

Report of Planning and Economy to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 20 March 2017

**PE2 - Draft South West District Plan**

PE2

**Draft South West District Plan**

19

TRIM 9035

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The purpose of this report is to make a submission on the Draft South West District Plan.
- The Draft District Plan prepared by the Greater Sydney Commission is on exhibition until the end of March, 2017.
- Exhibition of the Draft District Plan coincides with the review of our Community Strategic Plan. Feedback on the draft Community Strategic Plan was used to assist in the preparation of a submission.
- Under legislation, a person who makes a relevant planning application or public submission is required to disclose any reportable political donations. The disclosure requirement extends to any person with a financial interest in the application or any associate of the person making a public submission. No disclosure of political donation has been made in association with the draft plan or any potential submission.
- A draft submission is still under preparation and will be forwarded to Councillors prior to the Council meeting.
- This report recommends Council make a formal submission on the Draft South West District Plan in the form circulated to Councillors.

**REPORT**

Council considered a report on the Draft South West District Plan at its meeting on 15 December, 2016 and resolved as follows:

1. *That Council note the exhibition of the Southwest district plan and welcome this new way of planning which genuinely involves local government in district level planning.*
2. *That Council invite the District Commissioner, Sheridan Dudley, to address Council and the community on the content of the district plan at the February Community Forum.*
3. *That a Workshop be held to discuss the district plan and what should be incorporated into Council's submission on the plan.*
4. *That Council staff commence preparation of a housing strategy as required by the draft district plan, using existing budgets where possible, noting that this will have implications on the delivery time for other projects. Should additional funds be required that they be requested through the December quarterly review.*

**PE2 - Draft South West District Plan**

The District Commissioner, Sheridan Dudley held a workshop with Councillors on Monday 6 February, 2017. The Commissioner also made a formal presentation at the Community Forum on Monday 13 February, 2017.

In December 2014 the New South Wales government released A Plan for Growing Sydney. This plan included a commitment from the government to work with local council's to prepare six district plans. Wollondilly Council is located in the south west district along with the councils of Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield and Liverpool.

Early in 2016, the Greater Sydney Commission was established to provide a link between metropolitan level planning undertaken by the Department of Planning and Environment and local level planning undertaken by councils.

During the course of 2016 several council staff participated in technical working groups which were used by the Greater Sydney Commission to provide input into the preparation of the draft district plans. The technical working groups were also attended by staff from the Department of Planning and Environment, Transport for New South Wales, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Industry for New South Wales and other government agencies were included in the technical working group process when matters relevant to them were discussed.

The Greater Sydney Commission also undertook a substantial community engagement program which included a meeting with the previous council of Wollondilly Shire as well as particular community groups and general engagement through social media, community events and meetings with industry associations.

The draft district plan translates and tailors metropolitan level planning for each district by giving effect to the four goals of a plan for growing Sydney:

- Goal 1: A competitive economy with world class services and transport.
- Goal 2: A city of housing choice, with homes that meet our needs and lifestyles.
- Goal 3: A great place to live with communities that are strong, healthy and well connected.
- Goal 4: A sustainable and resilient city that protects the natural environment and has a balanced approach to the use of land and resources.

To do this, the draft plan interweaves these goals by describing proposed priorities and actions for the district in terms of 'A Productive City' (Goal 1), 'A Liveable City' (Goals 2 & 3) and 'A Sustainable City' (Goals 3 and 4).

**PE2 - Draft South West District Plan**

The Draft District Plan has been prepared with a 40 year vision in mind (i.e. until 2056). From a State Government perspective the Draft District Plan will necessitate a review of 'A Plan for Growing Sydney' so that the long term vision for Greater Sydney aligns in the documents. The Future Transport Strategy being developed by Transport NSW will also inform assist with the review of A Plan for Growing Sydney.

For local government the Draft District Plan will inform the preparation of local environmental plans, assessments of planning proposals and guide strategic land use, transport and infrastructure planning across areas.

While the Draft District Plan is on public exhibition until the end of March it will not be finalised until at least the end of 2017 to allow it to be aligned with the review of A Plan for Growing Sydney. The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979* requires local environment plans to be updated to give effect to each district plan as soon as practical after a district plan is made. This process may require a comprehensive review to reflect the local government area priorities identified in each district plan and to allow for more targeted engagement of these priority areas.

A key focus of the Draft District Plan relates to the proposed Western Sydney Airport. The Draft District Plan discusses the potential opportunities arising from the Western Sydney City Deal which aims to bring the Australian, New South Wales and local government's together with a common purpose of measurable improvements to the productivity, liveability and sustainability of Western Sydney including the South West District.

Notable highlights in the Draft District Plan for Wollondilly include the recognition of productive agricultural lands, the recognition of Wilton New Town as a declared growth area, recognition of the need for improved road transport infrastructure and improved public transport services.

At the 17 October 2016 Ordinary Meeting Council resolved as part of its submission on the Greater Macarthur Priority Growth Area highlighted the need for an additional road between Campbelltown and Camden. The Draft District Plan includes an action to build the Badgally transport connection and a separate action to prioritise the planning of Spring Farm Parkway. These projects will relieve traffic pressure and reduce the amount of traffic using Wollondilly roads to avoid Narellan Road.

Council has also regularly advocated for the need to provide public transport services at the same time as growth occurs. The Draft District Plan includes an action for the New South Wales government to prepare a threshold for Greenfield Dwelling numbers based on transport provision. This means that a threshold limiting the number of houses that can be erected prior to the provision of public transport would be applied to growth areas if this requirement remains in the final plan.

**PE2 - Draft South West District Plan**

The Draft District Plan includes a specific action to facilitate jobs growth in Wilton New Town in line with population growth. The plan says that "Wilton New Town has the capacity for more than 8,000 new jobs once it is fully developed with the capacity for more than 7,300 new jobs planned in a centre at Wilton Junction. We need to create jobs in a range of industries including retail, education, trades and services industries. To help create these jobs, growth must be supported by infrastructure provided at the right time with the right level of capacity in line with population and economic growth. Some of the major transport infrastructure improvements that have been identified to support Wilton New Town include the widening of sections of Picton Road and the M31 Hume motorway, upgrading the Picton Road/M31 interchange and new rapid bus services to Campbelltown MacArthur.

The Draft District Plan includes a section on retaining and growing the agricultural, horticultural and rural industry. This section acknowledges the range of agricultural and rural activities occurring and the importance of their proximity to Sydney markets. The plan also notes that residents of the South West district identify strongly with both their rural visual landscape and its remaining agricultural use which provide a sense of belonging.

The liveability chapter outlines numerous liveability priorities and actions for the south west district. These include improving housing choice, improving housing diversity and affordability, coordinating and monitoring housing outcomes and demographic trends, creating great places (not just building houses), fostering cohesive communities and responding to people's need for services.

One particular action that will impact all Council's is the requirement to prepare a Local Housing Strategy. These local housing strategies will need to consider:

- The planning principles and directions in A Plan for Growing Sydney
- Capacity to support the five year housing target
- Capacity to support the strategic housing needs of the local government area for the next 20 years
- Local demographic land
- Local housing market including the feasibility of development for different housing types
- Development staging and market take up rates and how these align with demand
- Challenges and opportunities relating to infrastructure provision
- Urban form and place making
- Accessibility of housing to employment opportunities
- Ways to address housing diversity that respond to the needs of the existing and future local housing market
- Opportunities to improve housing affordability

**PE2 - Draft South West District Plan**

- The prospective displacement of existing affordable housing
- Opportunities for additional capacity around strategic and district centres and other areas with good transport connectivity and service provision
- Specific local market complexities including addressing ways to incentivise the provision of larger group homes, smaller homes for singles and couples, intergenerational homes and medium density housing required by the local community
- Consider ways to provide adaptable housing in accordance with design guidelines by Liveable Housing Australia.

Given the current focus on affordability at all levels of Government, it appears very likely that this action will remain in the District Plan when finalised.

It is unclear whether the affordability targets relate to the entire housing stock in a local government area or new housing stock. A detailed analysis of the socio-economic characteristics of the various towns and villages of the Shire to better understand housing affordability is a costly exercise. The development of a Housing Strategy will be subject to future budgetary considerations.

The Draft District Plan proposes the implementation of affordable rental housing targets to be secured by the relevant planning authority and passed on to registered community housing providers to manage. In this regard the Commission encourages the New South Wales Government to bring forward its own land to maximise affordable housing. The Draft District Plan also includes separate actions to increase social housing provision.

The Draft District Plan also includes discussion on how Councils are to increase housing capacity across the district. The draft district plan includes the following specific items which require actioning by Council:

- Monitor the delivery of Wollondilly's five year housing target of 1,550 dwellings recognising proposal's progressing in Picton, Tahmoor and Thirlmere
- Should the need for additional housing capacity be identified investigate local opportunities to address demand and diversity in and around local centres and infill areas
- Continue to progress work on the Greater Macarthur Priority Growth Area in partnership with Campbelltown Council and the Department of Planning and Environment
- Continue to progress work on the Wilton New Town priority growth area in partnership with the Department of Planning and Environment.

