



PART C

Infrastructure Strategy

Community Engagement

Summary Report

March 2023

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

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ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This summary report is Part C of the Future Strategies Community Engagement Report. It covers community feedback on the draft Infrastructure Strategy, which is one of three strategies in the Future Strategies suite.

This summary report should be read in conjunction with the Future Strategies Community Engagement Report; which reports on engagement methods, activities, statistics and key outcomes across all three strategies.

About the draft Infrastructure Strategy 2022 - 2042

Our infrastructure is sustainable, resilient, inclusive and smart. Infrastructure delivery is aligned with planned growth and the community's needs.

Infrastructure shapes and influences every aspect of our community – from where we live to how we work, our social interactions, our economic structures and our environmental footprint. Well-planned infrastructure enables us to manage change, and ensures the essentials of life are delivered safely and reliably. Council is one of many players who are responsible for the infrastructure that supports us including all levels of government as well as the private sector.

The Infrastructure Strategy for Port Macquarie-Hastings takes an LGA-wide view and aims to:

- Identify significant issues and challenges for infrastructure assets over the next 20 years and provide principles and priorities to guide investment and resourcing to address these issues and challenges.
- Demonstrate how Council plans to manage its infrastructure assets prudently and sustainably through future periods of growth and other pressures, which can be supported by our Resourcing Strategy including our Long-Term Financial Plan.
- Provide the principles for the development of long term financial plans and budgets for infrastructure.

This Strategy is not an audit. It is not intended to identify every infrastructure need or capacity constraint in the LGA, nor is it intended to provide a list of the projects that Council should undertake. Details of specific infrastructure projects will be detailed in supporting strategies and action plans. This is Port Macquarie-Hastings Council's first ever Infrastructure Strategy. This first iteration outlines the key principles and priorities that Council will follow in the implementation of its infrastructure investment and identifies key areas of focus that will shape future strategic and operational planning work for Council's infrastructure.

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: FEEDBACK

We received 20 submissions in response to the draft Infrastructure Strategy, with the majority coming through our Have You Say online engagement platform.

Feedback was also gathered during a combined community and industry workshop session, which attracted 18 attendees. As acknowledged in the Community Engagement Report, we received a relatively low number of responses however, the majority those were informative and comprehensive.

Feedback across all three strategies was qualitative; we simply asked respondents to share opened ended feedback on each strategy. This form of data delivers extensive and detailed information specific to each strategy however, it is typically difficult to analyse and in this case, responses don't fit into standard categories.

One of the challenges in presenting this type of feedback is in identifying key issues without bias. The following section presents observations around some of the strongest themes, with examples of feedback. We have included verbatim responses in the Appendix and encourage readers to view this for details.

In some instances, feedback was supplied as a marked up document; feedback was given on a per page basis. It is not practical to copy these submissions into the appendix however; all feedback will be considered when updating the strategy.

Feedback Summary

1. Readable, understandable: respondents referred to the challenges surrounding readability and user comprehension of the document.

"Too much information - can't it be broken into different infrastructure streams?"

"Where is the strategy in this document? Appears to be 60 pages of saying and doing nothing. Is there a reason why this document is not user friendly, who is that target audience anyway – is certainly not rate payers and the community."

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"As this is the first ever Infrastructure Strategy for the council, surely the council did its research to look at best practices and see what other are doing? Why can't it be more reader friendly."

2. Realistic and true language:

respondents want transparency and everyday language used rather than altruistic statements.

3. Measurable and credible: questions around how success is measured, how

credible the strategy is in the context of the current and predicted growth and our ability to maintain this pace when there is a significant backlog of work.

"It is very encouraging to note that the draft infrastructure strategy acknowledges and aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals."

"Principles - misses the unplanned growth which has been a significant impact."

"I don't think anybody would expect upgrades to infrastructure (particularly critical infrastructure) would result in enhanced biodiversity. If we apply our CAPIT values and use language which is realistic and honest, documents such as this will have much greater integrity."

4. Reliable data: respondents want to ensure that the data informing the strategy is reliable and considers growth in our region.

"References to population growth specifically references to the importance of factoring the growth of young people and young families."

"Can we be sure that the IS connects to the Regional City Action Plan"

5. Climate Change: some respondents expressed concern about the impact of climate change and how it was not written into the strategy.

It is commendable that the Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) forms the basis of the Strategy. However, of the four strategic pillars of the QBL the words Climate Change, with the two words appearing in that specific order, are absent and ought to be included.

"Are we afraid to use those words? The plan addresses adaptation strategies but does little to address our share of mitigation. There is some mention of it in page 78 but again avoiding the

"These mere asides lack integrity and exhibit avoidance, perhaps due to fear, rather than the boldness and leadership we need from planners. Please get serious about mitigation."

"It should be acknowledged that infrastructure plans need to respond through both adaptation and mitigation measures to address the increasing risks posed by Climate Change."

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COMMUNITY & INDUSTRY WORKSHOP: FEEDBACK



The workshop sparked critical thought and discussion among participants and staff. The following comments were recorded during the 1.5hr session.

- How does the strategy address our current backlog?
- Concerns on document credibility; development continuing on infrastructure already stressed and at capacity
- Can we be sure that the IS connects to the Regional City Action Plan
- Does the IS address natural disasters and shocks at the correct level
- Impatient to see actions from this
- Principles - misses the unplanned growth which has been a significant impact
- Future trends - stay ahead - regular reviews required to stay ahead
- Stay ahead of growth - stop 'chasing tail' the connections missing
- Whole of life management / maintenance of infrastructure
- How is community input achieved on strategic priorities? Engagement with community and collaborative discussions
- Positive to see proactive opportunities not just reactive
- Priority to maintain and enhance existing infrastructure is a positive e.g. infill growth
- Strategy adjustment (growth) resonate
- Creating local precinct; having local services / health etc
- Make the area most liveable and attract people
- Less reliance on cars. More reliance on people lifestyle
- Reassessed the way we want to live our life
- Planning for growth maybe more of a higher priority than secondary
- Too large for strategy document
- Being resilient - what mitigation / actions how are you going to do this
- Pg 14. rather than 'seeing' or planning, looks like we are reacting
- How do we test our community?
- Do we need to define resistance better?
- Where do the objections come from?

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- Strategy on a page - great table but not included in the actual strategy
- Lack of 'project management' or portfolio management (action based)
- What are the priorities of the strategy?
- Too much information - can't it be broken into different infrastructure streams
- How do we translate this document into the actions on the ground?
- Difficult to see the table
- Overlap
- So many strategies - when will we get to the doing
- Need to understand interconnections between strategies
- Population growth
- Misses opportunities growth
- Population projections v actual growth - higher
- Overall agree, really like it, quite ambitious
- Covid changed wants and needs
- Less reliance on infrastructure - move to public transport
- Principles - misses unplanned growth
- Future trends, regular reviews, stop chasing tail
- Increased engagement with community
- Positive - proactive opportunities
- Priority maintaining existing infrastructure
- Support for the 1 pager as larger document is overwhelming
- Where are the objectives coming from?
- How does the strategy address the backlog?
- Natural disasters higher in the priority

INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS

Hopkins Consultants

- General support for the Infra Strategy.
- Challenges the statement that infill, medium to high density housing development will satisfy future demand
- Needs to address the forecasted growth and likely demand for low density family living in new estates.

Love Project Management

- Acknowledges infrastructure is more than hardware; it is an integral part of our liveability.
- Needs to address future community members and be equitable for a broad demographic.
- Infrastructure responsibilities is too general.
- Need new infrastructure while continuing to maintain existing and addressing the backlog of new assets.

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- Sustainable growth needs to be incorporated at every stage, not as a secondary priority.

Wauchope and Hinterland (deintified)

Suggestions for infrastructure projects including:

- Link road from Bago Road to the Oxley Highway
- Expansion of Lank Bain sporting fields
- Light Rail
- Cycleways
- Tertiary education expansion

(See Appendix 2: Industry & Community Submissions)

NEXT STEPS

All submissions received will be considered during the next revision of the Future Strategies. The final reports will be tabled at the April 2023 Ordinary Council Meeting for consideration for adoption.

If you would like to view the final documents, the Council Meeting agenda or speak at a public forum please head to our [website](#) for this information or contact our customer service team on 6580 8111 or council@pmhc.nsw.gov.au.

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APPENDIX 1: VERBATIM FEEDBACK RESPONSES

I have read too many infrastructure strategies that simply get shelved and ignored. I suspect, despite all the nice words used in this plan, it too deserves to be shelved. The shortcomings are:

1. No mention of the crying need for a road network that is actually a network - that is to say where there is connectivity across roads. PMQ is a town based on hubs along arterial roads. Those hubs are not connected to the next hub. For example, one cannot go from Merrigal Road to the Base Hospital. Instead, a commuter must go out on to Lake Road and make their way through to Wrights Road. Similarly, there is no sub-connection between Ascot Park and Sovereign Hills. There is no connection between Ocean Drive, Oxley Highway and Hastings River Drive.
2. The orbital road has been a part of the discussion for over 20 years. An independent infrastructure gap analysis saw the yawning gap. Anyone asked will agree on the need, but our Mayor and State representative conspire with NIMBY activists to thwart the solution.
3. People do not wish to come to PMQ to swap the traffic jam in Five Dock for the traffic jam at Wrights Road. An orbital road will relieve the pressure on that location by taking away flows from and to the eastern suburbs by taking them to the south and further on to the airport. An all weather access road to the airport. Wow, what a great idea for visitors and locals alike.
4. Other road infrastructure gaps include the Pacific Highway off ramp from the south at the Donut and an overpass from Houston Mitchell Drive.
5. All the many nice words about resilience, building for the future and the like count for nothing without specific projects that will address current and longer term needs.
6. No mention of new dams/reservoirs being constructed, despite recognition of the increasing demand on water. We have a problem when it rains and turbid water cannot be taken from the river and when it doesn't rain there is insufficient water to take. We cannot blame climate change for these phenomena. They happen all the time.
7. If you want resilient water solutions, then you cannot overlook dams; a proven technology for storage of water which also provides potential for flood mitigation.

- There are substantial rural land in the Hastings that are not reaching their productivity potential due to inadequate or lack of drain maintenance. Regular maintenance appear to have fallen off the radar.
- The maintenance of flood mitigation drains and headworks are the responsibility of Council. The drains and headworks were constructed in the 1970's. A number of drains have not been maintained by landowners or Council. The headworks have not been upgraded to include modern technology that facilitates best effectiveness for intended use and best environmental practice.
- Modern technology should be installed so that flood gates are mechanical open and closed by solar power controlled by programmed computers that results in maximum drainage of surface water and maximum retention of subsoil water table. The resulting increase productivity of the land increases the viability of our LGA and environment protection of land and water ways. Could this be included in the infrastructure strategy

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- The infrastructure strategy refers to the "Three Waters Infrastructure" and it is not clear that this is also the "Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy" (IWCM) is the integrated management of water supply, sewerage and stormwater services within a whole of catchment strategic framework.
- The three components of urban water – potable water, sewage and stormwater – share common issues, as well as individual problems. IWCM promotes holistic management of these services, which saves resources and improves services to ratepayers.
- Perhaps "Three waters" should be combined with IWCM or at least the connection made between the two (2) being the same thing.

The overarching IWCM framework should deliver the strategy for the three (3) related strategic plans:

1. Water resilience plan
2. Sewer catchment management plans
3. Storm water catchment management plans.

- External factors (page 28) include Climate Change.
- Are we afraid to use those words? The plan addresses adaptation strategies but does little to address our share of mitigation. There is some mention of it in page 38 but, again, avoiding the phrase 'Climate Change'.
- These mere asides lack integrity and exhibit avoidance, perhaps due to fear, rather than the boldness and leadership we need from planners. Please get serious about mitigation.

- I would like to suggest we use more realistic and honest language on this document. In particular, in relation to our environmental management. We have a statement in desired outcomes which states; 'We are stewards of our natural environment'. Are we good, bad or indifferent stewards?
- In our Strategic Objectives we state; 'We plan our infrastructure wisely to protect our natural environment systems and to preserve and enhance healthy, and resilient biodiverse'. Is this really true? Could we consider using more realistic and honest language such as; We make every effort to ensure our infrastructure upgrades minimise impact to our natural environment and biodiversity?
- Quite simply I don't think anybody would expect upgrades to infrastructure (particularly critical infrastructure) would result in enhanced biodiversity. If we apply our CAPIT values and use language which is realistic and honest, documents such as this will have much greater integrity.

- It is very encouraging to note that the draft infrastructure strategy acknowledges and aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It is also commendable that the Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) forms the basis of the Strategy. However, of the four strategic pillars of the QBL the words Climate Change, with the two words appearing in that specific order, are absent and ought to be included.
- The Community Wellbeing Strategic Pillar is quite comprehensive and should remain. Again, page 4 lists external factors and Climate Change should be included here. And it should be acknowledged that infrastructure plans need to respond through both adaptation and mitigation measures to address the increasing risks posed by Climate Change.
- Page 13 includes the Hastings – Macleay Regional Economic Development Strategy but this expired in 2022 and there is not a current/endorsed version.

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	• Page 26 claims that a large percentage of the LGA's ecosystems are in protected areas (e.g. state forests, national parks and reserves). However this is not the case for state forests where a significant proportion is not protected (ie reserved for timber production). • Pages 38 and 39, Objective 3 acknowledges the significance and importance of mitigating pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity loss which are all crucial for achieving a sustainable place and are appropriate so should definitely be retained within the strategy. • Also on page 39, Objective 4 makes a lot of sense and will be very important for achieving the delivery of infrastructure that is of maximum benefit when considering its merit against a QBL decision making framework.
	• How does the 'draft Infrastructure Strategy' align with the United Nations General Assembly's Sustainable Development Goals. It needs to provide commentary on how it's aligned or how the strategy addresses these. • QUADRUPLE BOTTOM LINE (QBL) STRATEGIC PILLARS - what does this mean, who is this document written for. There is no introduction to these to explain the purpose or what they mean. • As this is the first ever Infrastructure Strategy for the council, surely the council did its research to look at best practices and see what other are doing? Why can't it be more reader friendly maybe have a look at other such as https://haveyoursay.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/download_file/250/530 for inspiration. • Where is the strategy in this document? Appears to be 60 pages of saying and doing nothing. Is there a reason why this document is not use friendly, who is that target audience anyway – is certainly not rate payers and the community. • Why is the council making things so complicated? Why is the council even referencing a 4-5 stage DRAFT Strategic Planning Framework? • If you are going to utilise someone else's image recommends referencing the source as we can clearly see that it states 'Waverly' within the image (page 36) The document refers to a 'Waste Management Strategy which will be reviewed in 2022.' However, we are in 2023 does this mean you are a year behind. • How is the council enabling transport connectedness, we have major bottlenecks especially along the Oxley highway (if there is an accident it's totally blocked) – what happened to the orbital road – only one way in and out of most areas. The airport road gets easily flooded, how are you supporting our residents and visitors move around when there are here, it's appears there is a lack of planning. • How can council get away with spending all this money on plans, consultation over many years only to block progress and shelve it. • You talk about opportunities to 'Improve safety on our roads through initiatives such as targeted safety projects, speed management and road improvements;' how about simply putting in speed limit signs so people know what the speed is especially along new development areas 'Carlie Jane Dr' near the underpass is a haunt for speedsters why? No speed limit signs.
	• The roads are a disgrace
	• There is some informative information. Not much thought about the Hinterland. We need to get the basics right to build a strong community into the future. Good maintenance is a start.

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	• Additional residential density in East Port Precinct given the proximity to the Town Centre and local amenity • Infrastructure, particularly servicing East Port and the potential to grow the residential population.
	• I have for many years been involved in cycling projects, not only in the Hastings region, also, in other areas of Australia, Malaysia and Countries throughout the world. • I have commenced reading the drafts this morning, as you would be aware, there are many and it will take some time for me to digest the many that are on offer. • I am currently employed by the National body of cycling, AusCycling and am once again based in the Port Macquarie region and if I can be of use, please email me.
	• Great to see that the draft infrastructure strategy acknowledges and aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. • Also great to see that the Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) forms the basis of the Strategy however, of the four strategic pillars of the QBL the words Climate Change, with the two words appearing in that specific order, are absent and ought to be included. • The Community Wellbeing Strategic Pillar is quite comprehensive and should remain. • Again, page 4 lists external factors and Climate Change should be included here. And it should be acknowledged that infrastructure plans need to respond through both adaptation and mitigation measures to address the increasing risks posed by Climate Change. • Page 13 includes the Hastings – Macleay Regional Economic Development Strategy but this expired in 2022 and there is not a current/endorsed version. Page 26 claims that a large percentage of the LGA's ecosystems are in protected areas (e.g. state forests, national parks and reserves) and as State Forests are in fact not protected areas this should be removed. • Pages 38 and 39, Objective 3 acknowledges the significance and importance of mitigating pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity loss which are all crucial for achieving a sustainable place and are appropriate so should definitely be retained within the strategy. • Also on page 39, Objective 4 makes a lot of sense and will be very important for achieving the delivery of infrastructure that is of maximum benefit when considering its merit against the Environmental, Social, Financial and Purpose as is expected from a QBL decision making framework.
	• The draft Infrastructure Strategy is a document which recognises that infrastructure is not purely roads and pipe networks, but rather is an integral component of the successful liveability of our LGA. With that in mind, I am generally supportive of the broad definition of infrastructure (beyond roads and pipes) adopted by this Strategy, and the value of these various levels and types of Infrastructure, to the wellbeing of our community. • It is important that our existing community members, as well as our future community members, are given equal value in the decision making process. It is critical that we provide a voice for those who have not moved here yet, as well as those who choose to visit us. • The draft Strategy makes reference to the significant component of our population who have migrated to our towns and communities, and for that reason, we must have a strong view towards these future communities, not just those of us who happen to be

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here now.

The following specific comments are made, in support of the above broader comments:

- p.19 – Demographic Context
“Port Macquarie – Hastings population growth is driven substantially by people moving to the LGA. PMHastings’ population is expected to age significantly over the next 20 years”
Comment: Whilst I accept the trend towards ageing population, I don’t accept the trend that the ageing LGA is due to the LGA being an attractive place for retirees. The view of our LGA as a place for old people is a trend that we should not necessarily continue to reinforce and accept - particularly if it results in the other sectors of our community not being catered for.
- P24 – Responsibilities across infrastructure sectors
The division of sectors across Federal, State & Local Government, and the Private Sector is rather subjective, and does not take into account the full range of involvement in the provision of some of these forms of infrastructure. For example, Local Roads are identified as only a responsibility of Local Government, however substantial funding is sourced from outside Local Government, including State Government Grant Funding, as well as initial construction of new roads by the private sector.
- Pathways / cycleways could be considered a similar responsibility split. The parameters of defining “responsibilities” for the purpose of this Table should be set out / defined as an assumption to this Table. It is not considered that this table is a good representation of responsibility splits and is perhaps too misleading or open to incorrect interpretation and thus should not be included in the strategy in its current form.
- Page 25 –
“Put simply, it is not of benefit to the community to build new infrastructure assets if those that already exist are not able to be maintained and as a result, reach an unusable condition. Council needs to be a responsible and strategic steward of what it manages on behalf of the community”.
This statement is concerning if it were to be interpreted that all new infrastructure is to wait until refurbishment of existing infrastructure occurs. This scenario may be likened to the painting of the Sydney Harbour Bridge – by the time we have refurbished our existing infrastructure, parts of the network would again require replacement and upgrades. It’s a never ending cycle of maintenance, which must continue to occur to ensure a well maintained system, as well as ensuring our LGA has ongoing system upgrades to provide for better and more efficient infrastructure networks. It is likely that the new infrastructure will put less load on future maintenance demands and drains on funds, if new technology, new materials and current standards are applied. The latter would suggest that installing new infrastructure will provide for improved efficiencies, rather than waiting until we have finished patching up the backlog. Thus, the quoted statement is not supported in its current form.
- Page 37 – Objective 1 – Our infrastructure maximises wellbeing and liveability for our communities. Whilst I generally agree with the broader statements in this section, there are MANY competing demands on the provision of infrastructure; not all of which could be encapsulated into this objective and the supporting statements. Infrastructure is reliant on good / prudent long term decision making, and sometimes these decisions will not always deliver a clear outcome in favour of Objective 1. It should be clear that the Objectives in this document are all part of the decision making and management process for infrastructure, rather than standalone Objectives, such that some decisions may not be entirely aligned with a particular Objective, however provide for an on balance consistency with the Objectives overall.

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- Page 40 – Infrastructure Priorities
This figure (Figure 9) is concerning as it could be interpreted to be a very strong directive that we continue to work with the existing assets and networks, and don't allocate any priority to ensuring we don't remain in this Infrastructure backlog for our future communities. If we are to only, or significantly only, work with the existing assets and networks, does this mean that, if a new asset was the better outcome, that this would not be pursued? Does it also mean that we do not allow for any population increase as the existing infrastructure does not support any additional persons / loading on the network? If this is the ultimate outcome of the Infrastructure Strategy, then the statement should be more explicitly outlined for the community, and this directive would be at odds with the long established growth of our LGA, as we continue to invite new people to share our place.
- Pages 44 & 45
The Secondary Priority – Support Sustainable Growth, should not sit at such a distance from the First Priority. By labelling this action as “secondary”, there is a risk that this is considered a second tier action. However, if we don't plan for this Sustainable Growth, then we risk this growth just becoming part of our infrastructure backlog. This priority should be concurrent with working on the backlog infrastructure. The discussion setout in this Secondary Priority section makes reference to “growth pays for growth” (page 45) – and thus it is evident that it is possible to action the delivery of new infrastructure, without adverse impact on the backlog tasks. The delivery of new infrastructure should not be seen as an action which must wait until the backlog is cleared, and this should be made clearer in the Infrastructure Strategy.
- Page 46 It is a positive outcome to note that this Strategy references the benefits of collaborating “with adjoining Councils, all levels of government and the private sector to cost-effectively deliver new and upgraded infrastructure”. This recognises the funding restrictions for local government, such that Council cannot deliver all required infrastructure on its own.
- Page 51
Figure 12 shows an interesting division of Council's Infrastructure Assets in terms of dollar value. The tiny sliver of Open Space & Recreational Assets is disappointing. These assets provide significant health (mental & physical) value to our community, as well as providing the many other layers of open space value to our broader biology. It will be interesting to review this split of asset dollar value in the future.

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APPENDIX 2: INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS



13th March 2023

The General Manager
Port Macquarie Hastings Council
PO Box 84
PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444

Attn: Dr Clare Allen

Directors

MICHAEL S MOWLE

B E Civ (Hons)
Chartered Engineer

GEOFFREY E HILL

B Surv
Registered Land Surveyor

DANIEL J BAKER

B Surv
Registered Land Surveyor

DARREN J BOOTH

B Surv
Registered Land Surveyor

Re: Submission on PMHC Draft Infrastructure Strategy

I refer to the PMHC DRAFT Infrastructure Strategy currently on exhibition and make the following submission.

The above Draft Strategy identifies that the PMHC LGA is forecast to grow to over 100,000 people by 2040. It also states that this will require an additional 11,900 dwellings by 2040.

It also correctly identifies that land use planning and new infrastructure to meet the demand generated by growth go hand in hand.

It is of concern that the statement below is included without proper context or explanation:

"In order to meet the NSW growth targets of 40% of new dwellings to be located in the existing urban growth areas of the LGA, it is the intention of Council to plan for growth to occur predominantly within the existing urban boundaries of Port Macquarie, Laurieton & Wauchope. The availability and capacity of infrastructure to support new development or the intensification of existing development is a key planning consideration."

Recent housing statistics show that over the past 20 years greenfield, stand alone housing accounted for 70% of all housing stock produced in this LGA. This means that about 30% of housing demand has been satisfied with high & medium density housing.

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With a significant effort PMHC may be able to increase in this figure to around say 40% of housing being met by infill development comprising both high and medium density housing.

However, the forecast housing demand can never be satisfied "*predominantly within the existing urban boundaries of Port Macquarie, Laurieton & Wauchope*".

A recent study by this office of such developments within Port Macquarie indicates that they do not deliver large numbers of dwellings and are certainly not affordable for young families wanting to move to this area.

Council must consider and plan for the forecast growth to include young families and professionals who will require stand alone houses (upwards of at least 60% x 11900 = 7140 dwellings/lots). This will require additional zoned residential land with the necessary infrastructure (including sewer water and road links). The market will dictate a range of housing options with choice of housing type, price, quality and location.

Whilst this infrastructure strategy is generally well written and appropriate it should take into consideration the forecast growth and likely demand for low density family living in new estates. The ongoing Fernbank/Sancrox Structure Plan and resultant rezoning of up to 3000 residential lots is key to meeting this housing demand.

Yours faithfully,

HOPKINS CONSULTANTS Pty Ltd



B. Eng (Civil) Hons U Syd MIEAust
Chartered Civil Engineer
Managing Director



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Dr Clare Allen
CEO – Port Macquarie Hastings Council
PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444

10th March, 2023

Dear Clare,

RE: PMHC – Draft Infrastructure Strategy

Reference is made to Council's current exhibition of three significant documents, including the Draft Infrastructure Strategy.

Council staff are to be congratulated on the preparation and exhibition of these documents. I trust that the submissions received from our broader community will support and guide Council in updating and modifying these documents with the benefit of the submissions received during the community consultation process.

The following submission is in regards to the Draft Infrastructure Strategy.

Should you require clarification regarding any of these matters, please don't hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Regards

Michelle Love
LPM
Certified Practising Planner

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LPM Submission – PMHC Draft Infrastructure Strategy – March, 2023

The draft Infrastructure Strategy is a document which recognises that infrastructure is not purely roads and pipe networks, but rather is an integral component of the successful liveability of our LGA. With that in mind, I am generally supportive of the broad definition of infrastructure (beyond roads and pipes) adopted by this Strategy, and the value of these various levels and types of Infrastructure, to the well being of our community.

It is important that our existing community members, as well as our future community members, are given equal value in the decision making process. It is critical that we provide a voice for those who have not moved here yet, as well as those who choose to visit us. The draft Strategy makes reference to the significant component of our population who have migrated to our towns and communities, and for that reason, we must have a strong view towards these future communities, not just those of us who happen to be here now.

The following specific comments are made, in support of the above broader comments:

p.19 – Demographic Context

“Port Macquarie – Hastings population growth is driven substantially by people moving to the LGA. PMHastings’ population is expected to age significantly over the next 20 years”

Comment: Whilst I accept the trend towards ageing population, I don’t accept the trend that the ageing LGA is due to the LGA being an attractive place for retirees. The view of our LGA as a place for old people is a trend that we should not necessarily continue to reinforce and accept - particularly if it results in the other sectors of our community not being catered for.

P24 – Responsibilities across infrastructure sectors

The division of sectors across Federal, State & Local Government, and the Private Sector is rather subjective, and does not take into account the full range of involvement in the provision of some of these forms of infrastructure. For example, Local Roads are identified as only a responsibility of Local Government, however substantial funding is sourced from outside Local Government, including State Government Grant Funding, as well as initial construction of new roads by the private sector. Pathways / cycleways could be considered a similar responsibility split. The parameters of defining “responsibilities” for the purpose of this Table should be setout / defined as an assumptions to this Table. It is not considered that this table is a good representation of responsibility splits and is perhaps too misleading or open to incorrect interpretation and thus should not be included in the strategy in its current form.

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Page 25 –

“Put simply, it is not of benefit to the community to build new infrastructure assets if those that already exist are not able to be maintained and as a result, reach an unusable condition. Council needs to be a responsible and strategic steward of what it manages on behalf of the community”.

This statement is concerning if it were to be interpreted that all new infrastructure is to wait until refurbishment of existing infrastructure occurs. This scenario may be likened to the painting of the Sydney Harbour Bridge – by the time we have refurbished our existing infrastructure, parts of the network would again require replacement and upgrades. It's a never ending cycle of maintenance, which must continue to occur to ensure a well maintained system, as well as ensuring our LGA has ongoing system upgrades to provide for better and more efficient infrastructure networks. It is likely that the new infrastructure will put less load on future maintenance demands and drains on funds, if new technology, new materials and current standards are applied. The latter would suggest that installing new infrastructure will provide for improved efficiencies, rather than waiting until we have finished patching up the backlog. Thus, the quoted statement is not supported in it's current form.

Page 37 – Objective 1 – Our infrastructure maximises wellbeing and liveability for our communities

Whilst I generally agree with the broader statements in this section, there are MANY competing demands on the provision of infrastructure; not all of which could be encapsulated into this objective and the supporting statements. Infrastructure is reliant on good / prudent long term decision making, and sometimes these decisions will not always deliver a clear outcome in favour of Objective 1. It should be clear that the Objectives in this document are all part of the decision making and management process for infrastructure, rather than stand alone Objectives, such that some decisions may not be entirely aligned with a particular Objective, however provide for an on balance consistency with the Objectives overall.

Page 40 – Infrastructure Priorities

This figure (Figure 9) is concerning as it could be interpreted to be a very strong directive that we continue to work with the existing assets and networks, and don't allocate any priority to ensuring we don't remain in this Infrastructure backlog for our future communities. If we are to only, or significantly only, work with the existing assets and networks, does this mean that, if a new asset was the better outcome, that this would not be pursued? Does it also mean that we do not allow for any population increase as the existing infrastructure does not support any additional persons / loading on the network? If this is the ultimate outcome of the Infrastructure Strategy, then the statement should be more explicitly outlined for the community, and this directive would be at odds with the long established growth of our LGA, as we continue to invite new people to share our place.

Pages 44 & 45

The Secondary Priority – Support Sustainable Growth, should not sit at such a distance from the First Priority. By labelling this action as “secondary”, there is a risk that this is considered a second tier action. However, if we don't plan for this Sustainable Growth, then we risk this growth just becoming part of our infrastructure backlog. This priority should be concurrent with working on the

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backlog infrastructure. The discussion setout in this Secondary Priority section makes reference to “growth pays for growth” (page 45) – and thus it is evident that it is possible to action the delivery of new infrastructure, without adverse impact on the backlog tasks. The delivery of new infrastructure should not be seen as an action which must wait until the backlog is cleared, and this should be made clearer in the Infrastructure Strategy.

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It is a positive outcome to note that this Strategy references the benefits of collaborating “*with adjoining Councils, all levels of government and the private sector to cost-effectively deliver new and upgraded infrastructure*”. This recognises the funding restrictions for local government, such that Council cannot deliver all required infrastructure on its own.

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Figure 12 shows an interesting division of Council’s Infrastructure Assets in terms of dollar value. The tiny sliver of Open Space & Recreational Assets is disappointing. These assets provide significant health (mental & physical) value to our community, as well as providing the many other layers of open space value to our broader biology. It will be interesting to review this split of asset dollar value in the future.

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This is some ideas for future infrastructure projects for Wauchope and Hinterland.

The revitalization of the Railway precinct with parking on the Western side of the line. A pedestrian over bridge to link the town with the station platform and the Stationmasters cottage .

The planting of 10,000 shade trees 5metres high along all the streets of Wauchope. As well a series of pergolas where trees cannot be planted to transform the town into cool shaded zone in summer. An oasis and an education centre to show how trees and pergolas will allow communities to adjust to climate change. This would transform Wauchope into a tourist destination and the gateway to the Hinterland. Sustainable hub.

The construction of a retaining wall along the Hastings river from the Railway bridge to 8 Rocks Ferry Road. This would stop further erosion of the riverbank caused by two large floods in recent years. They could have buttress that pushes water energy into the middle of the river. All storm water drains increased in Wauchope to combat flooding caused by increased water from new houses running into the existing gutters.

A link road from Bago Rd to Oxley highway crossing over it west of the cemetery heading north along the edge of the rosewood (cleared 100 acre portion)and Yippen Creek to link with Beechwood road near timber corner . This would allow for further expansion of the town from Yippen Ck to rosewood.

Along this new link to Beechwood a new high school, fire station and Hospital could be developed. As the town grows to the west a tunnel under the railway line is essential. This would ensure that traffic would move through the CBD without the constant congestion felt by the 12,000 cars that use the route everyday.

A roundabout at corner of King Creek road and Oxley highway.

The purchase of part of Crosslands farm would allow the expansion of the Lank Bain sports centre . In particular a parking area off the Beechwood road.

A tar sealed road from Beechwood through Brombin to just east of long flat with a new bridge to the east of the village that crosses to Oxley Highway, to link the two villages together. This would developed as a tourist drive culminating in a visit to the historical Kindee Bridge.

Establish a campus of CSU at Wauchope just west of the High school that specialises in agriculture, viniculture, sustainable industries .

Establishment of a light rail from Port Macquarie to the railway station A cycle way from Port Macquarie to Wauchope along the river where possible. To highlight this beautiful asset. This leads to a healthy population by encouraging exercise.

The establishment of a observation precinct on Mt Wauch that honors the first Australians . With trails sculpture and interpretive signs . This educates our wider community about the important roll first nations people play in caring for our natural environment A bridge across the Hastings to replace the low lying Bain bridge. Construction of a new bridge across Yippen creek on Beechwood road. This will allow the residents of Beechwood and Pappinbarra to be able to access Wauchope and Port during floods helps to reduce loss of productivity. Encourages investment in the area

Investigate a bridge tunnel autobahn to be constructed from the pacific Hwy west of Huston Mitchell drive to Tamworth. This would have huge economic advantage for the whole Mid North Coast economy

linking the coast to the inland. A fast train which carries freight and passengers would be included in the design. A transport hub at the Huston Mitchell interchange would allow freight to be redistributed along the pacific motorway. The motorway would have a fast train running between Sydney and Brisbane. To power this huge new population of potentially a million people a hydroelectric scheme could be introduced to transform an area west of Seaview into a collecting cistern with hydroelectricity which would be a clean energy source as well as a way of controlling destructive flood waters that have plagued the low lands from Wauchope to Port Macquarie for many years . This was achieved in the Colorado river almost a century ago. Water could be stored in the mountains through a system of cisterns that would be used in times of drought to power the power turbines. As well as being a constant water source for agriculture and industry. The mountains could store trillions of megalitres of water, by this storage method less impact on the natural environment would occur.

If we have plentiful supply of water and power coupled with a comprehensive transport system we will attract some of the best and most innovative industries to our region which in turn will make us the most desirable