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**ITEM: 6.2**  
**SUBJECT: COUNCIL SUBMISSION - DRAFT NORTH COAST REGIONAL PLAN**  
**FILE/INDEX: MID NORTH COAST REGIONAL STRATEGY**  
**PRESENTED BY: DANIEL BENNETT, ACTING MANAGER LAND USE SERVICES**

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057/16

**RESOLVED (Cr Scott/Cr Klipin)**

1. That Council resolves to make a submission in response to the public exhibition of the draft North Coast Regional Plan and that the submission notes the following comments and concerns
2. That Council requests that the composition of the Coordination & Monitoring Committee established to implement the Plan includes at least one representative from each Joint Organisation of Councils once established.
3. That Council advises the DP&E that it supports the inclusion of variation criteria for State & Regionally Significant Farmland.
4. That reference to the potential of run of river hydroelectricity projects is made in the discussion of potential sources of alternative or renewable energy under Direction 1.5 of the Plan.
5. That maps in the plan are amended to ensure that different colours for shading are consistently used to delineate different land features in the Plan, noting in particular the use of a common shade colouring for Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land in Figures 6 & 7, and land identified as a World Heritage Area in Figure 1.
6. That Council requests that Urunga be included as a "Town / Village" on all mapping within the draft Plan.
7. That Council advise the DP&E that it concurs with *Figure 33: Urban Growth Area Map* for Bellingen LGA as an accurate depiction of Councils current strategic land use planning and that it is supportive of its inclusion as an Appendix in order to allow for periodic amendment where necessary.
8. That Council advise the DP&E that it looks forward to working with the NSW Government to identify proposed urban land for inclusion in the urban growth areas to deliver a supply of housing, and that it has commenced investigations into a range of potential opportunities in the Repton and Urunga areas, in conjunction with recent infrastructure planning.
9. That Appendix A- Infrastructure Investigation Locations for Priority Land Release Areas is amended to include the South Urunga Area in Bellingen Shire with a Potential lot yield of 700 lots.
10. That Council advise the DP&E that the principle issue that Bellingen Shire has experienced with the development of land for housing supply and employment growth is the prohibitive upfront cost of infrastructure connections. The focus of the Plan on assisting existing high growth areas with infrastructure assistance will work against smaller areas such as Bellingen Shire in delivering a supply of land for residents within the Local Government Area. It will also frustrate the support role that the Plan suggests Bellingen Shire will provide to the Regional City of Coffs Harbour.
11. That Council notes the inclusion of all land identified in its Employment Lands Strategy as "Proposed Employment Land" in the Plan, and looks forward to working with the DP&E to see the recommending zonings implemented as landowners work towards the development of this land.
12. That Council concurs with the observation made in Direction 5.1 of the Plan that the completion of additional sections of highway will improve opportunities to supply



products to other markets, noting in particular the role that Bellingen Shire can provide in the supply of housing and employment land, and labour, to the Regional City of Coffs Harbour.

13. That Council notes the relative proximity of existing and possible future residential zones in Urunga and Repton to the CBD area of Coffs Harbour, in comparison to areas in Nambucca Shire and other satellite suburbs of Coffs Harbour such as Safety Beach to the north, and that this is considered in future deliberations regarding support for infrastructure projects.
14. That Council considers the impending relocation of the Pacific Highway to the west of Urunga is likely to stimulate further greenfield and infill development in response to the improved amenity of the residential environmental and the reduced complexity and cost in constructing vehicular accesses.
15. That Council notes it's concern that the Plan embeds a philosophy of preferential support to existing high growth areas, rather than acting as an enabler for areas with low growth rates, or ambitions for growth. This may not, in the long term, lead to sustainable local communities if state government support for infrastructure upgrades is progressively steered away from lower growth areas.

