
Subject:

FW: Submission regarding the Draft Central Coast Regional Plan

Dear Sir

Please find attached my submission in relationship to the draft Central Coast Regional Plan.

In presenting my submission I note with interest that Parliamentary Secretary to the Central Coast Scot McDonald MLC acknowledges that:

The Environment is the defining feature of this region and the draft plan identifies its high value in environmental areas, including its water catchments, and outlines actions to protect these areas.

I agree the environment is a defining feature of this region. Although it is important to acknowledge this feature it is equally important for the State Government to put in place proactive actions. Actions should be in accordance with the principles of Ecological Sustainable Development that ensures the environment is managed and protected.

In my view the draft Plan lacks specific actions to manage and protect the environment. For example in Figure 9 although the region has a number of National Parks, Nature Reserves, Conservation Areas, State Forests plus the Coastal Open Space System (COSS) there is no direct action to identify any wildlife corridor linkages or buffer zones. The consequence of not identifying these actions within the Regional Plan in my view will result in the long term the areas of high conservation becoming islands surrounded by incompatible land use.

It is understood the New South Wales Government has made a commitment to introduce an E5 zone to be applied to COSS. The State government should introduce an E5 zone into the standard instrument as soon as practical. As the E5 zone is coming, it is recommended that within the Regional Plan that areas in both Gosford and Wyong should be identified where the E5 should be considered. Areas worthy of consideration would include the area between Jilliby State Conservation Area to Munmorah State Recreation Area. Another area would include the areas north and west of Matcham through to Ourimbah State Forest.

I note under Goal 3 - Sustain Productive Landscape, that Action 3.1.1 supports development of agriculture and aquaculture but Action 3.1.3 plans for ongoing productive use of lands with extractive resources is conflicting. When you analyse Figure 8 Central Coast Mining by combining the identified mineral resource with the potential mineral resource removes all agricultural land in the Somersby, Mangrove Mountain and Kulnura. To ensure farmers in the agricultural areas to have certainty it is recommended that the area of potential mineral resource be removed from map 8 where prime agricultural lands are identified in Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 8.

As a draft regional plan I'd like to pause for a moment to reflect on history. From my recollection in the late 1970s the then Department of Planning and Environment prepared the first Gosford Wyong Structured Plan. This first Plan was built upon the design principle, that urban development should parallel the Sydney to Newcastle railway line and motor way. Therefore, development at that time was to follow a north-south direction.

Paradoxically, notwithstanding the planning principles contained within the Gosford Wyong Structured Plan the state government at the time when it introduced Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 6 (**SREP No 6**) abandoned the north-south planning concept. If you examine SREP No 6, supporting documentation you will observe the only justification presented for shifting development from a north-south direction to an east-west direction to establish the Erina commercial centre and surrounding residential area was based upon the statement that due to coal deposits underlying the proposed Warnervale Town centre that this town centre would not proceed. Consequently, to take up the projected population growth for the Central Coast that the commercial zone at Erina and the surrounding residential zones were gazetted.

As a consequence of SREP No 6 abandoning the north-south planning concept. I believe by not following the planning principles as set out in the Gosford Wyong Structure Plan resulted in the death of Gosford Town Centre losing its role as a regional town centre.

Yet today in 2016 we find the Draft Central Coast Regional Plan identifies Warnervale Town Centre as a viable proposition.

Acknowledging that the Warnervale Town Centre is a viable proposition the question arises that as SREP No 6 was based upon a false assumption shouldn't the planning principle of development parallel to the motorway and the Sydney to Newcastle railway be revisited. That is, rather than planning a regional growth corridor east-west from Erina to Somersby wouldn't it be more logical to plan an economic growth corridor north-south from Ourimbah to Woy Woy.

Not only does the Sydney to Newcastle railway provide a major public transport link in the future for the movement of local residents the local road infrastructure in a north-south direction will complement movement of local residents.

Analysing the local road constraints it becomes very obvious that the passage of the Central Coast Highway through East Gosford and across the Punt Bridge and Punt straight is a major constraint. However, with the recent upgrade of the West Gosford interchange and the pending upgrade of the Old Pacific Highway from Ourimbah to West Gosford the road infrastructure would complement an economic growth corridor. I would therefore request that NSW Planning and Environment reflect on the history of past planning decisions and more fully explore the opportunity of establishing a north-south growth corridor from Ourimbah to Woy Woy.

Reflecting on history if you take the concept of a north-south planning concept as originally proposed in the Gosford Wyong Structure Plan and bring it forward and incorporate it into the Central Coast Regional Plan of 2016, I believe that the concept of Gosford becoming regional city is more likely. The reason why it is more likely is because as an economic growth corridor from Ourimbah to Woy Woy becomes more established and the economic growth corridor from Warnervale to Tuggerah becomes more established it is likely the two corridors will merge. As the two corridors merge Gosford will become the heart of the region enabling it to become a dynamic city for the future.

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