



Hawkesbury City Council

supplementary  
ordinary  
meeting  
business  
paper

date of meeting: 08 July 2008  
location: council chambers  
time: 5:00 p.m.



**ORDINARY MEETING - Supplementary**

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**SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS**

**MAYORAL MINUTE**

**MM - Windsor Bridge Replacement - (79353, 95495)**

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**REPORT:**

I was extremely pleased to be advised recently of the State Government's decision to provide funding for the replacement of the Windsor Bridge. The timeframe for the proposed replacement is also encouraging as it shows that the urgency of the representations made by the Council and community have been acknowledged by the State Government, and they have responded appropriately, with a short timeframe envisaged for the replacement.

Whilst the existing bridge has served the community well over the decades, it is obvious with the advent of larger vehicles and increased traffic flows that it has reached the end of its economic life. I am hopeful that the RTA will work with Council and the community prior to the final design being completed to provide a deck level at the height of Wilberforce Road or a little above which will give increased accessibility to residents on the north and west side of the river on a daily basis and in times of flooding and an alignment which will improve access from Freemans Reach Road. There are also a number of urban design matters relating to the historic Thompson Square precinct, which will need to be addressed.

I would like to thank all those Councillors, local members of parliament, and community members who have given support to the campaign to have the bridge replaced, including Doug Wiggins of Video Innovations who provided the television coverage at no charge.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the State Government be appropriately acknowledged for the quick response to the concerns of the community with the proposal to replace Windsor Bridge and ask the RTA to work with Council in the development of the project and to provide a written timeframe for the development, design and construction of the project.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

There are no supporting documents for this report.

**oooO END OF MAYORAL MINUTE Oooo**

CITY PLANNING

Item: 148 CP - Progress and Criteria for Preparation of Residential Strategy - (95498)

Previous Item: 91, Ordinary (29 May 2007)

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**REPORT:**

**Introduction**

On 29 May 2007 Council considered a report on the preparation of a land use strategy for the Hawkesbury. That report discussed the purpose of a strategy and proposed a sequence of steps to follow in the preparation of that strategy. The resolution from that meeting was as follows:

*That:*

1. *The process and prioritisation for LEP and strategy preparation contained in this report be endorsed.*
2. *Council note that it is proposed to proceed with the offer previously accepted from Buildev Group for an employment lands study as soon as practically possible.*
3. *Upon release of the Sub-Regional Strategy for North-West Sydney, the implications of the Strategy on the Hawkesbury be reported to Council.*

The report contained 11 general tasks involved in the preparation of a land use strategy as follows:

- *Survey community to ascertain community vision (currently underway).*
- *Review of existing land supply in relation to residential, commercial, industrial and rural land uses.*
- *Update population statistics from 2006 census (due August/September 2007).*
- *Review projected growth figures in the context of a long-term planning framework (20-25 years).*
- *Review impacts that Metro Strategy and Sub-regional Strategy (draft expected June/July 2007) will have on the Hawkesbury.*
- *Based on the above information, review the need for separate Strategies for Residential, Employment (including retail, industrial and commercial) and rural land uses.*
- *Prepare (if required) separate Strategies for residential, employment and rural land use. These Strategies must be consistent with the Strategies of the State Government.*
- *Prepare document for public exhibition that will integrate the above strategies and clearly articulates the process for the implementation of the strategies.*
- *Publicly exhibit the Strategies to obtain community and servicing authority support.*
- *Council adopt the Strategy/s to provide certainty for landowners and the development industry and set a clear direction for implementation.*
- *Council's final adopted Strategies to be sent to the Department of Planning for endorsement.*

The timing of some of these tasks has been delayed due to the delayed release of the Sub-Regional Strategy. However, Council staff have undertaken the community survey, have commenced preparing a community strategy plan and a draft employment study is due for completion shortly. This work has indicated that it is necessary to undertake "separate Strategies for residential, employment" etc. As such, 7 of the above list of 11 are virtually completed. Council considered a report on the draft North-West Sub-Regional Strategy on 11 March 2008 and forwarded a submission to the Department of Planning on the strategy.

The purpose of this report is to propose a process and principles for the preparation of a Residential Strategy.

### **Statutory Requirements for Residential Strategy**

There are a number of Directions issued by the Minister and the Department of Planning that require land release proposals and rezonings to conform to a local or State Strategy, including the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy, the draft North-West Sub-Regional Strategy and the Department of Planning spot rezoning criteria. It should also be noted that the Minister will issue a Section 117 Direction upon finalisation of the Sub-Regional Strategy that will give the provisions of the North-West Sub-Regional Strategy Statutory weight. As such, any strategy work that Council undertakes must be consistent with the existing State Strategies or draft strategies.

#### **Metropolitan Strategy**

The Sydney Metropolitan Strategy contains Sustainability Criteria that Councils and other planning authorities must follow for all strategy, land release or rezoning proposals. This sustainability criteria is adopted and expanded in the implementation actions of the North-West Sub-Regional Strategy. The Sustainability Criteria contained in the Metropolitan Strategy is listed as follows:

##### Infrastructure Provision

*"Mechanisms in place to ensure utilities, transport, open space and communication are provided in a timely and efficient way."*

Development is consistent with this if it is consistent with a relevant residential strategy, sub regional strategy, regional infrastructure and Metropolitan Strategy.