UNANIMOUS

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**ITEM: 6.3**  
**SUBJECT: COFFS COAST TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN 2020**  
**FILE/INDEX: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING/TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**PRESENTED BY: MICHAEL GRIEVE, MANAGER, ECONOMIC & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

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058/16

**RESOLVED (Cr Klipin/Cr Scott)**

That Council endorse the Coffs Coast Tourism Strategic Plan 2020.

UNANIMOUS



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**Item:** 6.2

**Subject:** COUNCIL SUBMISSION - DRAFT NORTH COAST REGIONAL PLAN

**File/Index:** Mid North Coast Regional Strategy

**Presented by:** Daniel Bennett, Acting Manager Land Use Services

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**ALIGNMENT WITH DELIVERY PROGRAM**

(RE) RESILIENT ECONOMY

(RE.1) We have meaningful work and vibrant businesses within our community.

(RE.1.1) Our community has a diversity of businesses and new industries.

(RE.1.1.1) Execute the priorities and meet the targets contained within the Strategic Landuse Planning Program.



## RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council resolves to make a submission in response to the public exhibition of the draft North Coast Regional Plan and that the submission notes the following comments and concerns
2. That Council requests that the composition of the Coordination & Monitoring Committee established to implement the Plan includes at least one representative from each Joint Organisation of Councils once established.
3. That Council advises the DP&E that it supports the inclusion of variation criteria for State & Regionally Significant Farmland.
4. That reference to the potential of run of river hydroelectricity projects is made in the discussion of potential sources of alternative or renewable energy under Direction 1.5 of the Plan.
5. That maps in the plan are amended to ensure that different colours for shading are consistently used to delineate different land features in the Plan, noting in particular the use of a common shade colouring for Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land in Figures 6 & 7, and land identified as a World Heritage Area in Figure 1.
6. That Council requests that Urunga be included as a "Town / Village" on all mapping within the draft Plan.
7. That Council advise the DP&E that it concurs with *Figure 33: Urban Growth Area Map* for Bellingen LGA as an accurate depiction of Councils current strategic land use planning and that it is supportive of its inclusion as an Appendix in order to allow for periodic amendment where necessary.
8. That Council advise the DP&E that it looks forward to working with the NSW Government to identify proposed urban land for inclusion in the urban growth areas to deliver a supply of housing, and that it has commenced investigations into a range of potential opportunities in the Repton and Urunga areas, in conjunction with recent infrastructure planning.
9. That Appendix A- Infrastructure Investigation Locations for Priority Land Release Areas is amended to include the South Urunga Area in Bellingen Shire with a Potential lot yield of 700 lots.
10. That Council advise the DP&E that the principle issue that Bellingen Shire has experienced with the development of land for housing supply and employment growth is the prohibitive upfront cost of infrastructure connections. The focus of the Plan on assisting existing high growth areas with infrastructure assistance will work against smaller areas such as Bellingen Shire in delivering a supply of land for residents within the Local Government Area. It will also frustrate the support role that the Plan suggests Bellingen Shire will provide to the Regional City of Coffs Harbour.
11. That Council notes the inclusion of all land identified in its Employment Lands Strategy as "Proposed Employment Land" in the Plan, and looks forward to working with the DP&E to see the recommending zonings implemented as landowners work towards the development of this land.
12. That Council concurs with the observation made in Direction 5.1 of the Plan that the completion of additional sections of highway will improve opportunities to supply products to other markets, noting in particular the role that Bellingen Shire can provide in the supply of housing and employment land, and labour, to the Regional City of Coffs Harbour.
13. That Council notes the relative proximity of existing and possible future residential zones in Urunga and Repton to the CBD area of Coffs Harbour, in comparison to areas in Nambucca Shire and other satellite suburbs of Coffs Harbour such as Safety Beach to the north, and that this is considered in future deliberations regarding support for infrastructure projects.



