

MidCoast Council

1 June 2016

Katrina Burbidge
Director Regions, Northern
Department of Planning and Environment
Locked Bag 9022
GRAFTON NSW 2460

Ref: S943
Enquiries: Michael Griffith

Dear Katrina,

RE: Draft North Coast Regional Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the draft North Coast Regional Plan.

A key issue following the proclamation of MidCoast Council is that we are now split over two regions. I request that the Department remove the former Greater Taree City Council from the draft plan. The Administrator of MidCoast Council wrote to the Department's Hunter Office on the 25 May 2016, advising of the preference for MidCoast Council to be included in the Hunter Regional Plan.

While we have a clear preference to be included in the Hunter Regional Plan, we provide the attached comments on the draft North Coast Regional Plan with regard to how it applies to the former Greater Taree City Council area. I also seek that any regional plan applying to that area align with the intent of the draft Manning Valley Local Strategy which provides more detailed planning for this area. The draft plan can be viewed at www.gtcc.nsw.gov.au.

We trust that the Department will favourably consider the inclusion of the MidCoast Council wholly within the Hunter Regional Plan.

Yours sincerely



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Page ref.	Issue
7	Figure 1 should be amended to include reference to Harrington
10	Figure 3 should be amended to show Crowdy Head harbour
13	The proposed Coordination and Monitoring Committee will consist of only two representatives from local government, which is not adequate given the region covers 13 councils. It is noted that the draft Hunter Regional Plan enables each council to be represented on the Committee which is a better outcome. More information is required on the Joint Organisations
15	The plan has a large number of actions with no priority, timeframes or funding details. In addition, the number of council actions is more prevalent than the draft Hunter Regional Plan. More robustness is required to make the plan more accountable. Given a Ministerial Direction will require the actions to be achieved by councils, it is imperative that councils are consulted on any changes to the actions prior to the plan being finalised
17	The Worimi Aboriginal people are also represented in our council area
17	Goal 1 of the plan is a conglomeration of issues that don't fit nicely elsewhere and needs to be restructured. A key criticism of the current Aboriginal legislation was that it was included in the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i> . This goal reinforces this position with Aboriginal cultural actions listed with environment issues, natural hazards and resources. We question whether this goal should be restructured?
20	Action 1.1.3 - there is a requirement that "councils will review or prepare local cultural heritage studies". We have been through this process in the past only to have the Aboriginal groups not allow the mapping to be publicly available. More guidelines and funding is required to assist councils to progress this issue. The Hunter action approach is preferred as it requires the state government to support the preparation of "regional Aboriginal cultural studies"
22	Action 1.2.3 - we would like to be consulted on the interim farmland mapping prior to it being finalised, as we have not been involved in the mapping to-date
23	State and regionally significant farmland interim variation criteria – under land use conflict, it would be difficult to determine the 'future agricultural activities' given the farming industry is evolving into new industries with different site requirements (e.g. poultry is a growth rural industry in our region which was not considered over 5 years ago). Coastal erosion should be specifically listed as a risk
27	Direction 1.4 - the Department needs to provide leadership on the expected hazards to provide a consistent measure for the region (e.g. sea level rise, coastal hazards)
30	Figure 6 - typing errors in the legend
33	Figure 7 - more details on the resources identified would be appreciated
35	Goal 2 of the plan reads "Focus growth opportunities to create great places to work and live" is primarily about the development of the three regional cities (Tweed, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie). We question why not be specific in the goal to reflect this?
36	Figure 8 - our current population is 49,000 people (2015 ABS) where as the graph shows our population growth reaching 49,000 in 2036. We request the graph be amended accordingly.

47	Direction 2.3 - through the development of a local strategy, we have identified a number of changes proposed to the urban growth area. These changes are basically to ensure the growth boundary is located in a logical location that better defines the community. The mapping changes have been included in the draft Manning Valley Local Strategy.
49	Urban growth area variation principles – need to have coastal erosion listed as a risk
54	Caption for the photograph should read “Fotheringham Park”
55	Figure 16 - given the inaccuracy of the population projections in Figure 8, should the additional dwellings be adjusted accordingly?
57	Action 3.1.2 - Old Bar would be a suitable location for the Department to work with council to identify where upfront infrastructure can accelerate the take-up of housing commencements
61	The affordable housing actions rely on councils to provide. This needs to be balanced with greater assistance at the State level to provide incentives for affordable housing or the State Government should be providing for it
65	Direction 4.1 - should also include Harrington and Hallidays Point which are suitable for showcasing the natural environment
73	Taree Airport should be included in the last bullet point for this goal. Work has been done to develop an aviation business park at this location
Appendix B	<p>In the draft plan the urban growth area maps refer to ‘proposed urban land’. Given many of these lands have environmental constraints that need to be considered it is more appropriate to refer to them as ‘investigation areas’. This indicates that a detailed level of assessment is required prior to an urban rezoning.</p> <p>In addition, the urban growth area maps identify sites that have the potential to be developed over the next 20 years. In preparing the draft Manning Valley Local Strategy these maps were reviewed (attached for your information). This review indicates that amendments are required to the maps to logically define future planning boundaries. The proposed changes involve the inclusion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 812-822 Harrington Road, Harrington as it is located within the town area, surrounded by existing residential development • 74-130 Red Gum Road and 942-962 Old Bar Road, to better define the urban boundary for Old Bar • 14 Red Head Road and 183 Blackhead Road, to better define the eastern and western urban boundary of Diamond Beach and Tallwoods respectively • a more accurate boundary for the Northern Gateway Transport Hub (Stage 1 and 2) to accord with our planning for that precinct • 51-55 Glenthorne Road, Taree South, to better define the eastern boundary of potential employment lands.