



Hawkesbury City Council

attachment 1
to
item 62

Summary of Key Issues to include in
submission to Greater Sydney
Commission regarding the
Draft West District Plan

date of meeting: 28 March 2017
location: council chambers
time: 6:30 p.m.



Key Issues for Submission to GSC Draft West District Plan

The following are the key issues which have been identified for inclusion in the draft submission on the Draft West District Plan:

1. **Impact of current Western City Approach (Focus on South West Sydney – Penrith) and Need for an Infrastructure Plan and Transport Linkages for whole District**

- Current draft focuses on airport in terms of infrastructure requirements and does nothing for the district as a whole.
- Too much of a focus on Penrith and connections to the South West and omits connections within the West District, and outside of the District in other directions (North West and South East).
- Plan focusses on previous infrastructure commitments rather than providing a framework for an Infrastructure Plan for the whole District based on the expressed principles of Productivity, Liveability and Sustainability.
- Infrastructure Plan could consider:
 - extending North-South Rail Link through the District and linking Penrith with existing rail within the Hawkesbury (Richmond Line)
 - linking the North West Metro with the Richmond Line
 - Outer Western Sydney Orbital Road Link
 - LINKS with M9 and additional crossings of the Hawkesbury River to the west.

2. **Floodplain Management on a District Level**

- Need for a District approach to planning to address flooding issues in the Hawkesbury Nepean Valley, including advocating for the release of the Hawkesbury-Nepean Flood Risk Management Strategy to appropriately respond to flood risk and inform growth strategies.
- District approach to flooding issues in the Hawkesbury Nepean should ensure consistency of outcome through way of policy, standards and assessment.

3. **Blue Green Grid**

The Draft West Plan has identified within section 5 A Sustainable City; the delivering of the Sydney's Green Grid to promote a healthy community. Within the document there are a number of priorities which are inconsistent with the Green Grid and Council's capacity to fulfil the State Government strategic outcomes. These inconsistencies will disadvantage Council in achieving core outcomes in the District Plan.

It is noted that the Green Grid in the Draft District Plan has been based on previous strategies of the Regional Recreational Trails Framework (RRTF) prepared in 2005 which outlined significant recreational trails that impact Council including:

- Great River Walk
- South Creek Corridor
- Eastern Creek Corridor
- Sub-Regional trail from the North West Growth Sector to Windsor (Windsor Road Cycle Link).

These trails have been transferred to the Green Grid document, however changes have reduced the capacity of the Green Grid to fulfil its aim of connecting trail corridors.

As identified in the listed priority projects, Priority 2 South Creek, would be the only one that has some reference to the Hawkesbury, however Council has only limited land with which to apply for which is either operational (McGrath Hill STP) or leased properties.



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Eastern Creek Recreation Corridor

The corridor is identified as a regional corridor extending from Macarthur in the south for some 48km, however upon reaching the boundary of Hawkesbury City Council the Regional Status of the trail is stopped and becomes optional for Council as a local trail to fulfil as a connection for a distance of approximately 8km.

Within the original 2005 RRTF document this trail maintained its Regional Status up to its connection with the Hawkesbury-Nepean River and the Great River walk.

If the GSC is seeking to develop these and other trails in addition to the development of these strategic plans it will need to drive these projects and assist physically:

- compulsory acquire the trail route
- provide funding for capital improvement for the trails to function
- provide funding for environmental restoration projects
- not restrict funding to 50/50.

South Creek Recreation Corridor

The corridor is identified as a regional corridor extending from Macarthur in the south for some 48km and looping through St Marys and returning through Marsden Park, again reaching the boundary of Hawkesbury City Council the Regional Status of the trail is stopped and becomes optional for Council as a local trail to fulfil as a connection for a distance of approximately 8km.

Within the original 2005 RRTF document this trail maintained its Regional Status up to its connection with the Hawkesbury-Nepean River and the Great River Walk.

If the GSC is seeking to develop these and other trails in addition to the development of these strategic plans it will need to drive these project and assist physically:

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Great River Walk

The Great River Walk is one of the largest and most comprehensive regional trails that once achieved will be a significant tourist trail, however the Green Grid documentation has misrepresented the walk as The Great North Walk and this requires amendment.

The Great River Walk has its own committee made up of representatives from Penrith, The Hills and Hawkesbury City Council's, in addition to representatives from NPWS and the bushwalking community. The group has been in existence for over 10 years and has seen the development of the trail in Penrith and the Hawkesbury to a limited degree. To develop the trail further the District Plan would need to include strategies that achieved this, including:

- compulsory acquire the trail route
- provide funding for capital improvement for the trails to function
- provide funding for environmental restoration projects
- not restrict funding to 50/50.