14. That Council considers the impending relocation of the Pacific Highway to the west of Urunga is likely to stimulate further greenfield and infill development in response to the improved amenity of the residential environmental and the reduced complexity and cost in constructing vehicular accesses.
15. That Council notes it's concern that the Plan embeds a philosophy of preferential support to existing high growth areas, rather than acting as an enabler for areas with low growth rates, or ambitions for growth. This may not, in the long term, lead to sustainable local communities if state government support for infrastructure upgrades is progressively steered away from lower growth areas.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The draft North Coast Regional Plan (the Plan) is on public exhibition until 2 June 2016. The Plan has been prepared by the NSW Department of Planning & Environment (DP&E) on behalf of the NSW Government. The Plan has been reviewed with principle regard to the impact that it is likely to have upon Bellingen Shire. The Plan incorporates the land release recommendations of Councils Employment Lands Strategy and proposes to work with Council to identify additional urban land to meet the housing needs of the Shire. It is recommended that Council makes a submission to the DP&E in response to the public exhibition of the Plan and that this submission is comprised of the recommendations that have been made with respect to the 5 main goals included in the Plan.

## REPORT DETAIL

### Introduction

The Plan has been developed to take the place of the existing Mid North Coast Regional Strategy. It is primarily a land use planning document rather than a whole of government plan for the North Coast. It will most frequently be used to guide future strategic land use planning undertaken by Council and the State Government, however the Plan also considers, in broad terms, issues of future infrastructure supply and service delivery that may be related to the growth forecasts contained in the Plan.

The stated vision of the Plan is summarised as follows.

*"The vision for the North Coast is for a sustainable future, centred on a prosperous community, healthy environment and attractive lifestyle choices."*

To achieve the vision, five goals have been set and this report will address the matters of principle relevance to Bellingen Shire that are related to each of these goals. Commentary will also be provided on the proposed mechanisms for delivery of the Plan. The focus of this report is not to undertake an analysis of the overall scope and functioning of the plan across the whole of the region, noting that the North Coast Region now extends from Greater Taree Council in the south, to Tweed Heads Council in the north. This report will focus on the main ways in which Bellingen Shire is likely to be impacted by the Plan, or the degree to which the Plan provides for realisation of local planning strategies that have been undertaken, or will be undertaken by Council. Many of the actions contained within the Plan reflect existing policies with respect to development of land and do not require any further commentary within this report.

Where it is considered necessary for Council to make comment on a particular aspect of the plan, a brief commentary will be provided and a recommendation will be proposed for inclusion in the submission made by Council.



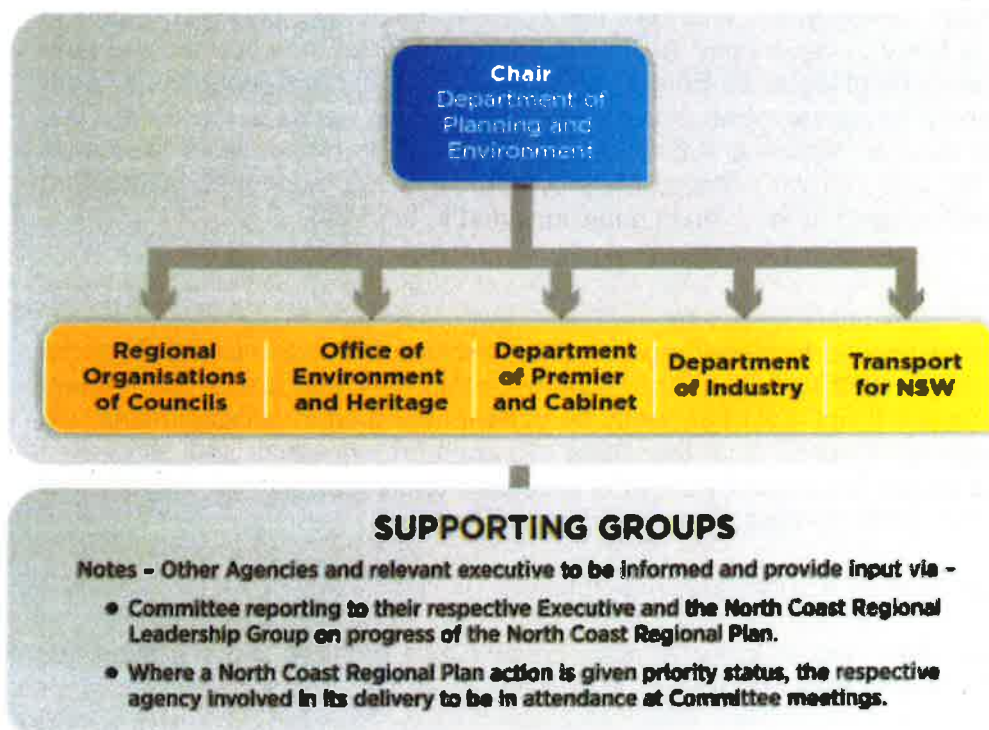


### Delivering the Plan

The main vehicle for delivery of the Plan is the undertaking of strategic land use planning work which will trigger the need to consider the policy directions contained within the Plan. For example, when Council reviews its Growth Management Strategy, the decisions made with respect to land release will need to reflect the strategic actions and direction that are contained within the Plan.

In addition to this, the DP&E proposes that a formal Coordination and Monitoring Committee is assembled to provide a governance function for implementation of the Plan and potentially advocate for infrastructure support from government to assist with delivering the plans objectives. The proposed structure for the committee is detailed below.

FIGURE 4: COORDINATION AND MONITORING COMMITTEE



The Plan proposes two Local Government Representatives determined by the Joint Regional Organisations of Councils, or Joint Organisations, once established. It is considered that this is an inadequate level of representation from local government which will be the tier of government most directly affected by the operation of the Plan. It is recommended that, as a minimum, there should be one representative from each Joint Organisation as a minimum on the Committee.

### Recommendation:

*That Council request that the composition of the Coordination & Monitoring Committee established to implement the Plan includes at least one representative from each Joint Organisation of Councils once established.*

**Goal 1 – A natural environment and aboriginal heritage that is protected and landscapes that are productive**

The Directions and Actions contained in this section of the Plan propose no significant departure from the existing policy framework that exists in the North Coast Region, or within Bellingen Local Environmental Plan 2010 (BLEP 2010).

The Plan introduces criteria to allow for minor variations to land mapped as state or Regionally Significant Farmland and this is considered to be a desirable outcome. In the preparation of Councils Employment Lands Strategy, it became evident that the rigid application of this boundary was unnecessarily restrictive in certain circumstances. It denied local communities a legitimate opportunity to trade off a resource that exists in abundance throughout the LGA for a resource that is unsustainably scarce (ie: employment lands) in the vicinity of Bellingen.

**Recommendation:**

*That Council advises the DP&E that it supports the inclusion of variation criteria for State & Regionally Significant Farmland Criteria.*

The Plan has minor impact in Bellingen Shire in terms of the identification of potential mineral resources, or policy statements regarding their future use and / or exploitation. Bellingen Shire does not possess the geology that is necessary for coal seam gas extraction and a "potential mineral resource area" identified at Wild Cattle Creek has been previously and consistently notified to Council as part of the NSW Mineral Audit (periodically undertaken by the Department of Mineral Resources).

It is however noted that Direction 1.5 of the Plan (Deliver economic growth through sustainable use of , and access to, mineral and energy resources) neglects to mention the potential for "run of river" hydroelectricity projects, such as those currently being explored on the Dorrigo Plateau. It is recommended that explicit reference is made in the Plan to the potential value of this resource.

