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Council Ref: DW1169692

Your Ref No:

For Enquiries
Please Contact: Mr Michael Rayner

Telephone Direct (02) 6670 2470

Submission
No 29

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4 May 2005

The Committee Manager
Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir

Infrastructure Provision in Coastal Growth Areas

We are in receipt of your request dated 7 March 2005 in relation the the NSW Standing Committee on Public works and the inquiry into Infrastructure Provision in Coastal Growth Areas.

Please find attached Council's submission in this regard.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the matter further please contact Mr Mike Rayner, Director Engineering & Operations on (02) 6670 2470 or alternatively Mr Patrick Knight, Planning & Infrastructure Engineer on (02) 6670 2501.

Yours faithfully

Dr John Griffin
GENERAL MANAGER

Encls.



**Submission by Tweed Shire Council to
NSW Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Inquiry into Infrastructure Provision in Coastal Growth Areas
Submission due Friday 6 May 2005**

1. Background:

The NSW Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works is to enquire into and report on issues relating to the provision of infrastructure to non metropolitan coastal growth areas in NSW.

The inquiry will examine:

1. Key coastal population growth and urban consolidation trends in NSW;
2. Short and long term needs of coastal communities for basic infrastructure (such as roads, power, water and sewerage) and human services infrastructure (such as hospitals, schools, aged care centres and sporting facilities);
3. Coordination of commonwealth, state and local government strategies to deliver sustainable coastal growth and supporting infrastructure;
4. Best practice methods to plan, manage and provide infrastructure to coastal growth areas; and
5. Management of social, environmental and economic considerations associated with infrastructure provision in coastal growth areas.

The committee has invited submissions to assist the inquiry process.

2. Current Infrastructure Planning and Finance in Tweed Shire:

Tweed Shire Council now has:

- A long term strategic landuse plan
 - There have been a series of rolling strategic landuse plans for the Tweed Shire area commencing with the 1984 "Tweed Shire Strategic Plan". The latest update called "Tweed Futures" was adopted late 2004.
 - The Strategic Plan deals with:
 - urban development & management including designation of future urban release areas
 - open space
 - community and cultural facilities
 - economic development
 - infrastructure planning
- A long term infrastructure plan
 - The "Tweed Development Program" has been compiled as a companion document to the Tweed Shire Strategic Plan. It contains 30 year plans for provision and financing of strategic infrastructure: -
 - Arterial roads,
 - water supply,
 - sewerage,
 - open space & recreation
 - Community facilities
- Various other complementary strategic plans including
 - A "Coastline Management Plan" to manage coastline land and hazards
 - Floodplain management plans for the Tweed River floodplain and other smaller coastal floodplains

- Contribution Plans to finance infrastructure necessary to service population growth
 - Section 94 Plans for arterial roads, strategic drainage, open space and recreation, cycleways, parking, emergency facilities, administration offices, libraries, cemeteries.
 - Section 64 plans for trunk water supply and sewerage infrastructure

3. **Assessment of Tweed Shire Infrastructure Planning and Financing**

- Council has generally been successful in providing the necessary trunk infrastructure to facilitate a population increase from 45,000 to 80,000 in the past 20 years.
- The cash flow from contributions plans has financed the necessary infrastructure from s94 and s64 contributions plans
- There are a number of areas where landuse/infrastructure planning and financing have not been ideal. These include:
 - Infrastructure planning by NSW Government agencies
 - Long term financing the management of coastline land and hazards
 - Integration of Tweed Shire arterial road network with NSW RTA and Queensland Main Roads highway/freeway strategies.

The principal area of concern has been the lack of strategic planning integration with other levels of government, particularly key NSW Government agencies. Tweed Shire has long term strategic plans in place for its infrastructure, but, the NSW Government agencies are often unable to provide their long term plans and do not appear able to integrate departmental planning with Council's long term land use planning.

It was the intention of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act (1979) to provide a State and regional planning framework that would enable State government infrastructure to be planned and integrated with Council Local Plans. Unfortunately this has never eventuated.

