



DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT

13 September, 2005

DSDS9 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROGRAM
FILE: * APB

SUMMARY:

Reporting on the priority and program of strategic planning projects for 2005/06, having regard to available resources.

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Background

Council considered a report for staffing issues within the Sustainable Development Services Department at its meeting of 14th June 2003. In relation to Planning Services, it was reported that due to the vacant position of Strategic Planner, there was a need to recognise certain projects would be delayed.

The Strategic Planning position has now been filled and the position reorganised to be under the direction of the Planning Manager.

Council has also received grant funding of \$75,000 from the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources to undertake strategic planning which is less than that applied for and which also impacts on Council's Strategic Planning Program.

The Planning Manager has reviewed all the Strategic Planning projects and functions, and assessed the likely resource requirements and the available staff to complete these. Following this, an initial assessment of priorities has been undertaken to devise the following priorities and time to complete. **It should be noted that the timelines for all these projects are subject to external factors, and these delays are likely to be experienced due to unforeseen circumstances.** [\(Appendix P\)](#)

Proposed Strategic Planning Program 2005-2006

1 Strategies

(a) Heritage Study (Priority: High)

The Heritage Study is being prepared as a "Community based" study. An initial draft study has been prepared and will be reported to Council in October 2000, with exhibition to occur from November to December, and a report to Council in February 2006.

Exhibition will involve significant staff time, with letters to owners of properties affected, responding to enquiries by the public, the holding of community workshops etc. It is anticipated that there will be many submissions on the study, resulting in substantial staff time to assess and report to Council.

(b) Kempsey Town Centre Masterplan (Priority: High)

A review of the 1995 Masterplan by a consultant is underway, with an initial draft received. This will be reviewed by staff before consideration by the Masterplan Committee, and consultation with the Chamber of Commerce. The results of consultation with the Chamber of Commerce will then be reported to the Masterplan Committee and reported to Council for subsequent public exhibition and community workshops. Given other demands and priorities, a report to Council is anticipated for December 2005, with public exhibition to commence after the holiday period, in February or March 2005. This project will also demand significant staff resources to engage the community and progress acceptance and adoption of the Plan.

(c) Residential Land Release Strategy (Priority: Medium)

Prior to releasing land for residential development, Council is required under the North Coast Regional Environmental Plan to have adopted a Residential Land Release Strategy and endorsed by DIPNR. Council's current strategy was adopted in 1997 and is overdue for review and updating.

The Residential Land Release Strategy cannot be reviewed and updated until the Population Profile, Population Projection Report and Urban Land Capacity

Report are finalised (see below). Consequently, a draft Residential Land Release Strategy is anticipated to be reported to Council in April 2006 with exhibition during May 2006.

- (d) South West Rocks Structure Plan Review (Priority: Medium)

as recommended by consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff, effective planning for public facilities, infrastructure and services for South West Rocks requires the 1995 structure plan to be revised based on current planning and environmental requirements. Following finalisation of the Local Environmental Studies currently underway for Saltwater and the former oil terminal site, and after preliminary investigations of the Spencerville to New Entrance investigation area (see below) Council will have sufficient information to prepare a revised Structure Plan for public consultation. Consequently, a draft structure plan is anticipated to be reported in April 2006 with public exhibition from May 2006.

- (e) By-Pass Strategy (Priority: Medium)

The prospect of the Pacific Highway by-passing the Kempsey Town Centre has a range of economic and social implications. Council needs to be well placed in its planning for this event concurrent with the RTA planning investigations for the by-pass route. The RTA have commissioned consultants to undertake an economic impact analysis for the By-Pass. A range of actions have commenced and many of these are being undertaken by the Economic Development Manager. Council withdrew funding for strategic investigations from the 2005/06 budget. Detailed Strategic Planning investigations will commence upon the RTA releasing details of the preferred route. However, discussions have commenced in respect to matters required to be addressed by the strategy.

- (f) Vegetation Mapping of the Shire (Priority: Medium)

A three year program has been identified in Council Management Plan for mapping of all vegetation communities across the Shire. Stage 1 will be the coastal strip east of the Highway. It is anticipated that a consultant may be commissioned in October for Stage 1. This mapping will form the basis for preparation of a

Sustainable Settlement Strategy over about a 5 year period.

