

“Making good development happen the right way”.

RE: Draft Greater Metropolitan Newcastle Plan

The Greater Metro Plan for Newcastle takes planning for this sub-region forward in many positive ways and the Department of Planning and Environment is to be commended for this achievement.

My submission focusses on:

- 1) The State Government Commitment to the Plan;
- 2) Governance, Leadership and Implementation;
- 3) The rigor of data analysis underpinning the strategy; and
- 4) Scenario Planning

State Commitment to the Metro Plan

Central to the success of this strategy will be the ongoing commitment from all relevant state agencies to achieving its objectives. Currently, there are major gaps in cohesive commitment to the implementation of regional and district plans. State agencies are not aligning budgets and priorities to the directions and actions in these plans and there are major gaps in the alignment of development and infrastructure.

Upon review of lessons learned in other Australian states as well as the overseas examples identified in the Metro Plan, it is difficult seeing the level of ongoing commitment required being achieved unless the implementation strategy is managed and lead politically by a sub-committee of Cabinet and/or by highly influential agencies such as Premiers and Cabinet or Treasury. Looking at other states such as Victoria and Queensland this lesson to be learnt is that this is likely to be a major impediment to the strategy's success even if the Metro Plan and implementation strategy are endorsed by Cabinet.

Governance, Leadership and Implementation

A Plan is only as good as its implementation. Governance and implementation are the key issues as is the case with the Hunter Regional Plan.

A diagram illustrating the relationships between the broader implementation tools and a summary of the different roles they would play would be advantageous.

The Collaboration Agreement with the five Lower Hunter Councils is a good initiative. The proposed establishment of a collaborative governance framework is certainly supported and the advice provided by Professor Clark is both useful and consistent with previous advice provided on this matter.

That collaborative governance framework should be led by the five Mayors of the constituent Councils, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter and the Minister for Planning. The five Mayors structure may be a derivative of the Joint Organisation of Councils or a separately constituted body. A Memorandum of Understanding should strongly underpin this Governance Framework and the role to be played in leading the implementation. It is critical that the influence, priorities and leadership of this Collaborative Body has committed connection with State political leaders for inputs into Treasury, budget and works prioritization by infrastructure and service delivery agencies.

Professor Clark's discussion paper refers to various cities and metropolitan regions around the world and to various plans and strategies which cover far broader aspects of planning and delivery than identified in the Metro Plan. The corresponding financial commitments in these documents appear to far outweigh those outlined or committed to with the Metro Plan.

In addition, what will be the roles of the Hunter Development Corporation and the Committee for Greater Newcastle and how will they fit/supplement each other? It is not anticipated that the HDC will have real influence over other key State Agencies.e.g. The Roads and Maritime Services. Such influence will need to come from the senior political level. It is also unclear how the Committee will work and who will have the "authority" and "power" to act if the Metro Plan is not being implemented.

The Rigor of data analysis underpinning the Strategy

Much of the data collation and analysis underpinning the Draft Plan appears to be unpublished. Macro-Plan completed extensive, rigorous analysis which underpins the Draft Plan. As with any good plan such data and analysis should be published to provide rationales for the recommendations.

Scenario Planning

It is the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan for 2036. What will be the mega trends, technological trends etc. affecting the Newcastle of 2036? None of this is articulated in the Draft Plan. Driver-less cars are likely to be the norm. Robots will have taken up a significant proportion of jobs in certain industries.

Conclusion

I thank you for the opportunity to make this submission on this extremely important Plan.

Yours Sincerely,

David Broyd
28 Feb 2018