- The State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP) have not been used to plan state facilities. More often than not they are merely devices to remove local planning powers from Councils so that the state can determine applications at the local level
- The Regional Environmental Plans have also been ineffective. When initiated in the 1980's by the then Planning & Environment Commission/Department of Planning etc the department failed to gain cooperation from other state agencies. Departments particularly health and education refused to be bound by the state/regional planning process and the State Planning Department refused to instigate any meaningful landuse/population future planning. In the end the regional plan became a repository of motherhood statements, policies and rules that added little to the regional planning process.

Council's strategic landuse planning, particularly in new urban release areas is hindered by the absence of State agency participation/cooperation in the process. Matters of particular concern are planning for and location/sizing of State primary and high schools, hospitals, fire stations, police stations, state health facilities, Pacific Highway interchanges and service roads.

As an example, Council in the past has attempted to set aside sites for public schools in new urban release areas, but, this has been met with either lack of commitment or disinterest by the education department who seem to prefer to plan reactively after the population has already been established with large increases in cost.

The newly formed Department of Infrastructure Planning & Natural Resources was supposedly created to integrate landuse and infrastructure planning. So far there has been little evidence of it happening. As part of the current planning reforms "Regional Strategies" are proposed for key regions of NSW. These may be a vehicle for better integrated "all of government planning", but, given past experience with the Regional

Environmental Plans and the reluctance of other departments to be constrained by the planning process, it seems unlikely there is sufficient commitment by the NSW Government to make it work.

4. Recommendations for Improvements to Strategic Infrastructure Planning in Coastal Growth Areas in NSW

An integrated whole of government approach is essential for adequate landuse and infrastructure planning of coastal growth areas in NSW. Given the failure of NSW to achieve this in the past a different model is required.

It is recommended that NSW adopt a regional planning structure based on the Queensland system, where regional planning is overseen by a high level regional coordination committee composed of key state government ministers and local government mayors. Such a committee has the power to ensure all state agencies and local government cooperate in meaningful whole of government regional planning.

Attached Appendix A gives an outline of the South East Queensland Scheme.

5. Conclusion

Your Committee's enquiry into infrastructure provision in coastal areas of NSW needs to come up with practical solutions to address the chronic lack of past all of government (including local government) planning in this area.

The adoption of the Queensland regional planning model may be one means of achieving this.

Appendix A South East Queensland Regional Planning System

The **South East Queensland Regional Coordination Committee** is comprised of six Queensland Government Ministers and four local government Mayors. The current members are:

- Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Sport (Chair)
- Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women
- Minister for Transport and Main Roads
- Minister for Natural Resources and Mines
- Minister for State Development and Innovation
- Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
- Lord Mayor of Brisbane
- Mayor of Noosa
- Mayor of Logan
- Mayor of Ipswich

The Regional Coordination Committee is the key advisory body to Cabinet on regional growth management in South East Queensland. It advises on the preparation and implementation of the **South East Queensland Regional Plan** and on regional infrastructure coordination

The **South East Queensland Regional Plan** will guide growth and development in SEQ to 2026. It also identifies areas that, subject to further investigation, may be suitable for medium to longer-term development. The extent to which this urban pattern is achieved will depend upon a number of factors, including future growth rates, community attitudes and behaviours, government regulation, the ability to provide infrastructure efficiently and technology. Sound planning principles, economic growth, the timely provision of infrastructure and the maintenance of community and environmental values will continue to determine the future of the region.

To support the Draft Regional Plan and guide the preferred pattern of development, the Office of Urban Management is currently preparing the **South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program (SEQIPP)**.

Key elements of the legislation with respect to implementation of the South East Queensland Regional Plan are:

- oversight by the Regional Coordination Committee (RCC);
- local governments are required to amend their planning schemes to reflect the Regional Plan;
- State and local government agencies preparing or amending a plan, policy or code that may affect a matter covered under the Regional Plan must take account of the Regional Plan;
- development assessment processes, including referral agency obligations for development applications to be consistent with the Regional Plan.