



Director Regions – Northern  
Department of Planning and Environment  
Locked Bag 9022  
GRAFTON NSW 2460

17 March 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Draft New England North West Regional Plan**

I refer to the abovementioned draft Plan and the opportunity to comment of the draft Plan.

Council would like to provide the following comments in regard to the draft Plan:

- The draft Plan is largely centred on Armidale and Tamworth as the regional cities and primarily focuses on these centres for future growth and development. Council would like the draft Plan to highlight the growth and development that is occurring in other areas of the region, such as in Gunnedah.
- The resolution of the draft Plan on the website is of poor quality.
- The majority of the maps are present over two pages, with Gunnedah being located in the middle of the page and as such is difficult to see. It is recommended that a fold out map be included in the final version so that all towns are able to be seen clearly (Figure 3, 5, 6). This can be considered to be a disadvantage for Gunnedah. In addition, Figure 3 does not show Gunnedah's airport.
- The vision of the Plan should acknowledge the work that Council's in the area, including Gunnedah, are doing to leverage foreign markets to the betterment of our communities. (pg10) Gunnedah Council has engaged in international trade discussions and undertaken site visits to industries within China. Representatives of Gunnedah Council and Gunnedah businesses are undertaking a second tour of agricultural industries in March 2017, with the aim of encouraging foreign investment within the community.
- Rural residential lot sizes can be reduced down to 1ha to provide more housing stock without fragmenting rural land, particularly with effluent disposal systems advancement now enable smaller lot sizes for on-site effluent disposal. With the increase technology of aerated waste management systems, rural residential lots can be smaller, reducing the impact on agricultural land.
- Council supports the initiative to review and amend planning strategies and local environmental plans to ensure consistency with the policies and actions in the final Plan. (pg9)
- The draft Plan notes that the region has maximised its expanding cotton potential. (pg 10) Council is of the understanding that the cotton industry is still expanding, with proposals for an expansion of the Carroll Cotton Gin. The Carroll Cotton Gin is proposing an expansion of its operation to cater for the increasing production of cotton in the area.

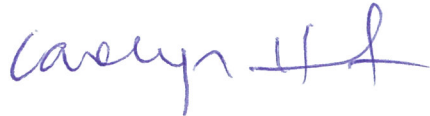
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- The draft Plan highlights the growth in Armidale and Tamworth. (pg 10, 57)  
The draft Plan should also recognise that Gunnedah is also growing and thriving alongside the regional cities.
- The draft Plan highlights Tamworth as the primary location for poultry development. (pg 15, 17)  
Council wishes to advise that the poultry industry is also growing in Gunnedah. Council recently approved the following development applications:
  - Expansion of the Baiada Breeder Farm near Curlewis - \$17.5m)
  - Staged Poultry Breeder Farm – Longarm Road, Kevlin (20,000 birds – silky chickens for export - \$130,000)
- Gunnedah Shire has the ability to support further poultry development, particularly as water is quite accessible within the area.
- Further details are required in regard to how the draft Plan promotes opportunities to expand intensive agriculture and food processing by identifying emerging development opportunities and streamlining approval processes. (pg 15)
- Agricultural industries rely on the Kamilaroi and Oxley Highways to provide linkages to domestic and international markets, particularly from the major agricultural producing areas. The draft Plan only notes the Newell and New England Highways as providing freight networks. (pg15)
- The draft Plan highlights major livestock facilities. (pg17) However, the Gunnedah Saleyards is not included in this list. The Gunnedah Saleyards is consistently in the top 5 selling centres in NSW for beef cattle - \$92m in 2016.
- Gunnedah currently supports the food processing agribusinesses and co-locating industries for the use of by-products and waste materials to create new products and services. (pg19) There are existing industries in Gunnedah that can be used as an example of the draft Plan's action.
- Council requests that the draft Plan utilise stronger wording to match the level of commitment and importance of second rail overpass for Gunnedah – resulting in higher mass limits. (pg 27) The second rail overpass for Gunnedah is an impediment to the distribution to Higher Mass Limits (HML) freight.
- Figure 8 does not include the beef and grain products that are grown in the Gunnedah region. (pg 30)
- Council has issued development consent for an Electricity Generating Works (27MW). (pg40)  
The draft Plan does not note this future development within the renewable energy projects.
- Gunnedah Council operates GoCo Community Care to provide home care services in the Tamworth, Gunnedah, Narrabri and Moree areas. The draft Plan does not recognise this service. (pg46).
- Gunnedah Council has encouraged temporary workers to live in the community, not in isolated temporary accommodation. The draft Plan should also note that alternative housing for temporary workers should also be considered for major developments such as mining. (pg47)
- Gunnedah's hospital is not fit for purpose and is an impediment to growth. The draft Plan should reflect this. In addition, the draft plan should recognise the difficulty for Councils of similar size to Gunnedah, have in attracting suitable medical professionals, which is considered to be an impediment to growth.
- Lack of trade courses in Gunnedah means that youth are lost to the town. The TAFE needs to provide a range of courses that are required by the regions' industries. Gunnedah youth are required to travel to Tamworth to undertake courses.

- Spelling correction – pg 58 – Baan Baa is referred to in the draft Plan as Baa Baa.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Council's Manager Development and Planning, Carolyn Hunt on 6740 2100.

Yours faithfully



Carolyn Hunt  
MANAGER DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

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Reference: 1044593 & 966617