

North Wyong Shire Structure Plan: overview and changes since public exhibition

BACKGROUND TO THE STRUCTURE PLAN

Wyong's population is predicted to grow from almost 150,000 to over 210,000 people by 2031. To support this population growth, the 2008 Central Coast Regional Strategy identified that 39,500 additional houses will be required in Wyong local government area (LGA).

While more than half of the future growth is expected to occur in existing urban areas, Wyong LGA will still be a popular location for greenfield housing and employment development.

The structure plan provides a high level framework to guide future planning for new greenfield housing and employment areas in the northern areas of Wyong LGA.

ABOUT THE PLAN

The project has been led by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure and been assisted, at different stages in the process, by consultants, councils (Wyong and Lake Macquarie), government agencies, landowners, developers, interest groups and the general community.

The structure plan identifies:

- 20 future development precincts with a potential capacity for almost 17,000 new homes and up to 17,100 new jobs
- a network of possible green corridor and habitat areas

- around 1,500 hectares of strategically located land that will be further investigated to identify an appropriate balance between conservation and development potential
- additional development areas that will support the establishment of the Wyong Employment Zone and Warnervale town centre sites
- potential new centres at Wadalba East, Lake Munmorah and Gwandalan
- sufficient land to meet the regional strategy targets with additional capacity should a high demand for land occur.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRUCTURE PLAN

Implementation of the structure plan will occur over many years through:

- Wyong Council's local planning for land release precincts and conservation
- strategic planning and policy decisions, including Wyong Council's new settlement strategy and future reviews of the regional strategy
- planning by all levels of government for infrastructure and services
- private investment decisions by individuals and companies interested in development opportunities in Wyong LGA.

It is expected that the structure plan will be incorporated into the Central Coast Regional Strategy when it is reviewed during 2013.

Until that occurs, new LEPs will need to be consistent with the regional strategy and the structure plan.

THE STRUCTURE PLAN MAPPING

When reviewing the structure plan, landowners should remember that the plans are high level. The final boundaries for the proposed development precincts and green corridor and linkages will be determined when new local environmental plans are prepared for the area.

PLANNING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT PRECINCTS

The structure plan does not change the zoning of land and the structure plan development precincts still need to be rezoned to allow urban development.

The rezoning of the development precincts could occur in several ways, the most likely being via a council-led local planning process as is already occurring for precincts 4, 5 and 7. The government could also lead the rezoning process, as occurred for the Warnervale town centre and Wyong Employment Zone sites.

The outcome of a rezoning process for greenfield sites is typically a new zoning plan, development control plan and infrastructure plans that enable the area to be developed for a range of land uses. Typically this process is supported by studies into land-use options, environmental constraints (vegetation, bushfire risks, etc) and infrastructure issues.

The community will have an opportunity to comment on the new plans as each precinct is planned and released.

STAGING OF RELEASE OF THE DEVELOPMENT PRECINCTS

The structure plan forms the basis for the ongoing release of new development areas. The staging will be reviewed and adjusted regularly to ensure that it delivers on the government's objectives to increase housing supply and achieve cost effective delivery of infrastructure.

The staging plan identifies three priorities for land release, short term sites that are already zoned for development, medium term sites that are expected to be zoned for development in the next 15 years and long term release sites that are expected to be released after that.

STRATEGIC SITES FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

The structure plan identifies several areas in the north east and north west of the study area that are strategically located in relation to existing and proposed infrastructure and development. These areas also have interrelated issues that will need to be resolved through more detailed local planning. The key issues which affect these strategic sites are biodiversity issues, water management and the future potential for extraction of clay resources.

More detailed local investigation and offset strategies are needed to determine the exact development potential of these areas which is beyond the scope of the structure plan project. The structure plan provides a framework for the strategic sites to be investigated further.

ISSUES RAISED IN THE SUBMISSIONS ON THE DRAFT STRUCTURE PLAN

More than 100 submissions were received in response to the public exhibition of the draft structure plan in late 2010.

Submissions came from government agencies and councils (Wyong and Lake Macquarie), specific interest and action

groups, residents and landowners, consultants and developers.

A broad range of issues were raised in the submissions including:

Issues raised in the submission

Issues	Focus of Comments
Extractive resources	Support for and objection to further clay, coal and gravel extraction
Biodiversity planning and impacts and the proposed green corridor and linkages	Support for and objection to the proposed green corridor and linkages
Staging	Requests for most of the development precincts to be released in the short term
Other development proposal	Requests for additional development sites to be identified
Capacity assessments	Concerns that the housing and capacity estimates overestimate the study area's development capacity
Mapping and presentation	Objections to the high-level nature of the mapping and identifying minor mapping errors
Infrastructure	Concerns that the structure plan does not identify the infrastructure required to support future development

- addition of new strategically located, sites for further investigation at Lake Munmorah
- changing the staging plan so that medium term development is now expected to be rezoned within the next 15 years and long term development is development that is expected to occur after that
- removing the land release precinct at Gwandalan as it has been rezoned since the draft structure plan was exhibited
- adjustments to forward dwelling estimates given that land has been rezoned and developed since release of the draft structure plan.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Department of Planning and Infrastructure website:

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CHANGES SINCE PUBLIC EXHIBITION

A number of changes have been made since the exhibition of the draft structure plan and in response to the submissions.

These include:

- clarifying that Wyong Council needs to ensure that clay and gravel resource extraction is still permissible in the identified resource areas and that the sites should contribute to the green corridor, during and after extraction of the resource
- minor amendments to the green corridor and development areas