

DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT

14th November 2006

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| DSDS5 | DRAFT ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD) STRATEGY |
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SUMMARY:

Reporting that the draft ESD Strategy has been prepared for Council's endorsement for the purposes of public exhibition.

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Background:

In a Report to Council in July 2004, it was recommended that following the adoption of the ESD Policy, a Local Agenda 21 Working Group be formed to provide advice and assistance to Council in the development of Action Plans and ESD Performance Indicators.

Community positions on this Committee were subsequently advertised with the finalisation Community members in May 2005. The Committee, known as the ESD Committee, first met in September 2005 and met on a regular basis to discuss the development of an ESD strategy for the Shire. Following in depth discussions with key personnel within Council and consultation with the ESD Committee over the past 11 months, the Strategy has now been finalised for the purposes of public exhibition.

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide a means of establishing goals and achievable targets to aid in the long-term coordinated approach to effective environmental, social and economic management within the Shire. The Strategy aims to unite the management of these three spheres under the one umbrella and assist in the creation of a more sustainably thinking and practicing culture.

Process Undertaken in the Strategy's Development

The initial series of ESD Committee meetings involved brainstorming key ESD issues of high priority within the Shire and reviewing a number of other Sustainability Strategies produced by other Local Councils in NSW. Concurrently, Council staff began an internal audit and review of all Council plans, policies, strategies and projects to identify which areas Council (and the community as a whole) was

moving towards sustainability. A matrix table was produced which identified numerous Council documents related to various aspects of ESD, including areas where no plans, policies, strategies and projects existed.

A broad vision was then developed, the issues brainstormed in the early ESD Committee meetings and transcribed into a series of broad scale goals designed to meet the vision of a sustainable future for the Shire. These broad scale goals were then broken down into a series of **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results orientated and Time bound (SMART)** objectives and associated actions, with the sole purpose of achieving the goals and thus the vision. The SMART objectives and actions were developed from the review of Council's existing plans, policies, strategies and projects and thus a number of the objectives and actions tie in closely with some of Council's existing documents, while other objectives and actions are proposed to develop appropriate strategies where none exist at present.

The goals and associated objectives and actions were then further refined following in depth discussions with key personnel within Council and reviewed by Council's Strategic Planning Group (SPG).

From May until August 2006, Council, in consultation with the ESD Committee, prepared a series of working drafts incorporating the goals, objectives and actions which have formulated the basis of the Draft ESD Strategy. As they were produced, these working drafts were progressively placed on display on Council's website and at the Customer First Centre and each of the Shire's libraries for initial community feedback. The purpose of providing these working drafts for initial feedback was to engage the public in the development of the Strategy as early as possible and encourage regular feedback as the draft working papers were developed, rather than receiving all feedback at the end of the process. Limited community feedback has been received and incorporated into the Draft Strategy where appropriate.

The full Draft ESD Strategy was reported to the August 2006 meeting of the ESD Committee. It was well received by the Committee with positive feedback at the meeting. Some further comments were made, mainly in relation as to how to engage the broader community in the public consultation process and in the prioritising of projects. A recommendation was made to develop a fairly basic and streamlined survey that community members could use to rank priorities in order of importance, with further room to make comments if they wish to.

The Committee voted to endorse the Full Draft Strategy, with no objections.

Funding of Strategy

Following the endorsement of the Strategy by the ESD Committee, the Strategy was referred to Council's internal Strategic Planning Group (SPG) for review in light of current and future funding proposals. The SPG identified that many of the proposed actions were already funded within Council's existing budgetary programs. However, a number of actions were identified as either;

- not currently funded, but still a high priority;
- not currently funded, with a medium to low priority and thus timeframes required to be extended; or
- not funded and not deemed a core responsibility of Council.

A breakdown these actions and comments is provided in the table below.

| Page No. | Action | Priority | Comment |
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| Not Funded But Still High Priority | | | |
| 21 | 1.1.1 Complete preparation of the following key planning documents with integration of ESD principles: e) Kempsey Integrated Settlement Strategy. | High | Unfunded action. Estimated funding required approximately \$90,000 over 2 years. |
| 22 | 2.1.1 Undertake a comprehensive land degradation assessment in the Kempsey Shire. | High | Unfunded action. Estimated funding required approximately \$50,000 over 3 years. |
| 29 | 3.1.2 Prioritise recommendations and seek matching funding prior to implementing recommendations outlined in those EMPs already prepared: • Killick Creek Estuary Management Plan; and • Saltwater Creek and Lagoon Estuary Management Plan. | High | Implementation of recommended actions in both Estuary Management Plans (EMP) are unfunded. The EMPs were prepared as a basis for seeking grant funding for the Identified works. |
| 38 | 1.2.3 Prepare Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Kempsey Shire. | High | Unfunded action. Estimated funding required approximately \$100,000 over 2 years |
| 81 | 2.1.2 Prepare energy and water saving action plan for Council. | High | Unfunded action. Estimated funding required approximately \$40,000 over 2 years. |
| Not Funded, Med to Low Priority, Timeframes Extended | | | |
| 39 | 1.4.2 Undertake detailed study on a significant wetland with the aim of having it listed as a Ramsar wetland. | Medium | Unfunded action. Time frame extended to 2012/13-2013/14 |
| 24 | 3.1.4 Implementation actions outlined in the Waste Management Strategy. | Medium | Unfunded action. Strategy not yet developed therefore implementation time frame extended to 2012/13-2013/14 |
| 38 | 1.2.4 Implement actions identified in the development of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. | Medium | Unfunded action. Strategy not yet developed therefore implementation time frame extended to 2012/13-2013/14 |
| 61 | 1.2.1 Develop a Public Transport Plan | Medium | Unfunded action. Time frame extended to 2012/13-2013/14 |
| 82 | 3.2.2 Prepare and implement scenic amenity DCP for the Shire. | Medium | Unfunded action. Unfunded action. Time frame extended to 2012/13-2013/14 |
| 46 | 2.1.3 Organise an annual 'Street | Medium | Unfunded action. Unfunded action. |