Identified Opportunities

Hawkesbury City Council sits on the boundary of one of the largest growth centres, The North West Growth Sector extending from Box Hill, Riverstone Vineyard, Rouse Hill and The Ponds. This area has seen significant population growth with further growth in the near future through the Box Hill area. This population increase has seen an increase in the use of regional recreational spaces in the Hawkesbury especially sites that have direct connection to the Hawkesbury River. Council has seen an increase in boating activities and use of Councils only major boat ramp within the area.



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The Roads and Maritime Boat Ramp Locator website has identified only two ramp access to the Hawkesbury River within 20km of the North West Growth Sector with the next available access to the water some 35+km at Berowa Waters and towards the city at Silverwater. With the increased popularity in boating further impacts on both the ramp area and our recreational spaces has been identified and significant funding is required to improve and manage these.

Council has also identified a number of regional trail routes that would improve connection including the Windsor Road Cycle trail connection that extends from Bella Vista to Windsor, with connection to the M7 cycle route and the Parramatta connections. In addition the Killarney Chain of Ponds recreation trail is feasible following the creek corridor from Rouse Hill, Box Hill, McGraths Hill and linking to the South Creek Corridor and the Hawkesbury River.

The heritage of Hawkesbury's large areas of National Parks and State Parks should be acknowledged in the Draft Plan. The regions role in providing vital green space for growing Sydney needs to be recognised, protected and supported with State resources. Pristine rivers such as the Wollongambe and the Colo Rivers needs to be protected from industry, including mining and agriculture, and better water quality monitoring of the regions rivers, creeks and wetlands must be supported by State funding for monitoring with compliance powers for both Council, EPA and other relevant authorities supported. Better protection from conflicting land use and their tourist potential as bird watching sites and historical landmarks, both Aboriginal and European, should be explored.

4. Role of RAAF Base into the Future

- Plan should reflect the role of the RAAF Base in terms of the economic vitality of area, and considerable and long lasting impacts if Base were to close.
- Contingency plans in the case of closure need to be considered, in addition to the potential for the Base to play a role in connections with the future Western Sydney Airport.
- Potential for STEM industry enhancements connected to RAAF (i.e. Science Park, Space Camp, and links with the Western Sydney Aeropolis) will result in more 'high end' jobs.
- Options for future consideration include Food Production Park/agribusiness opportunities based on agricultural produce (potentially niche market produce) from the area that can be readily transported.

5. Sustainability

- Need for greater focus on renewables within strategies.
- Strategies should provide for a transition from coal to renewables and alternative power sources within the District.
- No clear targets or measures in terms of sustainability indicators.
- Need to address urban design on a District basis (quality over quantity) and respond to increasing impacts of urban heat on a District wide basis.
- Strategies could contemplate District becoming self-sufficient in terms of energy and resources.
- Strategies should consider provision of solar power on all business roof tops.
- Consideration to uses of floodplains for alternate energy models (solar, wind etc.) on a District wide basis.



