

## **Submission to Draft North Coast Plan**

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To Whom it May Concern,

The following are my key concerns regarding the Draft North Coast Plan.

I am a Macadamia Farmer, and a small business owner who runs a printing and framing business in a shed in the Industrial estate at Raleigh. I am very concerned over the issue of a mining exploration licence at Valla and believe this would have a negative impact on investment outside of the mining industry. The following are my key concerns in regards to your draft plan

### Key Concerns

#### Addressing Goal 1.

##### Protecting the environment and Aboriginal and historic heritage

The Urban\_Growth Area and the Employment Lands designated for Valla do not adequately protect and manage Aboriginal heritage.

Mapping from the Office of Environment and Heritage highlights and ring-barks a few significant sites at Valla in this area but these maps fail to address broader cultural issues on such significant land use. Issues such as the ability to forage for traditional bush foods are significant cultural factors. Wider consideration of Aboriginal cultural needs ought to be upgraded on OHE maps and taken into future planning considerations. This is land that this community earmarked as significant when it was presented as the first land rights claim in NSW. This land at Valla was submitted and rejected. It has been subject to the law that having lost it cannot be re-contested. Seeing as it was the first claim, this may well be an issue about process rather than substance.

The Local Aboriginal Community has recently lost significant cultural assets because of the alignment of the new Pacific Highway when three sacred trees were removed. Now they feel this is death by 1000 cuts as further loss of significant cultural assets at Cow Creek encroaches even further on a community substantially impacted by colonisation.

This is not good for social cohesion, nor helpful for future generations. As a community we need to move in the next 20 years towards a treaty with Aboriginal people. In NSW Aboriginal communities have suffered the most significant losses due to early colonisation and any land of significant value to them should be comprehensively removed from any planning decisions with the view of reconciliation and treaty in mind. It is time to be truthful about the past.

In 20 years time, due to significant rates of child birth, and the fact that Aboriginal children are more likely to stay in this district, future population studies for Nambucca have Aboriginal people being 1/3 of the population. This represents significant opportunities for them and their continued cultural needs should be taken into account by current planning practises.

The proposed urban growth area and employment lands for Valla should follow Goal 2, Direction 2.3 of the Draft plan. It should go on the least sensitive and constrained areas to protect natural assets.

#### Protecting productive landscapes Goal 1 Direction 1.2

According to the 2011 Census data, As a macadamia farmer from Valla I am in a group that represents the most workplace occupation at Valla. That is 7.8% . The macadamia crop on the Mid North Coast in 2015, according to Coffs Advocate April 18/ 2016, brought in \$12.6 million of economic value to the region, with \$8.4 million taken at the factory gate

Macadamias from this district have a high oil content. Macadamia growers are paid, not for their nuts but for the amount of oil content in them. As such Macadamias from Valla command a premium price. I have, in the past, won significant awards for the best quality and highest price for nuts in Australia. As far as being apart of the world wide tree crop, Macadamias represent only a tiny portion of tree nut crop production. There is scope for much future profitable expansion. People are going nuts for Macadamias

Saying no to mining or exploration licenses is a potent issue in NSW for all rural residents

The Potential Mining Exploration License and any potential new mines at Valla bring with them an investment climate of uncertainty. Uncertainty hinders future investment strategies.

#### Goal 5. Direction 5.1 the Pacific Highway will bring people to Valla.

- Any mining or quarry expansion comes at the cost of opportunities for investment in other complementary rural industries such as the thriving Accommodation and Services industry.
- Last year the rate of people, at Valla, who offered Air BnB accommodation services doubled to 20.
- Opportunity costs from mining stop residents from participating in the massive infrastructure investments such as the highway and NBN . This denies them an equity of access to benefits of these investments freely available to others. Nobody wants to holiday or drink coffee or shop at a farm shop next to a mine.
- Many people at Valla who are managers and professionals have devised diverse income streams for themselves. They have investigated and are actively participating in different ways to earn a living in this low income area.
- The economic reality of mining differs from political debate about it. Political debate is stuck in an 18th Century world vision of “the export of things” driven by the powerful lobbying ability of the Minerals Council. There are far more jobs available in health, education and tourism. Australia wide, mining only employs as many people as McDonalds. There is no economic reason why politicians should think jobs in mining are “more important” than jobs in education or tourism.
- When it comes to policy settings governments need to understand which industries are and will continue to be the real opportunity for jobs and growth. As a policy setting the destruction of the environment is not “good for the economy”. This area is not about manufacturing, nor is it suitable for mining. It is an area for living, farming, tourism and services. This beautiful area would benefit from planning for events and attracting and importing visitors. To future plan for the export of raw materials because a mineral has been identified by a government department is a foolish development based on a supply equation and not back by the truth of what is actually a demand equation in the area.

#### Goal4. Action 4.4.2 Providing employment lands.

- An extremely large industrial land area has been set aside at Valla, west of the highway.
- Looking at how council has regulated the look of employment lands at Newville along the old Pacific Highway it has denigrated the land use nearby. As an entrance into a town or village it looks cheap and devoid of design, and debilitating. Better consideration needs to be given to other areas for this placement. Again this is development based on supply of land when there is little or no proven demand. This will become a stranded asset or white elephant as there are many available employment land spaces in the shire already that are running at less than capacity and are less than one kilometre from the Highway for logistical access

#### Direction 4.5 Growing the regions business centres

- Any expansion of Valla quarry for the future growth needs of Coffs Harbour represents poorly applied town planning principles. For all the loss of amenity, due to the conflict of land use, which a very large number of residents in the Transition area suffer from there is no significant re-use value to the site. Coffs Harbour needs for future aggregate would be better served from a quarry closer to Coffs which could have a significant re-use over the site afterwards, such as urban development.
- \_ Valla Quarry would not be allowed to happen if a DA was applied for today because it fails to meet the planning principles of today's standards. Any expansion of Valla Quarry would be immoral, and council should seek to guard its reputation for making appropriate and considerate planning decisions.