##### Access

*"Accessible transport options for efficient and sustainable travel between homes, jobs, services and recreation to be existing or provided."*

Development is consistent with this if the subject area is, or is planned to be, accessible by public transport and there is appropriate road access in terms of location, catchment and network efficiency.

##### Housing Diversity

*"Provide a range of housing choices to ensure a broad population can be housed."*

Development is consistent with this if it contributes to the geographic spread of housing supply, including any government targets established for aged, disabled or affordable housing.

##### Employment Lands

*"Provide regional/local employment opportunities to support Sydney's role in the global economy"*

Development is consistent with this if it:

- maintains or improves the existing level of sub regional employment self containment;
- meets sub regional employment capacity targets and;
- employment related land is provided in appropriately zoned areas.

##### Avoidance of risk

*"Land use conflicts, and risk to human health and life, avoided."*

Development is consistent with this if there is:

- an available safe evacuation route (flood and bushfire);

- no residential development within 1 in 100 year flood plain;
- avoidance of physically constrained land;
- avoidance of land use conflicts with adjacent, existing or future land use and rural activities as planned under regional strategy.

Natural Resources

*"Natural resource limits not exceeded/environmental footprint minimised."*

Development is consistent with this if:

- there is no unacceptable pressure in demand for water supply and environmental flows;
- demonstrates most efficient/suitable use of land;
- avoids significant agricultural land;
- avoids impact on productive resource lands (extractive industries);
- no unacceptable pressure in demand on infrastructure to supply energy.

Environmental protection

*"Protect and enhance biodiversity, air quality, heritage, and waterway health."*

Development is consistent with this if it maintains or improves:

- regionally significant terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity;
- existing environmental condition for water (community and recreational) and air quality;
- protect areas of aboriginal cultural heritage value (as agreed by DECC).

Quality and equity in services

*"Quality health, education, legal, recreational. Cultural and community development and other government services are accessible."*

Questions to consider when considering this issue include:

- do adequate services exist?
- do they have sufficient capacity?
- has government planned or budgeted for further service provision?
- developer funding for required service upgrade/access is available.

North-West Sub-Regional Strategy

This draft strategy contains a number of specific actions that Council must implement when undertaking strategy work. The main points are:

- achieve dwelling target of 5,000 dwellings by 2031;
- work with the Department of Planning to get land on the Metropolitan Development Plan (MDP);
- *"Hawkesbury Council to prepare a strategic residential land use study to consider opportunities for further growth around local centres to the north of the Hawkesbury River, cognisant of flooding and flood evacuation issues."*
- there is no capacity for additional growth south of the River outside current LEP provisions without substantial further upgrades to the flood evacuation network to the satisfaction of the State Emergency Services.

There are a range of other implementation actions contained in the North-West Subregional Strategy that Council must consider and take into account when preparing any local strategy. However, the points above are the principal matters relating to the residential strategy provision of dwelling targets.



### **Proposed Broad Local Criteria**

A number of issues need to be addressed prior to preparation of the draft residential strategy to provide a framework, consistent with the Statutory requirements and community statements obtained via the community survey, for the preparation of the strategy. It is proposed to use the above Statutory and the following local criteria to determine suitable localities for inclusion and investigation for release/development in the residential strategy. This criteria will also assist in dealing with submissions during the exhibition of the draft strategy and other individual applications for rezoning that are submitted to Council.

Areas that conform to the Statutory and broad criteria are likely to be less constrained, easier to service and capable of release in the relatively short term.

### **Community Survey**

Some of the key issues identified in the Community Survey and the actions identified in the North-West Sub-Regional Strategy, that a residential strategy must address include the following:

#### *Maintain the rural Character and Atmosphere of the Hawkesbury*

The exact manner that this can be achieved will vary across the Hawkesbury. However, the key issues that need to be addressed include:

- minimise the fragmentation of rural land;
- development needs to build on existing settlements;
  - adjoining an existing centre or village for urban development,
  - within reasonable distance from centre or village for rural residential (defined by short distance, topography or physical feature),
  - isolated, or stand alone, residential subdivisions should not be developed further or used as justification to undertake additional similar development, as these are contrary to the Sub-Regional actions,
- avoid prime agricultural land (Defined by the agricultural land classification and/or the need to protect the particular purpose for which the locality is currently used.);
- need to promote and protect existing productive and economic activities (both rural and urban activities);
- minimise potential land use conflicts (ie, not make existing conflict worse or introduce new conflicts);
- avoid vegetated land or land that will require significant clearing (for actual development or asset protection zones) or landform alteration (particularly to raise currently flood liable land).

#### *Achieve balanced growth*

Any release area must adequately address infrastructure servicing including:

- capacity of provision of reticulated sewer system or geotechnical capacity of catchment for on-site effluent disposal capacity;
- capacity of existing roads and other infrastructure to deal with the full development of the area;
- capacity of other infrastructure, including water supply, waste disposal, community, cultural and open space;
- requirements, ability, and timing of any upgrading works required prior to development proceeding;
- development (rezoning) must not proceed until adequate provision for infrastructure has been addressed.

#### *Provide housing choice*

The criteria must be consistent with the Metropolitan Strategy but must also take the changing demographics into account as well as the financial (including Council and community costs) and environmental sustainability of providing different types of housing in different localities.

*Develop strong town centres*

The trend in population decline in town centres must be addressed by making provision for appropriate density housing in, and surrounding, existing centres. The appropriate density should be defined by matters such as;

- infrastructure capability;
- aircraft noise and height limitations;
- building height limits (possible need for review);
- definition of appropriate urban design controls;
- protection of Heritage (both cultural and physical);
- residential development must not conflict with, or restrict additional, commercial development within the town centres.

*Encourage better public transport*

Public transport will be encouraged if the above issues are appropriately addressed. However, housing density and location will significantly impact public transport. Housing densities that are too low, significant rural residential development dispersed throughout the Hawkesbury and a lack of corridor planning will all adversely impact on the viability of public transport.

Population and Demographics

The most significant changes to Hawkesbury's population has been the slowing of its growth rate - resulting in a loss of 134 people in the 2006 Census count (- 0.22%. Note: Neighbouring LGA's of Penrith and Blue Mountains have also had slightly negative growth at the 2006 Census). This will result in a revised expectation of growth (and resulting dwelling and land requirements) over the next 23 years (to 2031). The actual population for the Hawkesbury from the 2006 census was 60,938 persons.

The previous projected population to 2031, based on the 2001 census, was 93,774 persons. The revised population projection based on the 2006 census would be approximately 72,995. However, the dwelling targets specified in the Sub-Regional Strategy will result in a population at 2031 of approximately 82,590.

These three projections display a high, medium and low population projection for the Hawkesbury that would be adequate for use in the Residential Strategy for the purpose of developing options for land requirements as the population is likely to be within these figures. It is appropriate that the medium projection be used as this is the artificially set target by the Department of Planning.

Key factors in the population change include:

- Australia's aging population;
- slowing birth rates reflecting that families are having less children and having them later in life;
- actual migration of people from some localities in the Hawkesbury.

It is important to note that the population trends show a decline in the population of "town residents" and an increase in rural fringe population. This will have a detrimental impact on the viability of the towns and the employment and residential strategies will need to address this matter. This will affect the types of dwellings, and land requirements, that the residential strategy will need to address.

The changing demographics will result in a lower occupancy rate for dwellings (currently 2.9 persons per dwelling) and a different mix in dwelling types, ie possibly more urban dwellings. This change in occupancy rate will also increase the land area requirements as more houses would be required for less people. The exact implications of this demographic change will be addressed in the strategy. However, Council will need to take the issue of changing population demographics into account in the preparation of the strategy which is likely to require a shift in the type of housing and subdivision that has traditionally been provided in the Hawkesbury.

Growth Thresholds

The housing market in the Hawkesbury has been restricted in the past few years due to the availability of suitable land. This makes it difficult to predict a realistic, long-term growth rate, estimate land requirements or suggest suitable locations as the current land market may be biased towards the one area where land is currently easier to develop.

It is proposed to base growth rates and housing requirements on a range of matters with particular emphasis on the housing targets, population trends (and the implications that this will have on the types of housing planned for), existing transport corridors, existing centres and achievement of the principle of strong town centres. This will not ignore other forms of housing or the "character and atmosphere" issue, however, it should enable a supply of additional land to be made available in the relative short term to enable a more unbiased monitoring of the growth trends. This can then be used as a base for a review of the strategy in the short to medium term. It is proposed to include a monitoring and review program in the Residential strategy that would require an annual monitoring program and a review at least every 5 years following the release of census figures.

**Conformance to Strategic Plan**

The proposal is deemed to conform with the objectives set out in Council's Strategic Plan i.e:

*"Investigating and planning the City's future in consultation with our community, and co-ordinating human and financial resources to achieve this future."*

**Funding**

No budget impact if recommendation adopted.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That:

1. Council note that the sustainability criteria contained in the Metropolitan Strategy and the actions contained in the draft North-West Sub-Regional Strategy must be included for implementation in Council's Strategy work.
2. It be noted that the criteria for inclusion into the Residential Strategy, as specified in the "Proposed Broad Local Criteria" of this report is an extension of the Statutory criteria and this be adopted for use in the preparation of the Residential Strategy.
3. The draft Residential Strategy be reported to Council prior to the public exhibition of the draft Strategy.
4. That no additional applications (beyond those already lodged in Council) for new residential rezoning matters be processed by Council until the draft Residential Strategy has been completed and endorsed by Council.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

There are no supporting documents for this report.

**oooO END OF REPORT Oooo**

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end of  
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