**Recommendation:**

*That reference to the potential of run of river hydroelectricity projects is made in the discussion of potential sources of alternative or renewable energy under Direction 1.5 of the Plan.*

The Plan maps areas of World Heritage Significance within Bellingen Shire and also maps areas of Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land. There is a mapping discrepancy in the Plan that utilises the same the colour of shading for Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land in Figures 6 & 7, and land identified as a World Heritage Area in Figure 1. It is recommended that maps in the plan are amended to ensure that different colours for shading are consistently used to delineate different land features in the Plan

**Recommendation:**

*That maps in the plan are amended to ensure that different colours for shading are consistently used to delineate different land features in the Plan, noting in particular the use of a common shade colouring for Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land in Figures 6 & 7, and land identified as a World Heritage Area in Figure 1.*



## Goal 2 – Focus growth opportunities to create a great place to live and work

The Plan nominates a hierarchy of settlements within the region and adopts a strategic position that existing high growth areas will continue to be the principal focus of government investment and attention given their role as drivers of economic growth. The hierarchy, as it relates to Bellingen Shire and surrounding localities, is as follows.

- Bellingen & Dorrigo are mapped as "Town / Village". (So too are Nambucca, Macksville & Woolgoolga in neighbouring LGA's)
- Lismore, Grafton & Taree mapped as "Regional Centres"
- Tweed Heads, Coffs Harbour & Port Macquarie mapped as "Regional Cities"

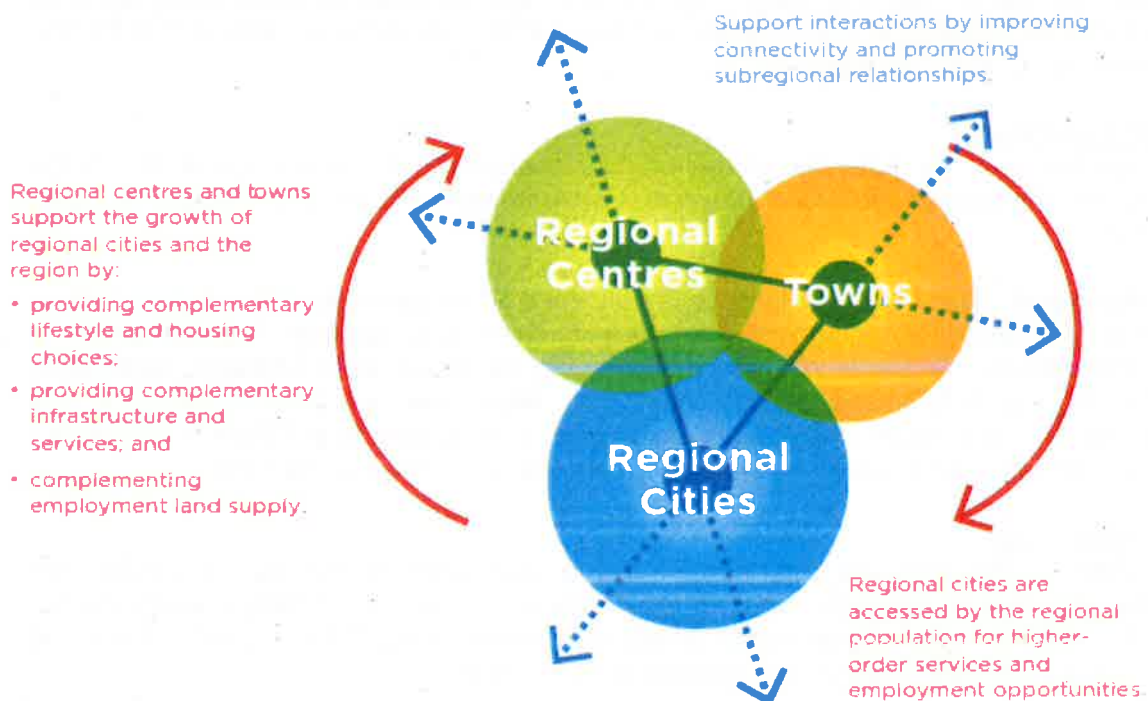
It is noted that Urunga is not mapped as a "Town / Village", however there is no obvious functional reason as to why this should be the case. Although there does not appear to be any obvious advantage or disadvantage to being recognised as a "Town / Village", It is recommended that Urunga be included as a "Town / Village" on all mapping within the draft Plan.

### Recommendation:

*That Council requests that Urunga be included as a "Town / Village" on all mapping within the draft Plan.*

The functional role of Bellingen Shire in the Plan appears to be as a supporting player to the continued growth and functioning of the regional city of Coffs Harbour. This functional relationship is depicted in the following schematic extracted from the Plan.

FIGURE 11: CENTRE RELATIONSHIPS - REGIONAL CITIES, REGIONAL CENTRES AND TOWNS







The principle tool used by DP&E to focus growth opportunities is the use of the "Urban Growth Area" map. The map, as it relates to Bellinghen Shire, is depicted below.



The map, as proposed within the draft Plan, represents the current extent of land zoned R1 – General Residential in the towns and villages of the Shire and includes all of the land identified by Council as future employment lands in its Employment Lands Strategy. The map is included as an Appendix to the Plan (Figure 33: Urban Growth Area Map for Bellinghen LGA), which is considered desirable in terms of allowing for ease of amendment in the event that Council considered additional growth areas in its strategic land use planning program. It is recommended that Council advise the DP&E that it is supportive of the map as it currently stands and is supportive of its inclusion as an Appendix in order to allow for periodic amendment where necessary.

**Recommendation:**

*That Council advise the DP&E that it concurs with Figure 33: Urban Growth Area Map for Bellinghen LGA as an accurate depiction of Councils current strategic land use planning and that it is supportive of its inclusion as an Appendix in order to allow for periodic amendment where necessary*



### Goal 3 – Housing choice, with homes that meet the needs of changing communities.

The Plan identifies that Bellingen Shire will need an additional 250-300 additional dwellings by 2031, however also identifies that Bellingen Council may not have sufficient capacity in its Urban Growth areas to achieve a 20yr supply of housing.

It is noted that the Urban Growth Area Map included in the discussion of Goal 2 depicts no areas within Bellingen Shire that are mapped as "Proposed Urban Land". Accordingly, Action 3.1.1 of the Plan proposes that;

*The NSW Government will:*

- *Work with Byron & Bellingen Councils to identify proposed urban land for inclusion in the urban growth areas to deliver a supply of housing.*

It is pleasing to see such a commitment from the NSW Government, particularly in light of recent investigations that have been undertaken by Council as part of an investigation into the sewerage of key precincts within the coastal area, and an application for federal grant funding to assist with its completion. This has investigated the potential for residential redevelopment in the Repton area, as well as potential extensions to the growth boundaries in the Sth Urunga area. This has not yet progressed to any formal proposal for presentation to Council, however it is appropriate to consider it as part of a broader investigation into future infrastructure capacities and as part of Councils review of its Growth Management Strategy, which is scheduled for completion during the 2016-17 financial year. It is therefore recommended that Council advise the DP&E of its willingness to work with them on identifying proposed urban land for inclusion in the urban growth areas.

#### Recommendation:

*That Council advise the DP&E that it looks forward to working with the NSW Government to identify proposed urban land for inclusion in the urban growth areas to deliver a supply of housing, and that it has commenced investigations into a range of potential opportunities in the Repton and Urunga areas, in conjunction with recent infrastructure planning.*

The lack of land identified as "proposed urban land" in Bellingen Shire is not indicative of a lack of forward planning for the Shire, but reflects the significant areas of land that were moved out of this category and rezoned by Council as part of the implementation of BLEP 2010. For example, Council recently compiled statistics for the DP&E as part of the 2014-15 Housing & Land Monitor Project, which confirmed the following areas of vacant land within the existing Urban Growth Areas, and the number of lots released, for the following localities in the 2014-15 financial year.

<b>R1 General Residential Locality</b>	<b>Remaining vacant zoned land (ha) 2014-15</b>	<b>Lots released 2014-15</b>
Bellingen	69.6	8
Dorrigo	86.9	1
Urunga	87.8	3
Other R1 (eg: Raleigh etc...)	30.1	2

This table clearly illustrates that Council has zoned significant areas of land for residential development within the existing Urban Growth area boundaries, however these have failed to progress towards any significant redevelopment in the six years since the



adoption of BLEP 2010. Advice from relevant landowners is that upfront infrastructure extensions and connections have made the development of land economically unviable. Council has unsuccessfully attempted to obtain infrastructure funding to assist with unlocking these land parcels as part of the Urban Activation Precincts funding program that was run by the NSW Government in July 2012.

Appendix One of the Plan identifies those areas of land within the North Coast Region that are considered to be infrastructure investigation locations for priority land release areas. This is reprinted below.

The Department of Planning and Environment will work with councils to identify where investment in local infrastructure may create housing supply in the preliminary list of priority land release areas shown below.

Site	Local Government Area	Potential No. of lots
Cumbulum Precinct B	Ballina	2,480
Thrumster	Port Macquarie-Hastings	4,250
Lake Cathie-Bonny Hills	Port Macquarie-Hastings	2,000
Kew	Port Macquarie-Hastings	900
Cobaki	Tweed	5,000
Bilambil	Tweed	1,696
Area E-Terranora	Tweed	1,590
Kings Forest	Tweed	4,500
Brimbin	Greater Taree	8,000
Old Bar	Greater Taree	2,000
Valla Urban Growth Area	Nambucca Valley	800
Casino	Richmond Valley	1,300
Junction Hill	Clarence Valley	1,000
West Yamba	Clarence Valley	1,000

The omission of any land from Bellingen Shire is disappointing, and reflects the bias of the Plan towards rewarding existing high growth areas with further support. The DP&E advise that there was a 1000 lot threshold for inclusion in the Appendix, however the Valla Urban Growth Area in Nambucca Shire has made the list with only 800 lots.

The lack of any land identified in Coffs Harbour Shire is notable, as is the fact that Bellingen Shire is better positioned, in terms of proximity, to supply housing and employment land to support the ongoing growth of the regional city.

A recent Development Application approved for a 240 lot residential subdivision at Sth Urunga by the Northern Joint Regional Planning Panel in May 2016 is part of a potential





700+ lots within this locality and it is considered that the closer functional relationship that Urunga will have with the regional city of Coffs Harbour, as this precinct develops, warrants its recognition as a priority land release areas for infrastructure investigation.

Recommendation:

*That Appendix A- Infrastructure Investigation Locations for Priority Land Release Areas is amended to include the South Urunga Area in Bellingen Shire with a Potential lot yield of 700 lots.*

*That Council advise the DP&E that the principle issue that Bellingen Shire has experienced with the development of land for housing supply and employment growth is the prohibitive upfront cost of infrastructure connections. The focus of the Plan on assisting existing high growth areas with infrastructure assistance will work against smaller areas such as Bellingen Shire in delivering a supply of land for residents within the Local Government Area. It will also frustrate the support role that the Plan suggests Bellingen Shire will provide to the Regional City of Coffs Harbour.*

**Goal 4 – A prosperous economy with services & infrastructure**

The Plan identifies land recommended by Council in its Employment Lands Strategy as "Proposed Employment Land". This is an outcome that Council advocated for throughout the development of the draft Plan and it removes a major potential obstacle to the eventual development of the identified land for employment generating purposes.

This section makes explicit reference to the identification of opportunities to expand visitation to regionally significant nature based tourism areas such as Dorrigo National Park. It also suggests that towns such as Bellingen are appropriate for smaller scale sustainable, nature based and coastal tourism accommodation that should be high quality and showcase the natural environment. At this stage, there is no need to amend Councils existing LEP to give effect to these aspirations which are generally permitted with consent in relevant zones.

Many of the other Directions & Actions (eg: education, health) within this section are essentially State Government investment decisions that Bellingen Shire Council has limited ability to influence via the land use planning system.

Recommendation:

*That Council notes the inclusion of all land identified in its Employment Lands Strategy as "Proposed Employment Land" in the Plan, and looks forward to working with the DP&E to see the recommending zonings implemented as landowners work towards the development of this land."*

**Goal 5 – Improved transport connectivity and freight networks**

The Directions & Actions within Goal 5 have limited relevance to Bellingen Shire from a land use planning perspective. Council has not advocated for a Highway Service Centre site within the LGA and has not identified land with explicit potential to operate as a freight transport facility.

It is however worth emphasising the stimulatory impact that the highways relocation is anticipated to have on the Urunga property market as the amenity of the locality improves, and formerly onerous access requirements to the existing highway alignment revert to local standards.





It is also considered that the improved connectivity that has been identified between the LGA and the regional city of Coffs Harbour has not been reflected in the selection of priority infrastructure investment locations, as previously discussed.

It is recommended that Council makes a submission noting the anticipated benefits that will accrue to Bellingen Shire from the highway relocation and the degree to which this is predicted to further stimulate local growth.

Recommendation:

*That Council concurs with the observation made in Direction 5.1 of the Plan that the completion of additional sections of highway will improve opportunities to supply products to other markets, noting in particular the role that Bellingen Shire can provide in the supply of housing and employment land, and labour, to the Regional City of Coffs Harbour.*

*That Council notes the relative proximity of existing and possible future residential zones in Urunga and Repton to the CBD area of Coffs Harbour, in comparison to areas in Nambucca Shire and other satellite suburbs of Coffs Harbour such as Safety Beach to the north, and that this be considered in future deliberations regarding support for infrastructure projects.*

*That Council considers that the impending relocation of the Pacific Highway to the west of Urunga is likely to stimulate further greenfield and infill development in response to the improved amenity of the residential environmental and the reduced complexity and cost in constructing vehicular accesses.*

#### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Although the DP&E have advised that the Plan is not an infrastructure strategy, it is most likely that the planning outcomes that envisaged for different localities in the Plan will be considered by the NSW Government when making decisions as to where to invest, or assist with provision of infrastructure.

The most direct opportunity in the Plan for Council to become eligible for assistance with infrastructure supply appears to be via inclusion in Appendix A - Infrastructure Investigation Locations for Priority Land Release Areas. An appropriate recommendation has been made regarding this matter.

A range of indirect opportunities also exist for Council derive an improved budget outcome via the Regional Growth Plan process. For example, the intention of the DP&E to work with Council to identify land for inclusion in the urban growth areas may result in an improved uptake of zoned land, and an increased ability for Council to derive rating income following its subsequent development.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT**

It is not considered that the Plan represents a significant departure from the existing policy framework (eg: the Mid North Coast Regional Strategy, Bellingen Local Environmental Plan 2010) in terms of the potential development of land with environmental constraints.

It is considered that the Plan embeds a philosophy of preferential support to existing high growth areas, rather than acting as an enabler for areas with low growth rates, or ambitions for growth. There is a concern that this may not in the long term lead to sustainable local communities if state government support for infrastructure upgrades is



progressively steered away from lower growth areas. It is recommended that Council advise the DP&E of this concern.

Recommendation:

*That Council notes it's concern that the Plan embeds a philosophy of preferential support to existing high growth areas, rather than acting as an enabler for areas with low growth rates, or ambitions for growth. This may not, in the long term, lead to sustainable local communities if state government support for infrastructure upgrades is progressively steered away from lower growth areas.*

**ENGAGEMENT**

The Bellingren Shire Council Community Engagement Strategy was adopted by Council at its Meeting 22 February 2012. This strategy is designed to outline the approach Bellingren Shire takes towards engaging with our community.

As the Plan is a State Government Document, Council was not required to develop an engagement strategy. It is noted though that the State government have undertaken a comprehensive engagement process for the duration of the exhibition period, and that Council staff were involved in providing ongoing feedback to the DP&E during the development of the draft Plan.

Representatives from the DP&E attended a Councillor workshop held at Bellingren on 4 May 2016 where a short presentation was followed by an opportunity to ask questions of key staff.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil