

31 May 2016

P O Box 2068
Port Macquarie NSW 2444

Director Regions
North Coast Region
Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 9022
GRAFTON NSW 2460

Dear Sir

RE: Submission to the Draft North Coast Regional Plan

Thank You for the opportunity to make this submission to the Draft North Coast Regional Environmental Plan. The submission focus is on *Goal 4 - a prosperous economy with services and infrastructure*.

Page 13 - 15: The proposed integration of key government agencies through a co-ordination and monitoring committee is supported and needs to be further embedded within the Charter of the other agencies identified as part of their service and budgeting obligations. As a planner who has worked in the Mid North Coast for many years, the absence of infrastructure commitment and co-ordination with Regional and State Plans has meant those plans were simply documents on a shelf referred to in DA reports with no real authority or ability to effect change. Real change in this regard would be the most significant thing to happen in Regional Planning in a very long time.

Page 68- 69: *Direction 4.4 Provide well-located and serviced supplies of employment land to expand industry investment opportunities.*

*Action 4.4.1 – Provide an adequate supply of employment land aligned with demand. And
Action 4.4.2 – Encourage well located employment lands with suitable buffers to prevent land use conflict.*

Action 5.1.3 – Identify Freight Transport Facilities along the Pacific Highway

The Draft REP Direction and actions in relation to employment land is supported but needs to acknowledge that there are infrastructure and service needs associated with establishing new well located employment lands, particular in areas where suitable buffers are available. It is noticed that Appendix A identifies infrastructure investigation location for priority land release areas. Equally, if Goal 4 a prosperous economy with services and infrastructure is to be properly addressed then infrastructure investigations for key employment lands need to be included in the REP. In particular, the potential social and economic benefit of



supporting employment lands through all the regional centres, not just the three major regional growth areas of Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour and Tweed.

Other main Towns within the Region which do not have the benefit of a strong housing and growth economy based on being popular coastal retirement and seachange areas need to be given opportunities to achieve local growth and employment increases through other economic drivers, in particular industrial employment lands with proximity to the Pacific Highway for access to markets outside the area.

A key example of this is the South Kempsey Industrial Area. It is comprised of substantial areas of land, well buffered and with good proximity to the recently opened Kempsey Bypass. The south eastern extent of South Kempsey employment area has been rezoned but has been significantly hampered by lack of essential infrastructure, only recently securing reticulated water supply and yet to resolve sewage treatment systems. The north western extent of South Kempsey employment area commenced but now continues to stall, on the costs of progressing through rezoning process and bringing the necessary infrastructure on line.

Co-ordinated infrastructure and service provision or funding towards such provision for the South Kempsey employment lands would provide long term socio economic benefits to Kempsey and the Macleay Valley sub region. It would generate very measurable increases in employment rates in a town with low levels of employment with a solid suite of local operators and potential employers keen to establish in the area.

It would seem to be sound long term planning to encourage economic prosperity across a range of locations and economic drivers, rather than rely primarily upon the building booms and import population growth in attractive coastal regional centres for regional employment.

An appendix, similar to Appendix A of the draft REP is needed identifying other growth and employment generating infrastructure needs consistent with Goal 4. Such non housing economic generators would appear to include employment industrial areas, high intensity and/or high value agricultural industries, and future marine precincts such as identified for the Clarence Valley.

Other comments

Action 1.2.3 Review of the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast farmland mapping projects

Action 1.2.4 – Adopt farmland interim variation criteria

These actions are supported and the criteria expressed in the draft REP appear relevant and properly designed to protect genuine regional farmland areas and permit consideration of other areas not so appropriately mapped.



Finally, the style and content of the draft REP is a significantly more succinct and purposeful than its predecessors and is supported. It is considered likely to be more effective at providing direction and guidance not only to Local Government but to NSW State service and infrastructure agencies.

Should you require any further information about points made in this submission or simply wish to discuss it further, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0439 836 711.

Yours faithfully



Geraldine Haigh

Director & Senior Planner

PIA NSW Division Committee (current), PIA North Coast Chapter Member and CPP

GEM Planning Projects
0439 836 711