(g) Parking Study Review (Priority: Medium-Low)

Council commissioned a consultant to undertake a parking study review for the main commercial areas of the Shire a number of years ago. Data was collected and a preliminary report has been received. It is proposed to progress the review in March 2006, with possible report to Council in June 2006.

(h) Rural Residential Land Release Strategy (Priority: Medium)

Prior to Council rezoning land for further rural residential development, it will be necessary to review the existing Rural Residential Land Release Strategy from 1995. While important, this strategy is not considered as high a priority as other projects, and will need to await available staff resources. Council should be aware that numerous requests have been received to undertake this review to facilitate rural residential rezoning. It is not proposed to commence this strategy before July 2006.

2 Studies

(a) Population Profile (Priority: High)

This will provide a demographic comparison and snapshot of Kempsey Shire based on the 2001 Census. It will provide the foundation for many planning projects. It is the first step in preparing the Residential and Rural Land Release Strategies. The Population Profile is nearing completion and is expected to be reported to Council in October 2005.

(b) Population Projection Report (Priority: High)

The Population Projection Report will analyse the Population Profile, examining past population growth trends, and will incorporate research of estimated population growth since the 2001 census. The report will also provide a logical base for population projections for the whole shire, and for key growth localities. This will be a key document for many other planning strategies, including release strategies and public infrastructure

planning. It is aimed to commence preparation in October 2005 with a possible report to Council in February 2006. However, this may be delayed depending on the availability of the data to be researched.

(c) Urban Land Capacity Report (Priority: Medium)

This is the third component to preparing the Residential Land Release Strategy by examining the amount of currently zoned residential land, and its capacity to house the projected population. This requires substantial research and documentation. It is aimed to commence this during November 2005 with possible completion in March 2006.

(d) Rural Land Capacity Report (Priority: Low)

This report provides a basis for undertaking the Rural Residential Release Strategy, by assessing the current availability of zoned land to meet demand. Given other priorities, it is proposed to commence this after May 2006.

3 Statutory Plans

(a) Saltwater Local Environmental Study and Local Environmental Plan (Priority: High)

Council has commissioned consultants to undertake preparation of a Local Environmental Study to facilitate rezoning of this land for residential development. The landowners have funded these studies, which have been in progress for some time. Demand for housing is high in South West Rocks, and it is necessary to ensure supply of land for growth is planned and catered for. Currently, staff have provided comments to the consultants on a draft LES, and are waiting for a final LES to be submitted. This is a complex site, and requires careful analysis, integration and resolution of conflicting issues. Depending on the consultant, a report may be provided to Council in December 2005, with possible exhibition from February – March 2006.

(b) Oil Terminal Site LES and LEP (Priority: High)

Council has also commissioned consultants to prepare an LES for this site. Comments have been provided to

the consultants on the draft LES, and it is anticipated that a report will be submitted to Council in December 2005 with possible exhibition from February – March 2006.

(c) Local Environmental Plan 2005 (Priority: High)

Council commenced a review of Kempsey Local Environmental Plan 1987 in 2000. Council is required to keep its planning instruments up to date, with major reviews intended to be carried out after no more than 10 years. The review is nearing completion, with final drafting of the LEP being undertaken, for submission to DIPNR for gazettal. Due to changing staff, it appears that the long period of preparation and continual changes to planning legislation have required an extensive examination of the final document to ensure it is accurate and does not contain errors. This requires a short term but substantial staff resource to finalise. It is anticipated this will be completed by October 2005, with gazettal anticipated in February 2006.

(d) Heritage LEP (Priority: Medium)

Following exhibition and adoption of the Heritage Study, aimed for March 2006, implementation of its recommendations requires preparation of a draft LEP and exhibition. A report to Council is anticipated for March 2006, with exhibition during April – May 2006.

(e) Spencerville to New Entrance Investigations (Priority: Medium)

This is an area identified for urban investigation in Kempsey Local Environmental Plan 1987, the 1995 South West Rocks Structure Plan, and for long term release in the Residential Land Release Strategy. Council previously commenced investigations for a planned distributor road. Due to the number of threatened species found in the area, it was decided to defer investigations for the road, pending completion of a Masterplan to determine the likely lot yield in the area and whether such a road would be necessary. To assist planning in this area, a number of environmental investigations are necessary. These have been partially funded by grant money from DIPNR, and some work has commenced. The extent of further studies is uncertain at this stage, with each study leading to refinement of

future investigations. It is aimed to progress these sufficiently by February 2006, to enable preparation of the South West Rocks Structure Plan.