It is not known why this section of the draft plan does not acknowledge other residential growth already in progress at Silverdale, Warragamba, the Oaks, Oakdale, Bargo, Menangle and Appin.

**PE2 - Draft South West District Plan**

The Draft Districts Plan includes actions to create great places and encourage design lead planning. Better Places (October 2016) seeks to deliver design excellence and a safe, equitable and sustainable built environment. The Draft District Plan also proposes actions to plan for safe and healthy places and enhance walking and cycling connections. It seeks to reinforce the need to conserve and enhance environmental heritage including Aboriginal, European and natural heritage. The draft plan also sets out a plan to meet the demand for school facilities and acknowledges that the districts 172 government schools are characterised by high utilisation rates and a significant amount of demountable classrooms. The draft district plan outlines ways in which it is proposed to support planning for health facilities and services, emergency services and cemeteries and crematoria.

This sustainability chapter of the Draft District Plan outlines a list of sustainability priorities including, but not limited to, enhancing the South West in its landscape, protecting the natural beauty of the visual landscape and improving protection of ridgelines and scenic hill scenic landscapes. There are also detailed actions on protecting and enhancing biodiversity, minimising impacts on biodiversity and protecting, enhancing and extending the urban canopy.

The Draft District Plan includes an action to monitor and protect the water quality within the streams and rivers of the South West district. Of particular note is the Action S5 to monitor water levels and water quality in Thirlmere Lakes. There is a requirement of the Office of Environment and Heritage to develop a program of research and monitoring changes in water levels at Thirlmere Lakes, the effects of water levels on the world Heritage values of Thirlmere Lakes and explore and evaluate any remedial action.

The Draft District Plan includes a significant section on managing the metropolitan rural area. The metropolitan rural area has a range of environmental, social and economic values, landscapes, habitat and biodiversity, mineral and energy resources, water supply catchments, tourism and cultural assets and areas of productive agriculture. It also supports small rural villages and areas of low intensity residential development providing opportunities for people to live in a rural setting. The draft plan notes that there is widespread support for the continuation of agricultural production in the metropolitan area. For this to be achieved it is important to recognise existing and potential conflicts between the different land uses and activities and the various pressures on continuing agricultural production. The draft plan takes the approach of recognising the pressures as a dynamic force that can be harnessed and redirected to achieve social, economic and environmental and benefits. The plan recognises that it is not a matter of planning to avoid tensions between activities - these activities are already interspersed - it is instead of a challenge to manage these interactions and develop approaches to distribute costs and benefits equitably, in the context of defined outcomes.



**PE2 - Draft South West District Plan**

The conclusion of the draft District Plan is that given the complexity and variation across the area a design lead response is likely to be more appropriate than relying on generic criteria for managing the multiple interests and values, activities and conflicts that vary from locality to locality. Design lead planning is a proactive, consultative planning process that identifies a desired outcome for each project.

The Draft District Plan also seeks to discourage urban development in the metropolitan area. It says that in general urban development in the metropolitan area will not be supported unless the relevant planning authority has undertaken strategic planning in accordance with sustainability priorities seven and eight. Sustainability priority 7 is to consider environmental, social and economic values when planning for the metropolitan area. Sustainability priority 8 is to provide for rural residential development while protecting the values of the metropolitan area. The plan provides more detail on each of these priorities.

There are many more individual strategies and a considerable amount of information included in the draft plans. A full list of actions identified in the plan is attached to this report.

**COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

There is some overlap between the issues discussed in the Draft District Plan and Council's Community Strategic Plan which will be reviewed next year. Ideally these plans should inform each other to further align planning. Council will be able to use much of the feedback from community engagement on the Community Strategic Plan to assist in the preparation of its submission on the Draft District Plan.

**CONSULTATION**

A workshop was held between the District Commissioner and Councillors and comments made during this workshop have been incorporated into the draft submission.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

No funding has been allocated for any of the tasks allocated to Council under this plan. From a quick review it would appear that the tasks for Council are able to be delivered by existing staff resources, however this will cause some delays to other strategic planning work, particularly the assessment and progression of planning proposals.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

A draft submission on the proposed changes will be forwarded to Councillors under separate cover once it has been prepared.

Report of Planning and Economy to the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 20 March 2017

---

**PE2 - Draft South West District Plan**

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council make a formal submission to the Draft Southwest District Plan in the form circulated amongst Councillors.