| Page No. | Action | Priority | Comment |
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| | Pride' competition along the lines of the 'Streets Ahead' program previously sponsored by Keep Australia Beautiful Council. | | Time frame extended to 2012/13-2013/14 |
| 23 | 2.5.2 Conduct annual audits of known contaminated sites on both private and public land and recommend the preparation of a formal management plan for those sites that do not currently have one. | Low | Unfunded action. Time frame extended to 2012/13-2013/14 |
| 76 | 1.3.1 Promote and encourage the expansion of skilled and professional industries within the Shire. | Low | Unfunded action. Time frame extended to 2012/13-2013/14 |
| Not Funded & Not Deemed Council's Core Responsibility | | | |
| 57 | 3.1.2 Consider employment of an Educational Officer to work with the Department of Education and Training and local Schools to encourage children to become involved in sport at a young age. | Low | Unfunded action. Not Council's core responsibility. |
| 40 | 2.2.1 Undertake a comprehensive survey to determine the area and extent of feral animals in the Shire. | Low | Unfunded action. Not Council's core responsibility |
| 40 | 2.2.2 Prepare Feral Animal Management Strategy. | Low | Unfunded action. Not Council's core responsibility |
| 40 | 2.2.3 Implement actions outlined in Feral Animal Management Strategy. | Low | Unfunded action. Not Council's core responsibility |

Over the 5 year program, those actions identified in the above table as a high priority but unfunded total approximately \$60,000 per annum. The Draft ESD Strategy has been amended to reflect the changes shown in the above table.

Strategic Planning Projects

Council also requested that the unfunded items relating to Strategic Planning Projects be noted. From the above table it is evident that three Strategic Planning projects:

1. Kempsey Integrated Settlement Strategy
2. Land Degradation Assessment
3. Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

are unfunded to a total of \$240,000 over the 5 year program of the ESD Strategy.

It should also be noted that there are several other strategic planning projects proposed to be funded and commenced within the life of the draft ESD Strategy that are not programmed for completion until up to 2015/2016.

These include:

- Habitat Assessment Mapping
- DCP Urban
- Residential land release Local Environmental Studies
- Rural residential land release Local Environmental Studies

If these projects were brought forward for completion with the ESD Strategy, a further \$650,000 would be required which, based on Council's incapacity to provided funding, have not been included.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- ***Environmental***

The preparation of the ESD strategy will highlight the problems facing the natural environment in the Shire and the actions required to manage and rectify these problems. Specifically, the ESD strategy will propose actions to:

- a) Identify, protect and enhance significant heritage sites***
- b) Minimise disturbance to vegetation and conserve biodiversity***
- c) Prevent, control and repair land degradation***
- d) Promote and encourage the responsible use and consumption of water***
- e) Minimise the generation of waste and implement further recycling activities***
- f) Reduce the amount of greenhouse gases emitted from the Shire***
- g) Plan, develop and maintain safe and cost effective transportation infrastructure, including enhanced public transport options***
- h) Reduce pollution incidents to natural and man made environments.***

- ***Social***

The Strategy has been prepared for Council and the broader community of the Kempsey Shire and therefore an important part of the process of developing an ESD strategy is to involve the community. A successful ESD strategy is one whereby the community embraces and takes ownership of the principles of ESD. A community that is fully aware and embraces ESD principles is likely to live more harmoniously and sustainably within the Shire. Specifically, the Draft ESD strategy proposes to:

- a) Foster a vibrant, secure and inclusive culture in which equality, individual creativity, understanding, respect and diversity flourish.***

- b) *Promote and develop strategies that provide health services to all demographics of the shire*
- c) *Foster community and civic pride and return to the community a sense of safety*
- d) *Provide high quality education and educational facilities to all members of the community*

- *Economic (Financial)*

The Draft ESD Strategy aims to identify the type of business and industry the Shire wishes to attract for a sustainable future. Specifically the Draft ESD Strategy proposes to:

- a) *Maintain and extend a broad based economy to service local needs.*
- b) *Create a healthy and vibrant business environment that is competitive and encourages innovation*
- c) *Encourage skilful and innovative enterprise that has national and / or international significance*
- d) *Ensure that development takes place at a sustainable rate and is relevant to the Shire's capacity to service that development.*
- e) *Encourage and promote development that uses best practice energy and water saving designs.*

In its present format the ESD Strategy recommends just over 300 actions over the next 5 years, many of which are already funded within Council's existing budgetary programs. However, a number of actions, which are not covered in the existing budgets will require funding or timeframes extended as outlined in this Report.

- *Policy or Statutory*

There are a number of legal requirements for implementing the principles of ESD. The Local Government Act (1993) and Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979) are the main pieces of legislation driving ESD.

- *General Managers or Directors Review*

The internal review of the draft Strategy has resulted in amendments to the draft recommended by the ESD Committee to ensure that the draft Strategy is within Councils capacity to fund recommended actions. It is likely that following public exhibition Council will be presented with a long and varied list of suggested action and priorities reflective of the diversity of views in the community. It is likely that Council will be requested to determine its priorities with in put from the ESD

Committee prior to being presented with a final ESD Strategy for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. That the draft ESD Strategy be endorsed for the purposes of public exhibition

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R B Pitt
DIRECTOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES