



F2013/01423

29 March 2016

Department of Planning and Environment
PO Box 1148
GOSFORD NSW 2250

Dear Sir/Madam

Joint Letter on the Draft Central Coast Regional Plan

Wyong Shire Council and Gosford City Council support the preparation of the Central Coast Regional Plan (the Plan) and recognise the importance of providing a framework to set the direction for the region over the next 20 years to 2036. Both Councils express their support for the Wyong Shire and Gosford City Council submissions lodged in response to the Draft Plan.

To ensure that growth in the region is well managed and to provide the best to its residents a robust plan needs to be adopted with strong commitment to implementation. A single Central Coast Council would play a significant role in delivering the Central Coast Regional Plan. The State Government needs to recognise that strong representation on the Monitoring and Coordinating Committee is necessary to implement the Plan. A regional approach to fund improvements to infrastructure with a commitment to doing so within identified timeframes is also necessary. This would provide certainty to both Council and the public and allow Council to better plan for future growth. The CCRP needs to focus on what will make the Central Coast a preferred destination to live, work and recreate and ensure that there is sustainable infrastructure to manage growth in these areas. This will include access to quality employment, education opportunities, a diversity of housing choice, and provision of essential infrastructure.

The population growth predicted by the regional plan is at the lower end of the potential growth scenarios and more consideration should be given to planning for the impacts of medium to high growth. To support the rising population essential infrastructure needs to keep pace with projected growth, including investment and employment generation. The State Government need to plan for and commit to the development of major transport infrastructure, including the Central Coast Airport, rail and road infrastructure to create a connected Central Coast.

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Connecting Greater Sydney with Newcastle, the Central Coast plays a major role in forming the State's fastest growth corridor, with a projected population of 1.1million people by 2036. The M1 Motorway, the Sydney to Newcastle train line, the Pacific Highway and Central Coast Highway are all key pieces of transport infrastructure that connect the Central Coast to outer regions and in particular Newcastle, the Hunter Valley and Sydney. Transport links within the Central Coast need to be improved. We need to create a connected Central Coast, which could be achieved through the completion of key infrastructure including the link road and improvement of public transport networks such as the introduction of light rail, high speed train and express bus network. (See Attachment 1 that provides a concept for a long term transport network that promotes a connected central coast. This proposes future light rail or rapid bus link that connects the Coastal centres with the two economic corridors and Central Coast Regional Airport).

The Central Coast Regional Airport is one of the most significant projects in the region and will provide a key economic gateway. It will provide access to air services for trade, the generation of skilled and professional employment, support for the tourism industry and attraction of general aviation businesses from Sydney and other regions. The Central Coast is the ninth largest region in Australia yet remains the only major population centre without a regional airport and as such is strongly supported by both Councils and should be recognised and supported by the State Government as a significant project and piece of infrastructure in the Final Plan.

While the Plan encourages employment growth a strategy is needed to manage this growth. Employment targets should be set, that would allow for on-going monitoring and provide measures to assess performance. Already the Central Coast has a high unemployment rate and any strategies to reduce this are supported. The Plan needs to highlight approaches to improve employment opportunities and retain local people in local jobs. Support for the Central Coast University and improvements to education opportunities will assist in retaining more young people on the Central Coast and will be a major step to improving the low rate of tertiary education amongst our population. Access to higher education opportunities must be supported.

The vast expanse of industrial land provides a major source for potential employment growth. Industrial land, in particular that in the Wyong Employment Zone and Bushells Ridge area, needs to be supported and the development of this land stimulated through the reduction in State Infrastructure Contributions (including Special Infrastructure Contributions). The high cost of these charges on top of already high development costs are counter-productive and an impediment to development and investment in business and industrial development in the area. State Government assistance is required in order to facilitate development in this area and recognise the employment potential of this land. This is also required to unlock urban release lands in the norther part of the region.

The potential for increased population growth along the rail corridor should be considered to support rail infrastructure, provide a range of housing types, including the potential for higher density development to assist in creating vibrant centres. Gosford, Woy Woy, Ourimbah, Wyong, Tuggerah, and Warnervale as well as a number of smaller centres along the rail line have the potential for growth and increased densities to support increasing demand.

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The Draft Plan does not outline a Centres Hierarchy in its text; however, the mapping does indicate a hierarchy which if left in the document needs to be further clarified and revised. Consideration of the role and function of centres is best left to the local Council given the comprehensive planning undertaken at this level. If the Plan does include any form of hierarchy then it should reflect the Councils proposed planning for these centres and the potential for growth into higher order centres given the extensive timeframe that the plan covers. Gosford Regional Centre should include West Gosford, East Gosford and North Gosford, Wyong/Tuggerah should be considered for its potential to grow into a city servicing the norther portion of the Central Coast, the centres of Woy Woy and The Entrance to elevate to Major centres, and Ourimbah, Lake Munmorah, Kincumber, Umina and Terrigal to be considered as Town Centres. The Entrance has the potential to grow as a major coastal centre and Council is currently planning for the growth of Ourimbah and Lake Munmorah. There needs to be strong commitment to the establishment of the Warnervale Town Centre and provision of infrastructure to facilitate investment and growth.

The Coastal Centres, as shown in Attachment 2, provides an opportunity to develop a Coastal corridor that connects the coastal lifestyle, with centre revitalisation, transport improvements, tourism and economic growth. The regions outstanding tourism attributes including the coastline, lakes system, National Parks, bushland, and existing and future tourist attractions need to be built upon to maximise the opportunities that growth in the tourism industry can bring. The CCRP needs to identify strategies to grow this economy.

Gosford and Wyong Council's support any actions that focus on revitalising and promoting Aboriginal culture and giving communities the tools to take responsibility for their own future including the mapping and prioritisation of land for economic opportunities and growth. In our view the Central Coast Regional Plan should provide clear guidance and certainty as to how Aboriginal Land holdings can be developed to ensure that the needs of the Aboriginal community, the Central Coast Region and the vision of the CCRP can all be achieved. Furthermore, the CCRP needs additional discussion and clear Actions on the significance of Aboriginal Culture to the region and how recognition and protection of Aboriginal culture can be incorporated into conservation strategies. By understanding the significance of the Aboriginal Culture within the Central Coast we can plan for the appropriate recognition and potential cultural tourism, housing and economic opportunities of Aboriginal Land holdings.

Gosford and Wyong Councils support growth and development of the region and would like to work with the State Government to ensure that the Central Coast continues to grow as an attractive destination to live, learn, work and recreate. The continued growth and development of the Central Coast region is dependent upon a coordinated approach, between Local and State Government, to the development of transport, employment and social infrastructure.



Should you require any further information or wish to discuss the matters raised in the letter please contact Wyong Shire Council's Director of Property and Economic Development, Mike Dowling on 4350 5202 or Gosford City Council's Manager Sustainable Corporate and City Planning Matthew Prendergast on 4325 8108.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob Noble".

Rob Noble
Acting Chief Executive Officer
WYONG SHIRE COUCNIL

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Anderson".

Paul Anderson
Chief Executive Officer
GOSFORD CITY COUNCIL

Attachment 1: A Connected Central Coast



Attachment 2: Coastal Corridor