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6. Liveability

- Need to provide improved leadership on affordable housing.
- Protection from greater Sydney growth impacts while improving access.
- Implement a 'Whole of Health' approach from preventative to acute care including active living programs, mobility – including pedestrian and cycling facilities, and a greater focus on improving health outcomes in Aboriginal Health, Youth Health, and Women's Health, Mental Health, Sexual Health, and domestic and family violence prevention and strategies.
- Developing a sustainable "village" model of liveability for communities, with a focus on local services and employment.
- Develop a district-wide Housing Strategy that identifies the unique roles that each council will undertake addressing housing diversity, affordable and sustainable housing outcomes, and affordable rental housing targets specific to the population demographics of each local government area.
- Develop and implement the Affordable Housing Target of 5 to 10% with a clear and compulsory mechanism that covers green field developments, infill developments, as well as floor-space bonuses.
- Expand Action L8 "Undertake broad approaches to facilitate affordable housing" point 4, in addition to amendments to existing tenancy legislation to allow longer leases, remove the "no grounds" evictions clause to improve security of tenure for tenants and reduce people being evicted into homelessness without cause.
- Develop a State government pool of funding (similar to the former Area Assistance Scheme) to run programs that address local social and community liveability indicators and improve liveability outcomes for new and emerging communities.
- Develop a district wide Community Services Strategy to improve liveability outcomes for each local government area including outreach program to all areas of the district.
- Develop a system for provision of social services for each area including a coordinated approach between State and local government in the delivery of services including the key agencies such as NSW Family and Community Services (including Housing) and NSW Health (including the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District).
- Develop strategies that reverse the growing income inequities and intergenerational inequity that has developed over the last three decades between East/North-East Sydney and Greater West/South West Sydney. For reference, see the SEIFA maps presented by Professor Bill Randolph at the GSC Forum in Blacktown on 10 March 2017 (by WSROC and WSCF).
- Restore 'real cost' S94 infrastructure levies for Western Sydney Council's rather than the cap of \$30K that will result in a shortfall of more than \$240 million of essential service infrastructure in the North West and South West Growth Sectors of Sydney where the bulk of Sydney's growth will occur. Research shows that growing inequity between high income and low income areas lowers the liveability of both areas resulting in the break-down of social inclusion, social cohesion and poor liveability outcomes for all communities across Greater Sydney.
- Establish a compulsory Community Investment Charge on all future Sydney development that will address the shortfall in human service provision across the Greater Western Sydney regions with a focus on place-making communities, social capital outcomes, and a sustainable 'village liveability' model that focuses on local community services and employment.



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- The GSC's Affordable Rental Housing Targets of 5-10% should be clearer that this target is a minimum target level and is compulsory for all development to address the loss of affordable rental housing and market failure in the private rental market to provide affordable rental housing as evident over the last three decades. A more ambitious target of up to 30% would be necessary to address the loss of affordable rental housing for low, very low, and middle income households in Greater Sydney.
- A different mechanism should be developed for the 5-10% Affordable Rental Housing Target in green-field and brown-field development as well as for infill developments for areas such as the West District of the GSC.
- The GSC's Affordable Rental Housing Targets of 5-10% should be clearer that 'Affordable Rental Housing' refers primarily to housing where the title of properties will be transferred to a registered Community Housing Provider (CHPs) to ensure that it will continue to provide affordable rental housing to low and very-low income households perpetually beyond a 10 year timeframe and provide the CHP organisations with greater leverage to develop more affordable rental housing and invest cash contributions to grow their affordable housing portfolios.
- The GSC's Affordable Rental Housing Targets of 5-10% should be clearer that its primary purpose is to provide a public/community benefit to improve liveability outcomes of low to very low income households.

7. Rivers and Waterways

- Need to recognise and respond to the Importance of health of the rivers and waterways on a District scale e.g. South Creek
- Strategies should link history, heritage and tourism with the Districts rivers and waterways.
- Links with historical 'Food Bowl' of Sydney.
- Uses of floodplain as regional attractors i.e. food security and providing healthy fresh local food for growing Sydney.

8. Economy (jobs)

- Need for a local employment strategy.
- Absence of a local centres hierarchy.
- Absence of clear guidance for rezoning of employment lands.

9. Heritage

- The Plan does not fully reflect the heritage of the District, particularly within the Hawkesbury. The Draft South West District Plan includes a number of Sections and Strategies associated with the Heritage of that area when considerably greater heritage is evident within the West District and in particular the Hawkesbury. By way of example, the South West District includes the following provisions which should all be applicable to the West District:
 - 4.7 Foster cohesive communities in the South West District
 - 4.7.1 Conserve and enhance environmental heritage including Aboriginal, European and natural
 - Action
 - L13 Conserve and enhance environmental heritage including, Aboriginal, European and natural
 - Liveability Priority 7 Conserve heritage and unique local characteristics
 - 4.7.2 Support the creative arts and culture.



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- In relation to heritage there is little direct recognition and response in the Draft Plan to the significant built heritage, and cultural landscapes that exists. Hawkesbury City Council has 4 of the 5 Macquarie Towns that were laid down by Governor Macquarie in 1810.
- There is no mention to the significant contribution of the region in the survival of the early colony and its intrinsic connection to rural and farming activities.
- There is no mention of the established townships and the fact that there has been little change to road networks and the best collections of early colonial buildings within the Sydney Metropolitan area, and how the Draft Plan will respond by maintaining this unique situation.

10. Measures/Outcomes and Implementing the Plan

- Need to establish clear strategic objectives with measures of success.
- How can we make sure the plan is implemented.
- The role of the State Government is unclear in the District Plans
- Implementation process has not been properly considered particularly with respect to infrastructure for the whole District.