- (f) South Kempsey Industrial Land LES and LEP (Priority: Medium)

This study is to investigate land identified in Council's Industrial Land Strategy, leading to rezoning to provide for future industrial economic growth. Whilst the need for additional industrial land was identified in the Strategic Plan for the Economic Development of Kempsey 2001 as a key factor to facilitate economic development in the Shire, Council has not allocated any funding, so landowners have been approached to fund the study. Initial quotes to undertake LES preparation by appropriate consultants were in excess of \$100,000. Landowners requested Council to obtain additional quotes to secure a lower cost. It is now proposed to undertake preliminary studies on specific issues to enable more targeted and realistic investigations for industrial rezoning. This preliminary study should be given high priority. It is proposed to seek proposals in September 2005 to undertake vegetation mapping, with a view to commissioning a consultant in October 2005, with a report to be provided in January 2006. Once this is received, the project brief will be refined to determine the most cost effective approach.

Should Council wish to assign this project a higher priority it would be necessary to provide funding.

4 Section 94 Plans

- (a) Rural Roads Contribution Plan Review (Priority: Medium)

This plan provides significant income for maintaining and upgrading Council's rural roads. However, the plan is complex and difficult to apply. There may be opportunities to increase contributions collected, or rationalise Council's obligations for road maintenance and construction. This project requires substantial staff resources and external consultants. There is no current funding for this and while it would otherwise be a high priority, there are no available resources to undertake this project. Consequently, the review is unlikely to commence before July 2006.

(b) Other Section 94 Plan Reviews (Priority: Low)

Most of Council's Section 94 plans require significant review. It is likely that Council is missing opportunities to levy developer contributions for the provision of services and infrastructure. This will lead to future deficiencies in the provision of public infrastructure and facilities. However, due to the lack of staff resources or budget allocations, no work can be undertaken in the foreseeable future.

5 Minor LEPs

(a) Reclassification South West Rocks and Frederickton Open Space LEP (Priority: Medium)

Council has resolved to pursue sale of a number of land parcels dedicated as public open space as a means to rationalise provision and generate funds to embellish these parks. It is anticipated the LEP will be exhibited in February 2006, with a public hearing in March 2006.

(b) Nicholson Street (Southside Cellars) (Priority: Medium)

This rezoning is to facilitate redevelopment of Southside Cellars. This is a simple LEP, and is anticipated exhibition will occur in November or December 2005, with a report to Council in February 2006.

(c) Crescent Head Expansion (Priority: Low)

This rezoning is unlikely to proceed until road access is available and the Lands Department agrees to include Crown Land available and the Lands Department agrees to include Crown Land in the rezoning which will not occur until Stages 3 to 5 of the Goolawah estate are released.

(d) Beranghi Community Title LEP (Priority: Medium)

This rezoning is to facilitate a Community Title Subdivision of a large parcel down Beranghi Road that contains sensitive habitats and archaeological relics. A draft Community Statement has been received which requires review. It is proposed to prepare a draft LEP for public exhibition by March 2006.

6 DCP Reviews

(a) DCP 22: Crescent Head (Priority: High)

Council appointed a community review committee in February 2005. The Committee has met five times, with one more meeting to be held in September. It is anticipated that a report may be submitted to the October meeting, with exhibition in November to December 2005.

Other Strategic Planning Functions

In addition to these projects, the Strategic Planning branch has responsibility for:

- the issue of s149 certificates including maintenance of the database
- servicing of the following Committees:
 - Heritage
 - Town Centre Masterplan
 - ESD
 - Land Release Taskforce
 - DCP 22 Review Committee
- strategic planning enquiries.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

• ***Environmental***

It is essential to undertake strategic planning activities to ensure environmental outcomes are achieved. There are a range of environmental projects that are not included in the program due to the unavailability of resources.

• ***Social***

Social sustainability for future communities requires effective strategic planning to be undertaken. Current resources will limit Council's ability to ensure preferred outcomes for future social infrastructure.

• ***Economic (Financial)***

The most significant financial impact is the inability to undertake comprehensive review of Council's Section 94 plans.

- *Policy or Statutory*

Council has an obligation to undertake planning activities to ensure orderly and economic development of the Shire.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council note the report and endorse the priorities attached to each project.

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R B Pitt
DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES