



8 September 2020

Feedback on Draft LSPS 2020-2040

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on *Your Future Macleay – Growth & Character Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)*.

As you may be aware, the Healthy Built Environment (HBE) Portfolio is managed by Health Promotion, Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD). HBE focuses, in part, on improving liveability, housing diversity, sense of place, promoting use of open space, walkability and social inclusion.

Kempsey Shire Council's Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement is very comprehensive and we particularly like your clear direction to focus on wealthy economy, connected communities and safe and suitable housing as three of your four key themes. These planning priority areas align well Direction 15 of the North Coast Regional Plan – Develop healthy, safe, socially engaged and well-connected communities.

Theme 2: Wealthy Economy

W2: Enable the growth of tourism:

W2.1 *Incorporate access and inclusion principles into future planning to support the growth of inclusive tourism in the Shire.*

MNCLHD comment: Consider **sustainable** and inclusive tourism.

W3: Strengthen regionally significant transport corridors:

W3.1 *Continue to advocate for the construction of the east–west bridge over the Macleay River linking South Kempsey to West Kempsey, to improve linkages between key industrial and residential areas (Action 1.24 of Council's Horizon 2030: Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Action Plan).*

Timeframe: Medium to Long term

MNCLHD comment: Consideration of negotiation/advocacy with Transport for NSW to provide an all-abilities egress off the pedestrian walkway traversing the railway bridge which links Kempsey South community to Kempsey West and Kempsey Central. Currently the egress has steep stairs which severely limit Kempsey South community access and linking to the key service and shopping areas. The alternative route is approximately five kilometres in length. This is unsupportive of low SES and high needs community, and people with ability issues and parents with small children (in strollers) with little or no transport options (Appendix 1).

Timeframe: short to medium term

Theme 3: Connected Communities

C3: Develop healthy, safe, socially engaged and well-connected communities

MNCLHD comment: Consideration of negotiation/advocacy with Transport NSW to provide an all abilities egress off the western end pedestrian walkway traversing the railway bridge which links Kempsey South community to Kempsey West and Kempsey Central. Currently the egress has steep stairs which severely limit Kempsey South community access linking

to the key service and shopping areas. The alternative route is approximately 5 km in length. This is unsupportive of low SES, high needs community, people with a disability and parents with young children.

Timeframe: short to medium term

C3.1 *Initiate an 'active living' strategy from a coordinated future audit of Council's Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2016 and the Kempsey Shire Bike Plan 2018 to promote the implementation of active transportation opportunities and linkages across the Shire.*

MNCLHD comment: MNCLHD would like to support the development of an 'active living' strategy that would:

- Support communities to improve the amenity and function of local open spaces and facilities to promote opportunities for active living and community cohesion
- Look to deliver an integrated active transport plan and network (for cyclists and pedestrians) that links important destinations with each other and with residential development and open space network across the LGA
- Include cycle paths in any new development or road renewal

There is good evidence to support your intention to initiate an 'active living' strategy to support the development of healthy, safe, socially engaged and well-connected communities.

- Good movement networks allow people to travel safely and conveniently between home, work, school and other important destinations within and between neighbourhoods (www.healthyactivebydesign.com.au).
- Obstacle free pathways and linkages is a key urban design feature as people are more likely to walk in pedestrian-friendly environments where they feel comfortable [1, 2]. There is consistent evidence that the presence of footpaths is associated with active transport across all age groups [3, 4, 5, 6-11, 12, 13, 14]. Footpaths also support recreational and general walking in adolescents, adults and older adults [15, 5, 13, 16, 17, 18]. Additionally, when footpath continuity has been included as one of the criteria for determining the walkability of an area, high walkable neighbourhoods had higher rates of walking [19].
- Identified links to the Draft NSW Physical Activity Strategy Office of Sport and key actions to enhance infrastructure that allows physical activity to flourish

Theme 4: Safe and suitable housing:

S2: Increase housing diversity and choice

S3: Deliver more opportunities for affordable housing

S3.1 *As part of the Local Growth Management Strategy identified in Action C2.1, Council will prepare a Housing Strategy that considers supply, diversity, affordability and resilience.*

MNCLHD comment: MNCLHD would like to support the development of a Housing Strategy.



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- Diversity of housing types helps cater to the housing needs of people at different stages of their lives, and of an increasingly diverse range of household types [20]
- Mixed-use planning and the presence of a variety of destinations and housing types and population sub-groups promote walking, which in turn increases the sense of place, community and social capital through greater interaction between residents [21].

S4: Deliver well-planned rural residential housing areas

MNCLHD: Consider in delivery; connected, safe cycle/walk ways to link new rural residential housing areas to existing sporting facilities, shopping centres and schools within a neighbourhood or housing estate. For example new housing estates being developed. Connectivity will encourage children to walk or cycle to school and all ages to use local recreation and other facilities.

- There is good evidence to support designing neighbourhoods that encourage people to walk as it creates opportunities for social interaction, and helps promote a sense of community, social capital and social cohesion [22], all of which are particularly important for the ageing population in maintaining quality of life.
- Pedestrian-friendly infrastructure may be especially important for older adults. Providing sheltered seating may encourage older adults to walk to local services, and maintain social interaction and community connections [23, 24].
- Walkable environments (denser, mixed-use and more connected) strengthen residents' sense of community and social capital by encouraging and facilitating community connections through opportunities for residents to meet, interact and become more actively involved in their neighbourhood [25, 26, 27].

We thank you again for the opportunity to provide feedback on your Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement and look forward to further opportunities where Health Promotion can work together with Kempsey Shire Council to help improve the health of your communities.

Should you require further information or wish to discuss please contact Amy Sawyer, Health Promotion Officer on 0429 690 186 or via email Amy.sawyer@health.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Nicola Kerr
Acting District Manager Health Promotion

Mid North Coast Local Health District
ABN 57 946 356 658

Morton Street PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444
PO Box 126 PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444
Tel 02 6588 2946

Website www.mnclhd.health.nsw.gov.au

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Mid North Coast Local Health District
ABN 57 946 356 658

Morton Street PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444
PO Box 126 PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444
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Appendix 1



Well-constructed accessible pathway from West Kempsey leading to stairs.



3 flights of 14 steps to pedestrian bridge crossing



Pedestrian bridge crossing – accessible, safe.



Accessible pathway ends here.



The inaccessibility point. Carrying a bicycle down 3 flights of steep steps is achievable for this young person. It is not achievable for older people, people with chronic disease and disease co-morbidity, parents with babies and toddlers. This linkage point is the only point of access to West Kempsey and its government offices – Centrelink, Service NSW, Family and Community Services and the majority of GP clinics and Kempsey Shire Council facilities, including library.

