



David Mehan MP

STATE MEMBER FOR THE ENTRANCE

REF: 088/16/mp

24th of March, 2016

General Manager
Hunter & Central Coast
NSW Department of Planning and Environment
PO Box 1226
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Draft Central Coast Regional Plan

Find attached my submission on the draft plan.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'David Mehan'.

David Mehan
Member for The Entrance

**Submission and comment on
Draft Central Coast Regional Plan
By
David Mehan MP
State Member for The Entrance**

In brief:

The draft plan is little more than a series of projections of population growth and lacks any sort of commitment to social or economic targets for our region.

The following comments refer to the three key areas not adequately addressed by the draft plan: employment; housing and transport.

Employment

1. Analysis by the New South Wales Parliamentary Research Service in its e-brief 16/2015 reveals that Central Coast unemployment levels have increased over the last four years. The e-brief found that the lowest unemployment rate since the year 2000 was 5.1 per cent, which was recorded in January 2011. This should be our benchmark.
2. Unemployment in the December quarter 2015 was 7%. The number of people travelling out of the area to find work has increased.
3. The plan should be framed around an employment target. The Central Coast unemployment rate is typically 2% or more above the New South Wales rate and an appropriate target would be parity with the state unemployment rate.
4. The draft plan references the Central Coast Regional Economic Development & Employment Strategy. This process has clearly not working given the above results. The REDES process has become unwieldy with little publically available reporting or accountability. REDES should be reviewed and refocused.
5. The plan references the employment lands in the Wyong Shire but provides no mechanism for these to be delivered quickly and in an affordable way.

Housing

6. The draft plan has no mechanism to deliver affordable housing for the region.
7. The plan should have a target for affordable dwellings across the region.
8. The draft plan references the affordable housing strategies of Wyong Shire and Gosford City even though these are largely inoperative and, given the very sharp rise in housing price which have occurred over the last four years, clearly failed.

Transport

9. The plan contains no targets for public transport usage or for travel to workplaces/school by means other than a motor vehicle.
10. The plan fails to include any reserves for public transport corridors. In this regard I note the Wyong Shire Council has proposed a light rail line on the Central Coast Highway corridor. Whatever the merits or otherwise of light rail, a first start should be a dedicated public transport corridor along this route. Likewise, reserving of public transport corridors to allow for expansion of public transport should be part of the plan for main roads in the region.