fortunate to have them.

Rates, and the record

This year Council posted a \$2.6 million deficit, the highest on record, and answered it with a 6 per cent rate rise, 10 per cent on commercial. I was the only councillor who voted against it. Council does not have a revenue problem. It has an expenses problem, and the answer to that is not to reach further into your pocket. Or worse still, into mine, because I pay rates too, and I felt that one.

Council also brought in a new rate on short stay visitor accommodation. I voted against that as well, and only one other councillor joined me. There is not a single hotel anywhere in this municipality. Take the short stay hosts off Bruny and you are left with a caravan park. Those hosts are not a problem to be taxed. They are the accommodation base your visitor economy depends on.

On planning, I have been the loudest voice in that chamber, and often the only one, about the Landscape Conservation Zone and the way it landed on rural landowners with almost no explanation. Nobody should learn that their property rights have changed from a neighbour. Bruny owners are still waiting for clarity.

The Bruny Island Specific Area Plan

Which brings me to the Bruny Island Specific Area Plan. Ahead of that vote I wrote a paper setting out my reasoning in full, including the arguments against my own position, and I published it so that anyone could read it and hold me to it.

That paper was picked up by several of my colleagues, and then by the Mayor. We worked through the weekend, and between us we turned the entire direction of that item around,

from a recommendation to proceed to a recommendation to withdraw.

And that is how it was voted. The Bruny Island Specific Area Plan has been withdrawn in full, on the acknowledgement that the new Tasmanian Planning Scheme already carries ample protection for Bruny without loading further burdens onto landowners who have carried more than enough of them already.

I want to name Councillor Street and Councillor Richardson, and the colleagues who came with us, because they did the hard yards alongside me. A Mayor has one vote, the same as everybody else. What a Mayor actually has is the ability to bring people around a table, hold the room together, and turn a hard problem into a decision. That is the leadership I intend to bring, for Bruny and for the whole municipality.

The bigger question, which is money

Bruny carries the visitor load of the south's number one destination on a very small ratepayer base, and your infrastructure needs are far beyond anything island rates will ever fund. That makes this a matter of state significance, not simply a council responsibility. I have met the Premier about it, and I have a direct line to his Chief of Staff, who has taken it on as a personal project.

Let me tell you what turned that conversation. I put to him what is happening on the unsealed stretch out past Lunawanna towards the lighthouse. Traffic out there has grown enormously, the dust hangs in constant plumes, and it settles straight into people's water tanks. Families are filtering road dust out of their drinking water. I watched both the Premier's eyebrows go up. He was horrified, and so he should have been.

So let me be plain about it. That road needs to be sealed, and I will not let go of it until it is. People out there ought to be able to drink the rain that God sends them, without straining the road out of it first.

As Mayor I want to use that relationship to quarantine real funding for Bruny, above and beyond anything rates can raise. A visitor levy is one option, and if it proceeds the exemptions are written down before anyone votes on anything. Residents do not pay. Shack owners do not pay, because you pay rates too. Tradies, essential workers and family visiting residents do not pay. Tourists and day trippers do. Every dollar raised on Bruny stays on Bruny, and the Kettering queue is fixed alongside it, not after it.

A monthly clinic on Bruny

One last thing. If I am given the privilege of serving as your Mayor, I will hold a public clinic here on Bruny once a month.

If the idea is unfamiliar, it is borrowed from Britain, where members of parliament hold what they call a surgery. They announce a time and place, and sit there with the door open. No appointment, no submission form, no going through the proper channels first. You bring whatever is on your mind, and you say it to the person's face.

That is what I will do here, announced well in advance so you can plan around it. No delegation, no survey, no consultant. Being accessible to you is the whole point of the job.

My priorities are set out in full at aldo4kingborough.com.

Thank you, Bruny Island, for having me in spirit. Next time I will be there in person, and I will take Adventure Bay Road to get to you, though I make no promises about my fillings.

Aldo Antolli

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