



MEDIA RELEASE

4 April 2018

Proposal to assign a sportsground name - Bob Bellear Sportsground

The Geographical Names Board is calling for public comment on a proposal by Byron Shire Council to name a sportsground in Ocean Shores.

Chair of the Geographical Names Board, Narelle Underwood, said feedback is being sought on the proposal to name the site Bob Bellear Sportsground, which is accessed via Shara Boulevard and is located adjacent to Brunswick Valley Way and New Brighton Road.

Robert (Bob) Bellear born in 1944, was Australia's first Indigenous judge. He was raised in Billinudgel and attended local schools.

He left school early and joined the Australian Navy where he rose to Petty Officer; the first Indigenous person to do so. After leaving the Navy, Judge Bellear gained his law degree in 1978 and became a barrister and was admitted to the Bar. In 1996 he was the first Indigenous person to be appointed a judge of the District Court of NSW.

Throughout the 1970s, Judge Bellear established the Aboriginal Housing Company and was director of the Aboriginal Medical Service and Aboriginal Legal Service. In 1987 he was the first Indigenous person to be appointed as counsel assisting a Royal Commissioner when he was appointed to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Mrs Underwood said the board is encouraging community comment before it considers the proposal.

"It is important that place names reflect the character and history of the local area and community," she said.

"We want to make sure everyone has an opportunity to provide their feedback on the proposed name."

Details of the proposal can be viewed and submissions lodged on the Geographical Names Board's website at www.gnb.nsw.gov.au.

Alternatively written submissions may be lodged with the Secretary, Geographical Names Board, 346 Panorama Ave, Bathurst, NSW, 2795.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 4 May 2018.