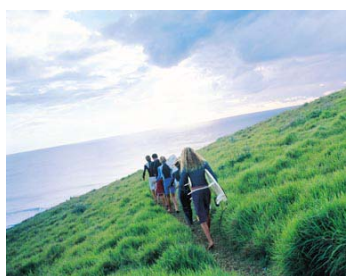




Lennox Head Community Aspirations Strategic Plan



November, 2002

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Introduction

In early 2000, Ballina Shire Council decided to prepare a new Strategic Plan for the district of Lennox Head. This decision was made in response to significant community interest about how the Lennox Head area should be planned and developed in the future and the provision of appropriate services and amenities.

The draft Strategic Plan was prepared in close consultation with the Lennox Head community and sought to reflect the ambitions of that community¹. Upon completion, the draft document was placed on exhibition for public comment for seven weeks in July / August 2002 and attracted approximately 650 submissions from interested members of the community. Ballina Shire Council resolved to adopt the final Strategic Plan at its Ordinary Meeting held on 28th November, 2002.

The Strategic Plan is intended to be an umbrella document which provides guidance for future Council activities – including town planning, works programs and annual budgets. The Strategic Plan will be implemented by each of the operational areas of Council. In some circumstances it will also be necessary to involve other Government agencies and community organisations in the implementation of the Plan.

The Strategic Plan is a living document which is planning for a timeframe of ten years. During the implementation of the Strategy, there will be ongoing review processes. In this regard, it is proposed that there be an interim review of the Strategy in 5 years time, with a comprehensive review in 10 years.

The community vision for the future of Lennox Head and the mission of the Strategic Plan are as follows²:

Community Vision

The seaside village atmosphere and environmental heritage of Lennox Head will be retained and enhanced as the community works together to provide for the needs of existing and future generations.

Mission of the Plan

The Lennox Head Strategic Plan will be a living document which promotes and enhances the sense of community by:

- Balancing environmental, social and economic needs;
- Reducing conflict by providing clear guidelines for future development; and
- Enabling continuing community involvement in its application.

Ecologically Sustainable Development (or “ESD”) is a concept which is embodied in a variety of pieces of legislation including the *Local Government Act, 1993* and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*. Sustainable development involves balancing the environmental, economic and social needs of the community and environment in which we live³. The Lennox Head Strategic Plan embodies this concept by seeking to balance the environmental, economic and social needs of the Lennox Head community. One of the main challenges in achieving this is addressing the wide range of competing opinions, views and interests within the community. Compromise, respect and tolerance were integral to this.

¹ Details regarding community involvement in the plan preparation process can be found at Page 41.

² Both the Community Vision Statement and the Mission of the Plan were prepared by the Lennox Head Community Access Group.

³ Further information regarding Ecologically Sustainable Development can be found in Appendix 1.

The Study Area

Lennox Head is located in the Ballina Shire Local Government Area on the Far North Coast of New South Wales. The Strategic Plan encompasses the broader Lennox Head district - including the original village subdivision, the older estates along the North Creek Road, and newer areas such as Lennox Meadows, Pacific Pines and Skennars Head⁴. Maps illustrating the study area are provided at Maps 1 and 2.

Current Characteristics

Some of the key existing characteristics of the Lennox Head area are outlined below:

- As at September, 2001 in the order of 6150 people resided in the study area. This figure includes actual populations of 4985 in Lennox Head and 858 in Skennars Head and an estimated 300 people at Figtree Hill / Sanctuary Village⁵.
- There is a strong sense of community identity in Lennox Head and this community places a high value on the existing "village atmosphere" of the area.
- The area is experiencing relatively fast population growth. The average annual population growth in the study area during the 1996 – 2001 Census period was 5.3%. This was one of the fastest growth rates in Ballina Shire. By way of comparison, the Wollongbar growth rate was 1.1% and the average rate across the Shire was 1.41% during this same period. It is noted, however, that the population growth rate for Lennox Head has slowed over the past Census period from that which occurred previously. For example, in the 1991 – 1996 Census period the average annual population growth rate for the study area was 9.4%.
- Lennox Head is conveniently located, being approximately 10 kilometres north of Ballina and 20 kilometres south of Byron Bay. Lismore is located some 30km to the west, with the Queensland Gold Coast approximately 100km to the north.
- There are a number of important and sensitive environments within the Lennox Head area - including littoral rainforests and wetlands, Lake Ainsworth, coastal heath lands, the reef, beaches, North Creek and the Ballina Nature Reserve. These environments contain a relatively high biodiversity due to the presence of temperate, subtropical and tropical flora and fauna species.
- Beaches and coastal landscapes dominate the village area as well as the subdivisions located to the east of North Creek Road. Areas to the west of North Creek Road are linked more closely to rural landscapes.
- Swimming, surfing and other water based and outdoor activities are important elements of the Lennox Head lifestyle. In this regard, the village area is located adjacent to Seven Mile Beach which provides an important social and recreational focus for the community. Also, a number of popular and world renowned surf breaks can be found in the area comprising shore, reef and point breaks.
- Lennox Head was originally settled as a holiday destination primarily for people from Lismore and surrounding districts and tourism continues to play an important role in the local economy. Over recent times however, both the number and proportion of permanent residents has increased substantially.

⁴ The Geographical Names Board has defined Lennox Head as being the area to the north of Skennars Head Road. Skennars Head is defined as that area between East Ballina and Skennars Head Road and incorporates Headlands Estate. For the purposes of this Strategic Plan, however, Skennars Head is being considered as part of the broader Lennox Head district.

⁵ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 1996 - 2001 Census Data. It is relevant to note that Figtree Hill and Sanctuary Village are located in Census Collector Areas which extend beyond the study area. As such, the population of this area has been estimated based on the number of approved dwellings in the area.

-
- There are large seasonal fluctuations in the population of Lennox Head with Christmas / New Year⁶ and Easter holiday periods experiencing the greatest influx of holiday makers. These visitors place demands on physical infrastructure, such as water and sewer, as well as parks, beaches and surf lifesaving facilities. Anecdotally, it appears that most visitors during these periods return to the area on a regular basis.
 - Lennox Head is largely a dormitory area for the nearby centres of Ballina, Lismore and Byron. As such, the commercial services currently provided are generally of a convenience and tourist service nature. Higher order commercial facilities and employment opportunities are provided in the larger centres nearby.
 - Physical infrastructure such as water, sewer⁷ and sealed roads are provided to almost all urban areas of the district. However, social infrastructure (such as community facilities and playing fields) has not “kept up” with the rate of permanent population growth in the area.

Key Planning Issues

The Lennox Head community has identified the following matters as being the key issues of relevance when framing the future planning and development of Lennox Head:

1. The community places a very high value on the existing “lifestyle” and “village atmosphere” of Lennox Head and wishes to ensure that these qualities are protected and enhanced in the future;
2. Lennox Head is located in close proximity to a number of important environments which need to be adequately protected into the future. Many of these environments are degraded and require restoration;
3. The Lennox Head Village Commercial Centre is the heart of the community and fulfils an important social and economic function. There is a need, however, for streetscape improvements, a rationalisation of traffic and parking within the centre and adoption of guidelines concerning built form to retain the village atmosphere within the Centre;
4. There are concerns about significant future population growth in Lennox Head and its impact on the village atmosphere and environment currently enjoyed. There are also concerns regarding the rate of population growth in the area; and
5. Community infrastructure, such as playing fields and community halls, are inadequate to meet the current needs of the community.

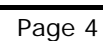
The Strategic Plan endeavours to address these issues by introducing a range of development principles and strategic actions which will be implemented by Council in the Lennox Head district⁸.

⁶Whilst detailed visitor numbers have not been obtained, demand on local infrastructure provides a useful guide. For example, there is a 20-25% increase in volume at the Lennox Head Sewage Treatment Works during the peak Christmas/New Year holiday period, indicating visitor numbers in the order of 1300 – 1600 people.

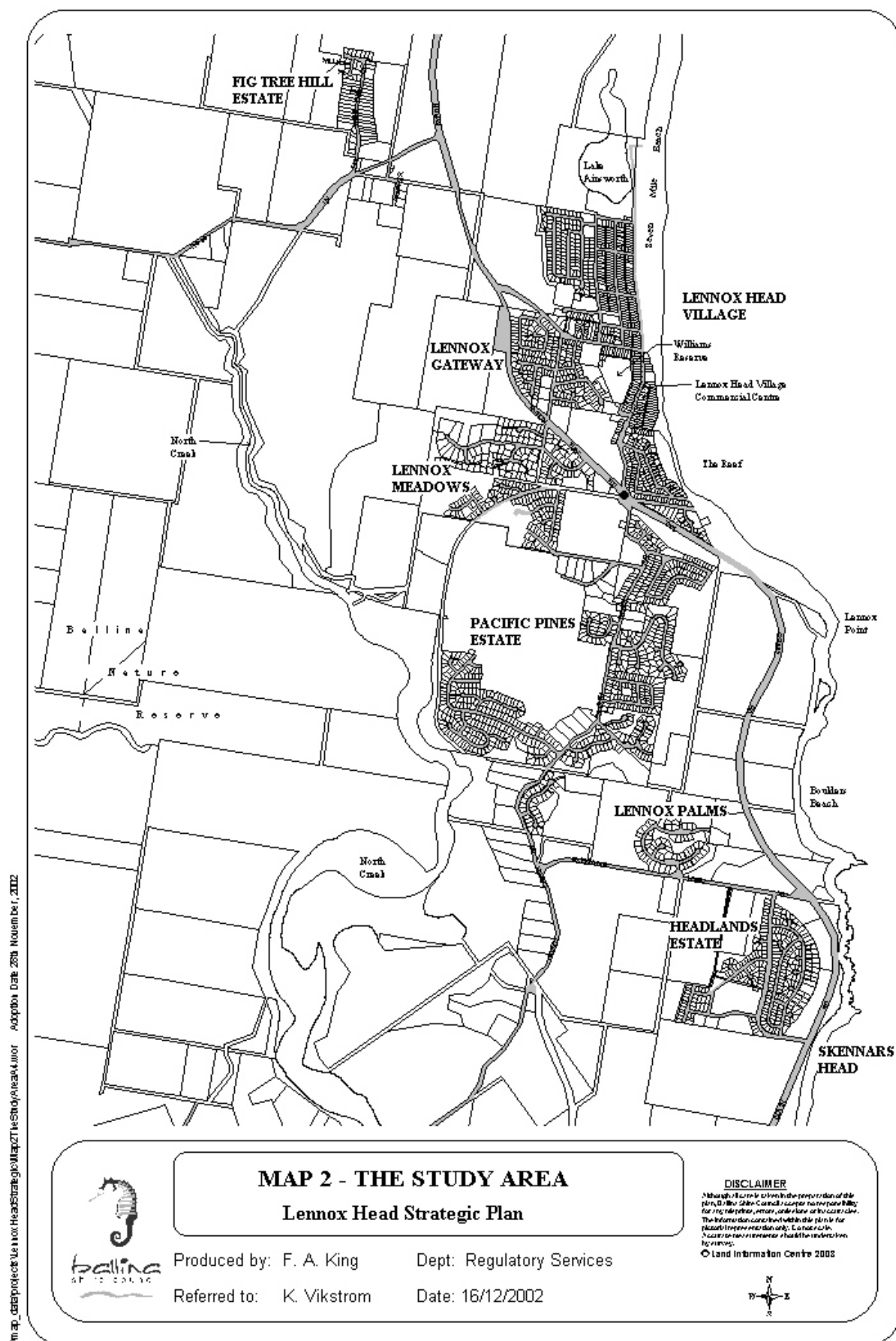
⁷A number of the “large lot subdivisions” in the area are not connected to sewer services.

⁸Detailed background discussion regarding these issues is provided in Part 2 of the Strategic Plan.

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Map 2 - The Study Area (Detail)



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PART 1 – The Strategic Plan



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Strategic Principles

In Lennox Head there is a close relationship between character and lifestyle and the environmental and visual qualities of the area. This relationship is recognised in the community vision found on page 1. The mission of this Plan involves balancing environmental, social and economic needs of the community whilst fulfilling the vision.

It is recognised that population growth inevitably causes change – in some cases this change is positive, in others it is negative. In order to achieve the community vision for Lennox Head and minimise the negative impacts of development, the Strategic Plan has been based on the guiding principles documented below.

Village Atmosphere and Lifestyle Principles

Housing Design

The design of development is very important to the future visual character and environmental sustainability of the area. New development therefore needs to be sensitive in terms of form and character to the natural environment and terrain and to incorporate design elements which reduce energy consumption. Development will therefore be encouraged to comply with the following:

- Providing for a range of housing types and densities, with higher densities located closer to activity nodes;
- Providing for housing choice, including a range of housing densities, designs and construction materials;
- Providing for a style and scale of development which is sensitive to the character, climate and topography of the area; and
- Promotion of “energy smart” design and construction of dwellings, commercial buildings and subdivisions.

Transportation and “Walkability”

Whilst transport within and around Lennox Head and to other places within the Shire is primarily by private motor vehicle, the character, lifestyle and environment of Lennox Head requires flexibility of approach. Planning will therefore provide for a settlement pattern which encourages walking, cycling and public transport usage where practicable. This will be achieved by way of the following:

- Promotion of an integrated transport network for all modes of transportation;
- Encouraging the development of a more efficient and better utilised public transport network by co-locating facilities such as shops, playing fields and community facilities into “nodes”;
- Ensuring that road infrastructure, both within Lennox Head and linking Lennox to other areas, is planned having regard for future population, employment locations, the environment and community views; and
- Providing for improved access to, and interpretation of, the beach and foreshore areas.

Visual Character

For all development, whether or not it includes buildings, there are important elements which need to be considered, including its appearance and how it fits on the land and within the land's context. As such, the following principles will be applied to the assessment of the visual character of development:

- Integrating future development with the landscape rather than substantially modifying the landscape to accommodate development;
- Protecting views and vistas to and from prominent ridgelines, headlands, beaches and other coastal areas by maintaining height, bulk, scale, materials and detailing

-
- consistent with the local context;
 - Recognising the close relationship of the urban areas of Lennox Head to nearby coastal, rural and environmental landscapes. Future development should seek to minimise impacts of urban development on these landscapes by way of sensitive design;
 - Maintaining Lennox Head as a place where the natural environment dominates in terms of views, environmental systems and vegetation types. Ecological systems surrounding and penetrating the built environment need to have a high level of environmental integrity;
 - Recognising the desire for Lennox Head to remain physically and visually separate from other urban areas; and
 - Designing new development in a manner which is sympathetic to the privacy and amenity of existing residents. The provision of buffers between and within large urban release areas may assist.

Community Involvement

Community consultation is a valuable and critical part of the planning process, leading to improved decision-making and better understanding of issues. There is recognition within this Strategic Plan that the Lennox Head community should be afforded opportunities to continue to be active participants in the ongoing plan implementation process. In this regard the Strategic Plan will provide for:

- Active and timely community consultation in Council decision making processes; and
- Developing ongoing partnerships between Council and the community in the implementation of the actions proposed in the Strategic Plan.

Environment Principles

Environment

The maintenance of biodiversity, water and air quality, and soil resources are key requirements in achieving sustainability. As such, the protection and, where necessary, enhancement of these natural resources is the underlying environment principle. This will be achieved by way of the following:

- Ensuring that future urban development does not impact negatively on environmental qualities of the area;
- Protecting and enhancing high conservation habitats by providing appropriate buffers between such areas and urban development and providing corridors linking these ecosystems;
- Maintaining and enhancing habitat for native fauna and flora – particularly that which is designated endangered, vulnerable or rare, or is otherwise protected;
- Maintaining ground, water and air quality;
- Maintaining low ambient noise levels;
- Maintaining an environment which is not deleteriously affected by inappropriate signage and other forms of visual pollution;
- Retaining existing native vegetation both within and around existing and proposed urban areas and encouraging the provision of native vegetation in new plantings;
- Protecting and enhancing public health and safety by providing appropriate buffers between urban development and areas identified as being key mosquito habitats or at high risk of bushfire hazard;
- Managing new development in a manner which ensures that it does not significantly increase stormwater runoff or lead to contamination of groundwater;
- Recognising that land may have attributes which limit or preclude its suitability for a range of land uses. These constraints include acid sulphate soils, bushfire hazard, flooding, proximity to land or waterways having significant environmental values, slope stability, soil suitability and susceptibility to airport noise or other such impacts; and
- Recognising that information about natural resources is not static. Significant new or improved information may result in the need to review plans and policies.

Cultural Heritage

Respecting and conserving the cultural, archaeological and historical heritage which exists in Lennox Head, including both Indigenous and European heritage, is integral to the future of the area. It is recognised, however, that information about cultural and heritage values is not static and changes over time.

Lennox Head Village Centre Principles

Village Centre

The Village Centre of Lennox Head will continue to provide a clearly defined area where people can meet, interact and socialise. This will assist in maintaining a sense of community and provide a focus for community-building activities. Decisions relating to this area will endeavour to achieve the following:

- Promoting a retail and commercial hierarchy which encourages the retention of the existing Village Centre as the commercial and social “heart” of the district and which discourages the establishment of large scale commercial enterprises;
- Improving visual and physical access to the foreshore areas adjacent to the Village Centre;
- Providing for an interconnected system of streets and public spaces in the Village Centre; and
- Encouraging low scale buildings constructed of complementary materials, forms and colours to produce cohesion throughout the Village Centre.

Employment and Tourism

The Community Aspiration Survey recognised that most people who are in the workforce and who reside in Lennox Head work outside the area and are generally happy for Lennox Head to largely exist as a dormitory suburb for Ballina, Lismore and Byron Bay. It is also recognised, however, that low key employment opportunities in Lennox Head will reduce transportation demands and provide for a more dynamic community. As such, the Strategic Plan provides for the following:

- Ongoing provision of low key employment opportunities in Lennox Head with a focus on retailing, tourism and hospitality and home-based businesses;
- Providing for low key “family oriented” tourism and ecotourism;
- Limiting the scale and number of tourist establishments to minimise impacts on residential amenity, village atmosphere and sense of community; and
- Planning for the provision of appropriate low key service type industrial activities in the area.

Community Infrastructure Principles

Community Infrastructure

There is a view within the community that growth and development in Lennox Head has not been accompanied by adequate community infrastructure to meet the needs of the community. It is therefore important that any existing shortfalls are redressed and that any future development is accompanied by adequate community infrastructure. As such the planning for the area will be undertaken in a manner which:

- Provides for long term strategic and financial planning relating to community infrastructure required by existing and future populations;
- Provides for an adequate level and standard of community infrastructure without adding to existing shortfalls;
- Recognises that population increases and changes in community composition will lead to changing demands on infrastructure;
- Recognises that population growth outside of Lennox Head may impact on the demand for facilities in Lennox Head; and
- Reviews available funding mechanisms for community infrastructure – including developer contribution plans, general Council revenue, Government grants and community fund-raising.

Population Growth & Strategic Planning Principles

Role of Strategic Plan

The Lennox Head Strategic Plan will provide the framework and guiding principles for future planning, development and operational matters in Lennox Head. Council shall have regard for the principles and actions documented in the Strategic Plan when considering matter such as the following:

- Amendments to town planning documents;
- Rezoning proposals;
- Development applications; and
- Operational matters.

Structure Planning

It is important that the growth and development of Lennox Head occurs in a co-ordinated and integrated manner. To achieve this the Strategic Plan will:

- Impose a moratorium on rezonings in the Lennox Head Village (north of the Coast Road) for ten years;
- Impose a moratorium on rezonings in the greater Lennox Head area until such time as a detailed Structure Plan has been prepared, adopted and implemented; and
- Ensure that future rezonings are consistent with the Structure Plan.

Monitoring and Review

Strategic planning is not a static activity. Changes in information, community values, technology, economic climate and government policy can all impact on the implementation of plans and policies. As such, the Lennox Head Strategic Plan will:

- Recognise that the Strategic Plan will be a living document which will be subject to review; and
- Develop ongoing partnerships between Council and the Community during the review of the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Actions

For the vision to be achieved, it is proposed that a series of actions will be implemented during the life of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan. The following tables identify the proposed actions and a priority and timeframe for the completion of each. In addition, a number of the key actions have been illustrated on the Strategic Plan Summary Map located on page 33.

The actions, timeframes and relative priorities were developed in close consultation with the Lennox Head Community Access Group and refined following public exhibition of the draft document. It must also be clearly kept in mind, however, that the timing for implementation of the Strategic Actions is contingent on availability of resources.

The tables also identify which Department of Council is responsible for undertaking the action. In this regard, "Strategic" refers to Council's Strategic Land Use Planning Section, "Civil" refers to the Civil Services Group, "Corporate" means the Corporate Services Group and "Regulatory" refers to the Regulatory Services Group. In some circumstances it will also be necessary to involve other Government agencies and community organisations in the implementation of the Actions.

It should be noted, that Council has previously committed to a number of projects in the Lennox Head area. The actions and priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan, do not detract from these previous commitments, but rather are intended to be complementary to them.

Urban Growth

There are a variety of environmental factors which limit the future development “footprint” of Lennox Head. Broadly speaking, the footprint is set by the ocean to the east; the coastal heath vegetation to the north; the Ballina Nature Reserve and associated low lying floodplain to the west; and the desire to provide a visual buffer between Ballina and Lennox Head in the south.

It is recognised, however, that there are also areas of land within Lennox Head which appear to be “relatively unconstrained” and possibly suited for future urban development. These areas are shown on maps 3 and 11, with those unzoned areas possibly suited to urban development coloured “blue”. In saying this, it is noted that all land is constrained in one way or another. As such, detailed environmental assessment and design work is required before it can be determined whether or not any parcel of land is actually suited for urban development.

With regard to the timing for the commencement of rezoning processes over the “relatively unconstrained land”, Ballina Council resolved to adopt the following population growth model:

1. For the Lennox Head village area (being all land north of the Coast Road) no more rezoning requests will be considered for 10 years, with this decision reviewed after that time; and
2. For the broader Lennox Head district, the current moratorium on rezonings is to remain in place for 10 years or until a Structure Plan has been prepared, adopted and implemented for Lennox Head. The Structure Plan will provide a framework for the development of new release areas in Lennox Head. It will identify preferred locations for environmental protection and enhancement, community and sporting infrastructure and conceptual road, pedestrian and cycle linkages. This will involve completion of the community and sporting needs analysis, transport network strategy, stage I of the environmental restoration plan, landscape / visual analysis and an assessment of water and sewer infrastructure.

The timeframe as to when rezonings will recommence in the Lennox Head District is not known at this stage. In this regard, Council has committed to finishing the technical work associated with the preparation of the Structure Plan within 9 - 12 months. The Structure Plan will then be forwarded to the elected Council for adoption. It is envisaged that when the Structure Plan is forwarded for adoption, Council will also be asked to determine the level of implementation required prior to rezonings recommencing.

It is proposed that planning and development of future urban growth areas identified within the Structure Plan would occur within the following framework:

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
All	Developer Information Sheet An information sheet will be prepared to advise that as a matter of Council Policy, rezoning and subdivision applications will be required to address the environmental, social and economic requirements outlined in the Lennox Head Strategic Plan.	Highest	Within 1 month of adoption of Strategic Plan.	Strategic
Population Growth,	Amendment to Ballina Urban Land Release Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To incorporate the adopted growth model for Lennox Head. • To provide an acknowledgement that there are physical and environmental limits to the boundaries of Lennox Head. • To indicate that additional population demands will be accommodated in alternate areas as identified in the Ballina Urban Land Release Strategy. The timeframe for the rezoning and release of alternate areas will be developed having regard to an analysis of population growth rates and land supply and demand in Lennox Head. It will also be noted that the attractions of Lennox Head will mean that such land releases will impact amenities and facilities in Lennox Head. • To identify the need for a buffer to provide for ongoing visual separation of Lennox Head from East Ballina. • To indicate that future rezonings in Lennox Head will be undertaken in an integrated manner. As such, the rezoning of each grouping of "unconstrained land" on map 11 will be required to be undertaken over the whole of that area. That is, adjoining landowners within these areas will generally be required to approach the rezoning of the land in a co-operative and integrated manner. • To identify that the preferred average density for new release areas in Lennox Head is 8 dwellings per hectare. 	Very High	Within 12 Months. <i>(Note: This would occur concurrently with an update of the ULRS to insert 2001 ABS Census Data)</i>	Strategic

Community Infrastructure

The community of Lennox Head is one of its greatest assets. The Strategic Plan needs to provide for adequate community, sporting and recreation facilities to meet the current and future needs of the community. It will achieve this by way of the actions outlined below.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Community Infrastructure, Community Involvement	<p>Community and Open Space Facilities The planning process has identified the need for improved community and sporting facilities in Lennox Head to meet the needs of both the existing community and future populations. In particular, the community has identified the need for a multi-purpose community centre (including youth facilities) in Lennox Head. The community's preferred location for such a facility is Williams Reserve. The following steps will be followed leading to the provision of this and other facilities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Community Facility and Open Space Needs Analysis will occur in consultation with the Lennox Head community and relevant social service providers. This process will ascertain the required size, design, function and timing of community and open space facilities in the area having regard to the needs, size, distribution and demographic characteristics⁹ of the existing and future Lennox Head community, as well as visitors to the area. This analysis will consider issues relating to community facilities, active open space, passive open space, youth facilities and aged care facilities¹⁰. As part of this analysis, suitable sites will be selected within the area and a detailed program for the funding and construction of the necessary facilities will be developed. In addition, future rezoning proposals in Lennox Head will incorporate the outcomes of this analysis. • Following the completion of the needs analysis, a comprehensive review of the Developer Contributions Plan relating community facilities and public open space will be undertaken having regard to the outcomes of the Community Facility and Open Space Needs Analysis. 	Very High	Within 9-12 Months as part of Structure Plan	Strategic, Civil & Corporate

¹⁰ Land for such facilities needs to be relatively flat, accessible to necessary support facilities and somewhat large (for example, the Maranoa facility in Alstonville is almost 4 hectares in size). The Community Access Group has identified that parts of the Henderson Land may be suitable for such facilities.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Community Infrastructure,	Interim Community Facilities Until such time as new community facilities are provided, the following interim measures will be put in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the various halls & community spaces at the northern end of Williams Reserve with the aim of improving community access to these facilities; and • The Ballina Youth Service will be approached with regard to the provision of youth support facilities within Lennox Head. 	Very High	Within 12 months	Strategic
Community Infrastructure, Transportation & Walkability	Combined Sporting Complex As provided for in the existing DCP, a combined sporting complex will be constructed in the vicinity of the "Pacific Pines" Neighbourhood Centre. Any planning for the "Henderson Land" shall incorporate sporting facilities immediately adjoining the fields designated for this purpose as part of the Pacific Pines development. The ultimate size of this facility will be directly related to the expected ultimate population size in the district. This requirement does not preclude the provision of sporting facilities on other parcels of land in Lennox Head.	High	As funds and land become available.	Strategic, Civil & Regulatory
Community Infrastructure,	Pacific Pines Playing Fields No further stages of Pacific Pines Estate will be released until such time as a detailed construction program has been agreed to by Council for the Pacific Pines Playing Fields. This construction timetable shall incorporate the construction of the first field in the immediate term.	High	As soon as possible.	Regulatory & Civil
Community Infrastructure,	Binding Agreements Once the Lennox Head Structure Plan has been completed and endorsed, Council will guarantee the provision of the full suite of community facilities to the residents of Lennox Head by only proceeding with new rezonings where the developer is legally bound to provide facilities specified by the structure plan in accordance with a non-negotiable timeframe.	High	As defined by the Structure Plan.	Strategic & Civil

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Community Infrastructure, Community Involvement	Use of Playing Fields Decisions regarding the development, use and allocation of playing fields will be made in consultation with the local sporting community, including the Lennox Head Community and Sports Association.	High	Ongoing	Civil
Community Infrastructure,	School Facilities Negotiations shall resume with the NSW Department of Education and Training regarding the possible future development of a high school and / or additional primary school.	High	1-3 Years	Strategic
Community Infrastructure, Village Centre,	Williams Reserve A review of the Plan of Management for Williams Reserve will be undertaken with the view to incorporating provisions relating to converting Williams Reserve into a "village green" or "gathering place" ¹¹ (whilst preferably continuing to provide some low key playing field function) <u>once</u> adequate alternate adult playing fields are provided. As provided for in the Williams Reserve Plan of Management, this area should remain predominately green, with only minimal incursions into existing green spaces. Improved interpretation of environmental qualities in this area should also be provided.	Medium	3-5 Years or as alternate fields become available	Strategic & Civil
Village Atmosphere,	Community Safety There will be ongoing implementation of the findings of the Lennox Head Crime Prevention Working Party ¹² . This includes conducting a safety audit and undertaking community education programs.	Medium	Ongoing	Strategic, Civil, Regulatory & Corporate

¹¹ Support has been shown for the concept of a bandstand or other performance area within the Williams Reserve area as well as a community facility at the northern end of the Reserve (in the vicinity of the existing community buildings in that area).

¹² In Mid 2001 this Group undertook an extensive community consultation program regarding crime prevention in Lennox Head. The final report of this Group made a series of recommendations concerning target hardening, policing and security, anti-social behaviour and parental responsibility.

Environment

The protection and restoration of the natural environment is integral to the future of Lennox Head. As such, the principal consideration in the design and assessment of future urban development will be the protection of significant natural environments. Similarly, ensuring that visually prominent areas are adequately protected into the future is important to the character and amenity of the area. These matters will be addressed by way of mechanisms outlined below.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Environment	Retain Vegetation Systems Existing native vegetation systems (within both existing and future urban areas) shall be retained and protected for its environmental and landscape value. To promote this, a Tree Preservation Order / Vegetation Management Plan will be introduced into the Lennox Head area.	Very High	Within 6 Months	Tree Preservation Committee, Strategic & Regulatory
Environment, Community Involvement	Lennox Headland Plan of Management A detailed plan of management will be prepared for Lennox Headland (including Pat Morton Lookout). The timing and content of this work will need to have regard for the outcomes of the Single Coastal Reserve Plan of Management process ¹³ . Whilst the detailed content of this Management Plan will be developed in consultation with the community, the Lennox Head Community Access Group recommends that the following principles be incorporated into the document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only low key and unobtrusive tourism infrastructure such as seats, lookouts and interpretive signage will be permitted; • Environmental repair, including weed eradication, is a high priority; • Formalisation of access tracks; • Provision of facilities such as toilets, bins etc; and • Rationalisation of car parking areas to meet the needs of the users and ensure traffic safety. 	Very High	Within 6 months of adoption of Coastal Reserve POM	Civil & Strategic

¹³ Refer to page 86 for more information about this matter.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Environment, Community Involvement	<p>Environmental Restoration Plan A Restoration Plan for significant environments will be prepared in consultation with the community. The plan will prioritise areas requiring restoration and identify strategies and actions required to achieve this. It will also give consideration to the maintenance and restoration of key habitats and corridors identified by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.</p> <p>This work will principally involve land under Ballina Shire Council's control, however will also investigate opportunities to provide incentives to encourage participation of private land owners. Consideration will also be given to roadside management issues and the rehabilitation and protection of coastal and dunal vegetation.</p> <p>Stage 1 of this work will involve a review of the existing environmental protection zonings in Lennox Head to ensure that all environmentally significant areas, including SEPP 14 and SEPP 26 areas are appropriately zoned.</p>	Very High and High	<p>Stage 1 within 9 – 12 months as part of Structure Plan</p> <p>Remainder within 1-3 Years</p>	Strategic, Civil & Regulatory
Environment	<p>Landscape Study of Prominent Areas A landscape study will be undertaken into areas of visual prominence in Lennox Head - including ridgelines, headlands and the areas adjacent to the Coast Road. The study will make recommendations regarding criteria for assessment of future development proposals in these areas. This may include recommendations to alter the zoning of such land under Council's Local Environmental Plan. Should a rezoning or development application be received over such land prior to the completion of this work, submitted documentation must include detailed visual analysis and assessment against the provisions of the North Coast Urban Design Guidelines¹⁴.</p>	Very High	Within 9 – 12 months as part of Structure Plan	Strategic

¹⁴ A copy of these Guidelines are available as Appendix 7

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Environment	Buffers to High Conservation Value Areas New rezonings and subdivisions will provide for adequate and effective buffers to all areas identified as being of high conservation value with these buffers being zoned for environmental protection purposes. The location and extent of the buffers will be determined following detailed assessment of individual sites and consultation with relevant State Government Natural Resource Agencies ¹⁵ . Development applications within existing urban zones will be assessed on their merits having regard for submissions received from relevant government agencies.	High	Ongoing	Strategic, Civil & Regulatory
Environment	Wildlife Corridors Future planning, development and subdivisions will seek to establish wildlife corridors linking areas identified as high conservation value. Key corridors are illustrated diagrammatically on the Strategic Plan Summary Map on page 33. Individual developments should also seek to link habitats where practicable.	High	Ongoing	Strategic, Regulatory & Civil
Environment	Council Involvement in Environmental Restoration Council will review its existing operations so as to enable a more active role in the restoration of the natural environment. This will include supporting volunteer community groups involved in these activities and education of Council Parks and Gardens staff as to appropriate methodologies with regard to maintenance of public areas.	High	Ongoing	Civil

¹⁵ Detailed site specific assessments will need to occur to determine the appropriate size of such buffers. As a guide, however, a revegetated buffer of a minimum of 50metres will be required. This figure has been derived following discussions with the NSW NP&WS and other natural resource agencies. In this regard NSW Fisheries has a policy which requires that terrestrial areas adjoining freshwater, estuarine or coastal habitats be carefully managed in order to minimise landuse impacts on these aquatic habitats. As a precautionary approach, foreshore buffer zones at least 50 metres wide should be established and maintained, with their natural features and vegetation preserved...The width of these buffer zones may need to be increased to 100metres or more where they are adjacent to ecologically sensitive areas.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Environment	Improved management of stormwater in existing urban areas Council will initiate a review of the existing stormwater systems in Lennox Head. A priority action within this work will be a review of stormwater management in the village area of Lennox Head with the view to minimising, as far as practicable, pollution of Seven Mile Beach, Lake Ainsworth and the ocean. This will be in accordance with the recommendations of the Urban Water Strategy and incorporate a forum at which community based solutions can be developed.	High	Within 1-3 years Referral to Urban Water Strategy	Civil & Regulatory
Environment	Enhanced provision of native fauna habitat on public land The embellishment and appropriate landscaping of public land will, wherever possible, be planted with endemic species. This will include street tree planting and other landscaping. In addition constructed noise amelioration measures ¹⁶ to major roads will be achieved by way of planted sound mounds, with these areas being planted with suitable native species.	High	Ongoing	Strategic, Civil & Regulatory
Environment	Enhanced provision of native habitat fauna on private land. To assist in achieving this, landscape guidelines contained within Council planning documents will encourage the use of appropriate native species and provide "plain English" advice regarding these species. This material will include specific advice concerning littoral rainforest species and responsibilities of persons owning land affected by SEPP 14 or SEPP 26.	High	1-3 years and ongoing	Strategic & Lennox Head Community
Environment	Review of Council Plant Nursery Council's plant nursery activities will be reviewed such that trees provided by Council to ratepayers will comprise suitable native species.	High	1-3 Years	Civil

¹⁶ The Environmental Protection Authority has Guidelines relating to road traffic noise and new subdivisions. These Guidelines permit a number of different methods to ameliorate noise impacts including physical separation and constructed barriers (such as sound mounds and "walls" similar to those seen adjacent to the road to Brisbane). In some instances it may also be appropriate to utilise special building construction techniques including insulation and double glazing.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Cultural Heritage, Community Involvement	Local Heritage Study A community based heritage study will be undertaken into the heritage qualities of the area. This study will build on the work already undertaken by the Heritage Committee of the Lennox Head Residents Association and include, but not be limited to, indigenous heritage and dry stone walls in the area. For those items identified by the community as being significant, a formal assessment of significance (based on criteria contained in the Burra Charter) will be undertaken to make recommendations for future conservation and management. This could include potential listing as heritage items in LEP. Should a rezoning proposal be received over land prior to the completion of this work, the rezoning documentation must include detailed assessment of the heritage qualities of the site and incorporate initiatives to protect those items identified as significant.	High	1-3 Years	Strategic & Lennox Head Community
Environment	Mosquito Buffers New rezonings and subdivisions will provide for adequate and effective buffers between new urban developments and areas identified as being key mosquito habitat. The design and location of such buffers will be in accordance with those contained within proposed DCP No. 10 – Mosquitos and Other Biting Insects ¹⁷ .	High	Ongoing	Regulatory, Strategic & Civil
Environment	Bushfire Planning New rezonings and subdivisions identified as being located in areas which are bush fire prone will be designed in a manner which is consistent with the relevant requirements of the NSW Rural Fire Service, particularly those documented in the publication entitled "Planning for Bushfire Protection, 2001".	High	Ongoing	Regulatory, Strategic & Civil

¹⁷ More information regarding this matter can be found at page 87. It should also be noted that the design characteristics of the "mosquito buffer" would typically be different to those of the "environmental buffer". As such, in some instances it may be necessary to have two buffers adjacent to one another.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Environment	Improved management and treatment of stormwater for new subdivisions Stormwater management systems for all subdivisions will be designed in accordance with Council's Urban Stormwater Management Strategy and relevant State Government policies. Particular regard will be had to ensuring that sensitive wetland and creek environments are protected and enhanced.	Medium	Ongoing - Referral to Urban Water Strategy	Strategic, Civil & Regulatory
Environment	Improved access to, and interpretation of, the natural environment. This will be achieved by way of improved walking trails and interpretive materials at appropriate locations. This statement recognises that there are some particularly sensitive environments for which access may be inappropriate. This will necessitate management programs being developed for such areas addressing issues such as litter management and dogs.	Medium	Ongoing	Civil

Housing and Development Form

A well designed home satisfies the needs of its occupants, responds to the local environment and respects its neighbours. The formal planning controls for Lennox Head will be reviewed and amended so as to provide for the matters identified below.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Housing Design, Visual Character, Environment	<p>Amendments to Planning Controls The planning work has revealed that the community is concerned about the scale and design of developments occurring within the Lennox Head area. It is therefore proposed to amend Ballina Development Control Plan No.1 Urban Land so that housing and development within the area is low scale and designed in a manner which responds to the climate of the North Coast. This work will incorporate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of building design - A requirement that new subdivisions allow for a reasonable variety of housing forms and materials. "Brick and Tile" covenants throughout entire subdivisions are not acceptable. • Range of Densities – Providing for a range of densities within Lennox Head, with higher densities located closer to activity nodes and lower densities in outlying areas. • Environmentally Friendlier Housing - New houses will be encouraged to be designed in a manner which is "Energy Smart" and which responds to the sub tropical climate of the North Coast. • Low Scale Development - Buildings taller than 2 storeys will not be permitted, other than those which comply with the height controls contained within the LEP¹⁸. • Affordable Housing – New controls will be designed so as to incorporate measures designed to promote affordable housing. 	Very High	Within 12 Months	Strategic

¹⁸ Clause 17 of the LEP requires that buildings shall not generally be greater than 6.4 metres in height, as measured from the ceiling of the upper most floor to the ground level immediately below that point. Council may approve a building taller than 6.4 metres only if it is satisfied that the building will not adversely affect the existing or future amenity of adjoining properties by way of overshadowing or loss of privacy, significantly obstruct views, have an adverse impact on the scenic or landscape quality of the locality or exceed 2 storeys.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Controls for Medium Density in Village Area - Specific controls will be developed with the objective of protecting and enhancing the older village area, whilst continuing to allow for medium density development in the area. These controls will encourage a built form which reflects the beachside locality and provides for improved amenity for residents and neighbours. These controls will be developed having regard to the subdivision pattern in the area and consider issues such as parking, setbacks, landscaping and overshadowing. • North Coast Urban Design Guidelines - The provisions of the North Coast Urban Design Guidelines will be considered in the assessment of future rezonings and subdivision applications. Material will also be introduced into DCP No.1 to provide information and design suggestions relating to these guidelines and their relationship to residential buildings¹⁹. 			
Housing Design, Environment	Improved Design of Development Environmentally and architecturally innovative housing and development will be encouraged by way of community education programs. Partnerships with architect and building designer professional bodies will also be fostered.	High	1-3 Years and ongoing	Regulatory, Strategic, Civil & Corporate
Housing Design	Review of Height Controls To provide certainty for the community regarding the overall height of buildings within Lennox Head. In this regard, Council will initiate a review of the height controls contained within the LEP. In the interim, all buildings will comply with the height controls contained within the LEP.	High	1-3 Years	Strategic
Housing Design, Visual Character, Environment	Amendment to Subdivision Code Council's Subdivision Code will be amended to ensure that new subdivisions are designed in a manner which is energy smart and reflects the other initiatives advocated in this Strategic Plan. This includes provision of street tree planting in new estates and the outcomes of the Community Facility and Open Space Needs Analysis.	High	1-3 Years	Civil & Strategic

¹⁹ A copy of these Guidelines are available as Appendix 7. These Guidelines include a requirement to design and locate development in a manner which protects prominent ridgelines.

Transport & Accessibility

Planning for the future development of Lennox Head will be based on the integration of landuse and transportation planning so as to reduce the dependence on the private motor vehicle. This will be achieved by way of the mechanisms outlined below.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Village Atmosphere,	<p>Cycleway / Pedestrian Network</p> <p>The planning process has identified the need for an integrated cycleway / pedestrian network in Lennox Head linking existing and future residential developments with the activity nodes. Safe access along North Creek Road and Skennars Head Road is a particular priority in this network as is the need for improved access at the North Creek Road / Coast Road Roundabout. It will also be important to connect to external networks where practical. The following steps will be followed leading to the provision of this network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An integrated Transport Network Strategy will be developed to identify the required routes, design and function of the transport network in the area. This will include a review of the road hierarchy²⁰ in Lennox Head and measures to improve access and interpretation of natural areas. This work will be undertaken in consultation with the community and relevant government agencies. • Following this work a detailed program for the funding and construction of the necessary facilities will be developed. This may include the preparation of a Developer Contributions Plan relating to the outcomes of the Transport Network Strategy. 	Very High	Within 12 Months as part of Structure Plan	Strategic & Civil

²⁰ Substantial background work has been undertaken into this matter by way of the Ballina Road Network Hierarchy Plan 2001. This work was based on projected population growth in Ballina Shire and advocated a duplication of road access between Lennox Head and East Ballina. Options considered within the Hierarchy Plan involved either converting the Coast Road to a dual carriageway system or constructing a road from North Creek Road to Angels Beach Drive in East Ballina (referred to as the "Skennars Head Distributor Road"), with the latter option being the preferred approach from a traffic management perspective. The construction of Hutley Drive (linking the Coast Road Roundabout with Skennars Head Road via Pacific Pines Estate) was also identified as being important to traffic circulation in this area. Detailed social and environmental assessments will, however, need to occur to determine the ultimate need, route and design of such roads. In this regard, it is noted that the Community Access Group has identified a desire to minimise the potential impacts of arterial roads on residential amenity, as well as the environment.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Village Atmosphere,	Cycleway Plan An integrated cycleway / pedestrian network in Lennox Head will be constructed on an incremental basis. The network will link existing and future residential developments with the activity nodes. Safe access along North Creek Road and Skennars Head Road is a particular priority in this network as is the need for improved access at the North Creek Road / Coast Road Roundabout.	High	Ongoing	Civil
Village Atmosphere,	Improved Access to Beach Ramps and paths will be constructed at suitable locations to provide safe and equitable pedestrian access to Seven Mile Beach. Key access ways should be provided with appropriate facilities such as signage, bins and showers. This aspect of the Strategic Plan will be implemented by way of the Coastal Reserve Plan of Management ²¹ .	High	1-3 Years	Civil
Village Atmosphere,	Roads Contributions Plan A development funded Roads Contribution Plan will be introduced to make provision for an improved arterial road network to accommodate increases in traffic resulting from increased population both within Lennox Head and external to it.	High	Complete	Civil, Strategic & Corporate
Village Atmosphere,	Review of Works Program A review of Council's works program will be undertaken having regard to available resources and in light of the following list of priority projects identified by the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upgrade required to North Creek Road north of Skennars Head Road (particularly in the vicinity of the Water Reservoir); - Review of safety of Coast Road in the vicinity of Lennox Point – possibility of a reduction in traffic speeds to be investigated; - Review of safety of Skennars Head Road and Coast Road intersection; - Review of safety of Greenfield Road and Coast Road intersection; - Ballina Street / Village Commercial Centre; and - Review of North Creek Road south of Skennars Head Road – investigate low key passing areas. Information concerning the current Works Program can be found at Appendix 10.	High	1-3 Years	Civil & Corporate

²¹ Refer to page 86 for more information regarding this matter.

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Village Atmosphere, Village Centre,	Interstate Bus Interchange An investigation of suitable sites for an interstate bus transit facility will occur in consultation with the community, landholders and transport providers.	High	1-3 Years	Civil & Strategic
Village Atmosphere,	Realignment of Ross Lane The eastern end of Ross Lane will be realigned to the south so as to remove through traffic from the Fig Tree Hill & Sanctuary Village area, with the existing road reserve being rehabilitated so as to link wetland areas located in the area. This will result in improved traffic safety, amenity and environmental outcomes. Detailed environmental assessments will, however, need to occur to determine the final route and design of such a road.	Medium	If and when this area was permitted to be rezoned for urban uses.	Civil & Strategic

Commercial and Economic Development

Retail and commercial development in Lennox Head will be developed and located in a manner which principally meets the needs of the Lennox Head community, whilst providing for commercial viability of these facilities. This will be achieved by way of the following:

Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Village Centre,	Lennox Head Village Centre²² Development Control Plan In accordance with Council's previous resolutions on this matter, a Development Control Plan (DCP) for the Lennox Head Village Centre will be prepared for exhibition as a matter of very high priority. The DCP will incorporate urban design controls for private land, a review of carparking and traffic flows and principles for subsequent streetscape initiatives. This work shall have regard for projected population growth in the area.	Very High	Within 6 Months	Strategic & Civil
Village Centre, Village Atmosphere,	Commercial Hierarchy Council's Retail Strategy and other planning documents will identify that retail and commercial development will be established in accordance with the following hierarchy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CBD will be the principal commercial area in Lennox Head and will provide facilities and services of a district scale. No increase or expansion of the existing commercial will occur. The CBD is the commercial and social centre of Lennox Head and planning for the area will enhance this role into the future. • A second commercial area will be provided in Pacific Pines Estate to complement those facilities found in the village centre. This centre shall be lower in the retail hierarchy than the CBD and provide facilities of a neighbourhood scale to service the residents located in this area and enhance walkability. • Other areas zoned for commercial activities within the district will provide convenience facilities of a local scale. • Higher order retail and commercial facilities including major supermarkets, shopping malls and bulky goods retailing will be provided elsewhere such as Ballina. 	Very High	Within 12 Months	Strategic

²² The location of the Village Centre is illustrated on Map 9.

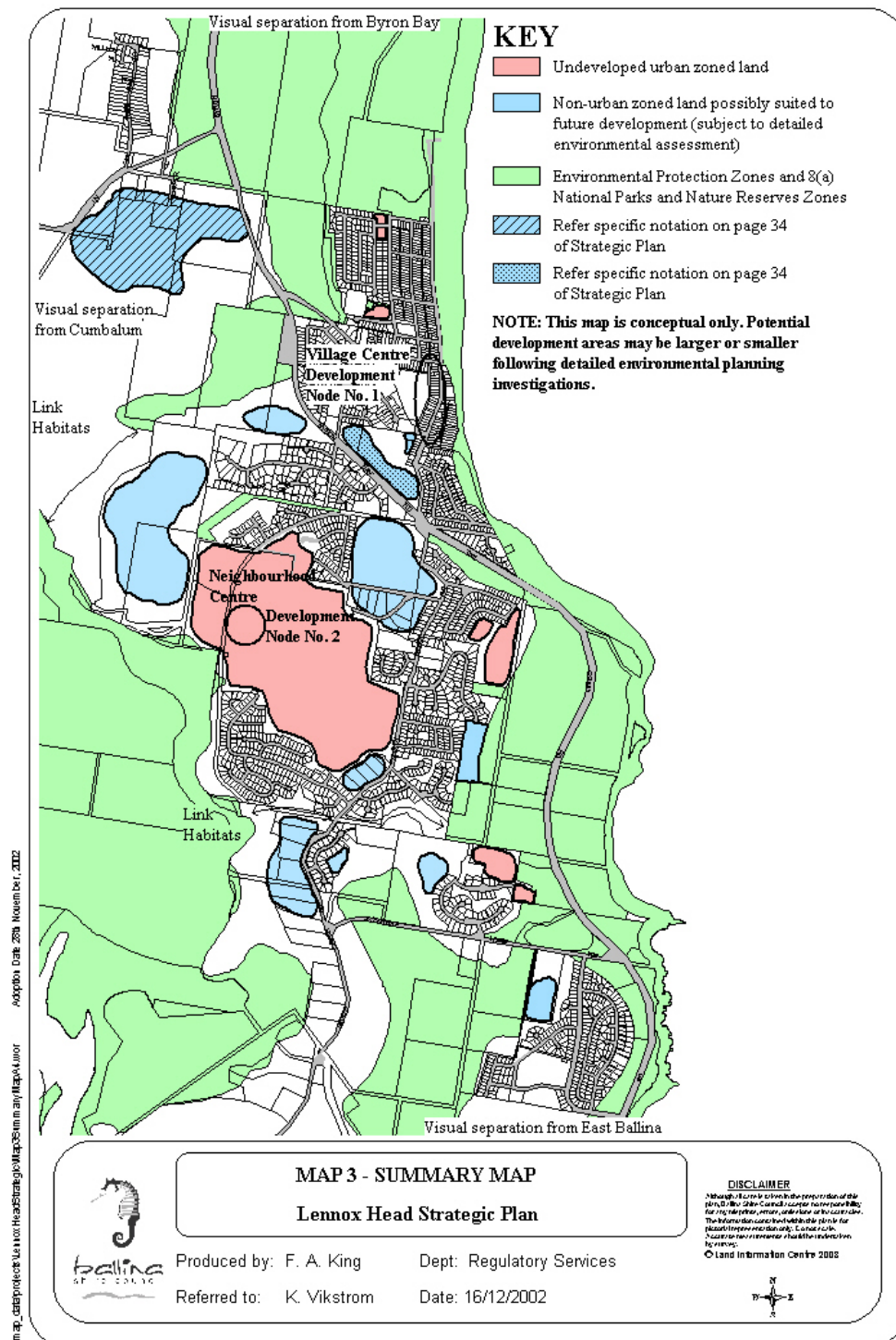
Applicable Strategic Principles	Action	Priority	Timeframe	Resp. Council Dept.
Village Centre, Village Atmosphere,	Village Centre Beautification A Landscaping and Beautification Scheme for the Lennox Head Village Centre shall be prepared and constructed.	Very High	1-3 Years	Strategic & Civil
Village Atmosphere,	Tourism Development Council's planning controls will be reviewed so as to incorporate detailed controls for the design and location of tourism development in Lennox Head. The aim of this work is to ensure that tourism developments are low key and limited in scale and number so as to manage impacts on the resident community. This work will also identify preferred locations for motels, backpacker hostels etc so as to minimise impacts on residential amenity. The results of this work will be included in the drafting of the Ballina Tourism Strategy.	High	1-3 Years	Strategic & Corporate
Village Atmosphere,	Pacific Pines Neighbourhood Centre ²³ Any application for the development of the Pacific Pines Neighbourhood Centre shall be accompanied by a retail analysis undertaken by a professional experienced in the field which demonstrates compliance with the hierarchy outlined above.	Low	3-5 Years	Regulatory
Village Atmosphere,	Light Industrial Area A low key light Industrial / Arts / Craft Park will be provided at an appropriate location in Lennox Head. The investigation and provision of this facility will occur via the following steps: 1 - Investigations into the need for such a facility; 2 - Investigations into the appropriate site for such a facility; and 3 - Provision of facility (via normal processes). Detailed site selection criteria and design controls will be developed prior to approval relating to accessibility and minimising environmental, visual or amenity impacts ²⁴ .	Steps 1 & 2 Very High Step 3 Low	Steps 1 & 2 within 12 months as part of Structure Plan Step 3 within 3 – 5 Years	Strategic

²³ As outlined on page 30 it is envisaged that this facility will provide shopping and community facilities of a neighbourhood scale.

²⁴ The preferred location for such a facility would be generally flat and accessible to arterial transport routes.

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Map 3 - Strategic Plan Summary Map



Notations Relating to Maps 3 and 11

As part of its submission to the draft Lennox Head Strategic Plan, PlanningNSW made comments concerning several areas of land illustrated on Maps 3 and 11 which are of relevance when considering the development potential of these lands. These comments are reproduced below:

A. "Shaded" area fronting the eastern side of Byron Bay Road immediately west of the village centre

"Most of this area is of outstanding visual prominence and amenity to the whole village environment, whether viewed from the north, east or west. PlanningNSW would strongly encourage Council to zone most of this area for environmental and/or establish a funding plan to acquire the land over time for a public reserve. This would be an excellent place for a public walking track, lookout and other passive recreational opportunities, with easy foot access from a number of central locations. Development of this area for urban purposes may be inconsistent with the NSW Coastal Policy 1997.

PlanningNSW sees no problem with inclusion of the north-western end of this land for future urban development. The area below the row of Banksia trees could be developed for a significant number of house sites with access from Greenwood Place and/or Blue Horizon Drive, without impact on the scenic amenity of the area".

B. "Crosshatched" area south of Ross Lane

"There are two issues with this land. Firstly, it is geographically isolated from the rest of Lennox Head and would only be accessibly from Lennox Head via Byron Bay Road, an arterial road. Accessing basic services in Lennox Head would involve longer journeys (relative to other release areas) and involve mixing local traffic with through traffic. Secondly, the land appears to be very low lying and may have drainage and flooding problems. The land may need filling, which may raise other issues including water movement across the site and impacts at the source of fill."

Implementing the Strategic Plan

Implementation Framework

In order to ensure that the Strategic Plan is used as a significant document in Council's decision-making, the following implementation process will be put in place:

1. Following exhibition of the draft Strategic Plan and consideration of submissions received to it, review and adoption of the Plan by Ballina Shire Council;
2. Implementation of the Strategic Plan in accordance with the priorities endorsed by Council;
3. New or revised Council policies and procedures should conform with the direction of the Strategic Plan. Should actions be proposed which do not conform with the Strategic Plan, this will necessitate appropriate adjustments being made to the document following consultation with the community;
4. Establishment of a formal Committee of Council²⁵. The Committee will:
 - Comprise representatives of both the Lennox Head community and Council with the selection of Committee members undertaken in a transparent manner;
 - Develop the monitoring program to oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan.
 - Monitor the implementation of the actions proposed in the Strategic Plan;
 - Oversee the drafting of any changes to the Strategic Plan to reflect the outcomes of the ongoing monitoring process;
 - Consider other issues relevant to Lennox Head as referred by Council from time to time; and
 - Meet every six (6) months or as required.
5. Interim review of the Strategy in 5 years time, with a comprehensive review in 10 years.

Funding the Strategic Plan

The Lennox Head Strategic Plan contains many actions which will require financial and physical resources to implement. Council will need to ensure that detailed consideration is given to funding the actions contained within the Strategy. This should include investigating all available revenue sources. In doing so, it must be remembered that there are limited funds available and many different projects competing for these funds. As such, balancing the priorities of the Lennox Head community with those of other areas of the Shire will require careful consideration. Broadly speaking, the mechanisms available to Council are as follows:

- Reallocation of priorities within existing budgets and works programs;
- Accessing available grant monies;
- Possible increase in rates to fund specific projects identified in the strategy; and
- Review of the developer contributions payable for new developments in the area. (Note: This mechanism can only be used to fund infrastructure requirements directly applicable to new urban development and cannot be utilised to rectify shortfalls associated with previous developments.)

Whilst Council will need to investigate each of these options, the Community Access Group has specifically requested that Council pursue the option of introducing a "Special Rate" to fund the environmental protection initiatives contained within the Strategic Plan. Should the community be supportive of this conceptual idea, Council would need to apply to the Minister for Local Government. Typically, the Minister grants rate increases of this kind only when other funding avenues have been explored, there is community support, a clearly identified need and a concise program for expenditure.

²⁵ The Community Access Group also identified the need for a second Group to act as a contact point for "big picture issues" affecting Lennox Head (an example given was the Marine Park). This Group would be a community initiative and comprise representatives of the key community organisations in Lennox Head.

By way of background on this issue, as at July, 2002 there were 2345 "Residential Rate Assessments" in Lennox Head / Skennars Head. If each of these properties paid an additional \$25 / year this would generate almost \$60,000. It should be noted that these properties already pay annually an average of \$575 in rates, \$330 for sewer, \$90 for water availability (plus water used) and \$146 for waste management services. There are also just under one hundred "Business Rate Assessments" in the area which could contribute.

The money gathered under such a rate could then be utilised to fund new environmental initiatives in the area proposed as part of the Strategic Plan. Other Councils who have introduced similar levies have found that it is normally possible to match these funds through various government programs, thereby effectively generating substantially more revenue. In the event that an extraordinary rate increase to fund these environmental initiatives is either not pursued by Council, or not granted by the Minister, it will be necessary to investigate alternate funding options - such as the re-allocation of existing funds within the budget or pursuing grant moneys.

Following exhibition of the draft Strategic Plan, Council resolved to undertake detailed investigations into the concept of an Environmental Levy for Lennox Head and undertake further community consultation once the findings of these investigations are known.

Conclusion

The Lennox Head Strategic Plan has been developed as a partnership between Ballina Shire Council and the Lennox Head Community, via the Community Access Group. It endeavours to set a framework for future planning and development, which meets the aspirations of the local community. The Strategic Plan also embodies the concept of Ecologically Sustainable Development by seeking to balance the environmental, economic and social needs of the Lennox Head community.

The Strategic Plan has endeavoured to address the key issues of concern to the Lennox Head community in the ways outlined below.

Issue 1 - Village Atmosphere and Lifestyle

Each of the initiatives contained within the Strategic Plan endeavours to protect and enhance the Lennox Head village atmosphere and lifestyle as the area grows and evolves. The following matters are, however, considered particularly relevant to protecting these qualities into the future:

- Provision of key commercial, social and recreational activities in "development nodes" to assist in encouraging walking, cycling and public transport usage;
- Initiatives to protect and enhance the environmental qualities of the area;
- Methodologies to obtain the community and sporting facilities to meet the needs of the community;
- Introduction of controls to ensure that future development is low scale, well designed, reflects the sub tropical climate of the area and provides for a "Lennox Head identity"; and
- Involvement of the community in the ongoing implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Issue 2 – Environmental Qualities

The initiatives contained within the Strategic Plan which seek to protect and enhance the environmental qualities of the area include the following:

- Introduction measures to protect mature trees and vegetation systems in the area;
- Planning for the provision of buffers to sensitive environments and wildlife corridors linking key environments;
- Increased planting of endemic species on both public and private land;
- Review of stormwater discharge onto Seven Mile Beach;
- Protecting visually prominent areas; and
- Preparation of a Plan of Management for Lennox Point.

Issue 3 – Lennox Head Village Centre

The Lennox Head Village Centre will continue in its role as the economic and social “heart” of the community. This will be achieved by way of the following;

- Establishing a commercial hierarchy which identifies the Village Centre as the main commercial centre in Lennox Head;
- Planning for low scale and well designed development in the Village Centre;
- Planning for the “beautification” of the public spaces in the Village Centre; and
- Recognising that Williams Reserve plays an important role in the community life of Lennox Head and planning to enhance this function into the future.

Issue 4 – Population Growth

Population growth in Lennox Head is an issue which has attracted much discussion within the community during the plan drafting process. As such, the exhibition phase of the draft Strategic Plan particularly sought the views of the community on this issue. The adopted Strategic Plan addresses this issue in the following ways;

- Identifying limits to the future “footprint” of Lennox Head;
- Placing a moratorium on new rezonings in the Village Area for ten years (being those areas to the north of the Coast Road);
- Placing a moratorium on new rezonings in the broader Lennox Head District for ten years or until a Structure Plan has been prepared adopted and implemented for Lennox Head;
- Ensuring that new release areas are designed in a co-ordinated and integrated manner by requiring such developments to be consistent with the adopted Structure Plan;
- Identification of a series of environmental constraints which apply to the physical expansion of Lennox Head; and
- Recognition of the ongoing visual and physical separation of Lennox Head from other centres, particularly East Ballina.

Issue 5 – Community Infrastructure

The Strategic Plan recognises that existing community and sporting facilities do not meet the needs of the community and that improved facilities are needed in the area - to service both existing and future generations. It is also recognised that Williams Reserve currently provides an important focus for the community and it is proposed that this role will be enhanced in the future. The Strategic Plan is proposing that the following methodology will be followed to provide these facilities;

- A community and sporting facility needs analysis will be undertaken. This analysis will consider requirements for the needs of all sectors of the community including the youth and aged persons within Lennox Head.
 - Detailed funding and construction programs developed; and
 - Comprehensive review of funding mechanisms, including the relevant developer contributions plans.
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PART 2 – Background Material



Interpretive Note

The background information contained in Part 2 of the Strategic Plan was an important element of the draft document placed on exhibition for public comment. The purpose of this information was to ensure that adequate background material was available to enable the community to make informed decisions on the strategic principles and actions contained in the document.

Whilst the material in Part 2 has been updated following exhibition to incorporate the 2001 ABS Census Data, other changes to the content and phrasing of the document have generally not been made. As such, it is important to consider the content and phrasing of Part 2 of the Strategic Plan in that context. Whilst this statement relates to a number of areas of Part 2, it is particularly relevant to the material relating to "Issue 4 - Population Growth".

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How the Strategic Plan was Prepared

In the year 2000, Ballina Shire Council decided to prepare a new Strategic Plan for the Lennox Head area. Council decided to do this work in response to significant community interest and concern about how the Lennox Head area should be planned and developed in the future and the need to plan for the provision of amenities and services.

This planning project was managed by Council's Strategic Services Section in close liaison with the Lennox Head Community Access Group. The Community Access Group was established by Council at the start of the process and comprised representatives of each of the main community organisations in Lennox Head. Appendix 3 contains a list of the members of the Access Group. The broader community was also offered a variety of opportunities to participate in the planning process. The Plan has been prepared in 3 steps which are outlined below.

Step 1 - Community Aspirations Survey

The planning process commenced with a survey which sought information about the key concerns, aims and aspirations of the Lennox Head community for the future development of the area. The survey was conducted in early 2001 by a consultant and comprised several parts. The first part involved a random telephone survey of 5% of the Lennox Head population. The telephone survey results were then supplemented by a series of meetings to which all interested members of the community were invited to attend.

The survey provided a large amount of material relating to the views of the Lennox Head community on issues such as planning, development, infrastructure, the environment and Council services. This information provided an important foundation for the preparation of the draft Strategic Plan. A copy of a summary of the Survey findings can be found at Appendix 4.

Step 2 – Drafting the Strategic Plan

Ongoing Community Participation

The process for preparing the Strategic Plan has been a consultative process - with the Community Access Group operating in a steering and review role and Council planning officers undertaking complementary research and plan drafting activities. A Charter outlining the drafting process in more detail, and the roles of different people within the process, can be found at Appendix 3.

The Community Access Group met on a regular basis during the drafting phase. At these meetings the Group considered the range of social, economic and environmental factors impacting on planning and development in Lennox Head. The Access Group was provided with background information on these topics by Council, with Group members also undertaking their own research into various topics.

The meetings of the Group were generally open to the public and were convened in Lennox Head. Some of these public meetings were participatory, with all members of the community welcome to contribute their views. Others were working meetings of the Access Group to which members of the public were welcome as observers. The Minutes of these meetings were made available to the public through both information folders at the Lennox Head Library and Post Office and at Council's Web Page. At the early stages of the process, the findings of these meetings were also displayed in the main street of Lennox Head on Saturday mornings.

A large community meeting was held at the completion of the “first draft” of the document to garner community views on the key issues and strategies proposed to be provided in the Strategic Plan. Feedback from this meeting was incorporated into the future drafts of the document.

Council planners also undertook consultations with technical departments within Council and relevant State Government agencies. Discussions with the local indigenous community and land holders in the area also occurred.

Constraints Mapping

In order to determine which lands in Lennox Head may be physically and environmentally suitable for accommodating urban development, a series of maps were produced identifying the key constraints to the further expansion of the area²⁶. This work included consideration of the following constraints:

- Areas zoned for environmental protection;
- High conservation value habitats and the need to buffer these habitats from urban development;
- Aircraft noise;
- Bushfire risk;
- Slope instability;
- Acid sulphate soils; and
- Flood susceptibility.

This process revealed that there are a number of localities within the study area which are relatively unconstrained and may be suitable for accommodating future urban development. A map illustrating a summary of the results of this work can be found on page 79. It is important to note that this work is indicative only and has been undertaken using the information available to Council. Detailed site specific environmental assessments are required to determine their suitability or otherwise for accommodating such development. In this regard it is noted that each of these areas is constrained in some way by issues such as stormwater management, access or connection to infrastructure.

Drafting the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan was drafted by Council officers in close consultation with the Community Access Group. Several drafts were provided to the Access Group members, with feedback from the Group incorporated into the final draft document for exhibition. The Community Access Group represented a wide range of opinions and interests and worked to achieve consensus on the range of issues included in the draft Strategic Plan. Consensus could not, however, be achieved within the Access Group on the issue of population growth in Lennox Head. Council therefore decided to particularly seek community feedback on this issue during the exhibition of the draft Strategic Plan²⁷.

Step 3 – Exhibition and Adoption of Strategic Plan

The draft Strategic Plan was placed on exhibition for a period of seven weeks in July / August 2002. 663 submissions were received in response to the exhibition. Of these 490 were individual submissions and 160 comprised signatures to a form letter. 13 additional submissions were received, however these did not incorporate sufficient information to identify the author. Council considered all submissions when deciding on the content of the final Strategic Plan for Lennox Head. The Community Access Group also considered issues raised in the submissions and provided advice to Council on the final document. A summary of the issues raised during the exhibition of the draft document can be found at Appendix 6.

²⁶ Maps involved with this work can be found throughout this document and in Appendix 5.

²⁷ Refer to page 70.

Human History of Area

The Lennox Head area is located in the country of the Bundjalung people. The Bundjalung nation extended from the Nerang Valley in Queensland, south to the Clarence River and west to the Great Dividing Range. According to oral traditions the area was first settled by the three brothers - Yarbirri, Marmoon and Birrung. Landing at rocks near Lennox Headland, the eldest brother, Yarbirri, plunged his spear into the sand and fresh water welled up. The Lennox area provided a bountiful food supply - including fish, oysters, wallabies, goanna, flying foxes, yams and native nuts. The importance of the Lennox area to the aboriginal people is evidenced by the Bora Ring Site located in Gibbon Street, Lennox Head, as well as other sites and relics in the area.

The first recorded European contact with the area occurred in 1770 when Captain Cook's Endeavour was passing through the area. Captain Cook observed that *"...at nine o'clock in the morning, being about a league from the shore, we discovered smoke in many places, and, having recourse to our glasses, we saw about twenty of the natives, who each had a large bundle upon his back, which we conjectured to be palm leaves for the covering of their houses"*. The group was then observed walking along the beach for about an hour during which Joseph Banks noted that *"not one of them was observed to stop and look towards us; but they trudged along, in all appearance without the least emotion either of curiosity or surprise, though it is impossible they could not have seen the ship by casual glance as they walked along the shore"*.²⁸

Lennox Head acquired its name from Captain Henry James Rous sailing on the survey ship HMS "Rainbow". In August 1828 Captain Rous named the Richmond River and the headland to its north after his brother's friend, Charles Duke of Richmond and Duke of Lennox. Whilst the river has retained the name originally given, a headland further north from the river became known as "Lennox Head".

In 1842, the cedar cutters first ventured into the Ballina / North Creek area. Cedar trees logged along North Creek were floated downstream to sawmills at Shaws Bay. Cedar cutters relocated regularly as timber supplies were exhausted and generally lived in temporary huts and humpies. As such, housing and other development at this time was somewhat primitive.

The *Robertson Act 1861 (NSW)* enabled settlers to make free selection of Crown Land. The names of many of the early settlers at this time are familiar to the current community and include Ross, Kennedy, Ainsworth, Henderson and Williams in Lennox Head and Skennar and Sharpe in the Skennars Head area. By the turn of the century dairy farming was the main agricultural pursuit in the area, however sugar farming and beef cattle grazing were also undertaken. Other trade at this time included tallow.

Access to Lennox Head in the very early days was by boat along North Creek or via the coastal foreshore. Later, North Creek Road was constructed, with a ferry operating over North Creek until the construction of a bridge in 1906. At this time, community activities were centred on "Upper North Creek", being adjacent to North Creek Road to the south of Henderson Lane. Facilities included a school, the Anglican Church of St John the Baptist (built 1898) and a public hall and post office (1914). At this time, the local economy was based primarily on farming.

²⁸ John Hawkesworth, LL.D, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere Volume III*

In December 1922 a public auction was held for a residential subdivision known as "Lennox Head Estate". This marked the start of the development of the area now referred to as the Village of Lennox Head. The houses built on these properties were relatively humble and used primarily as "weekenders" and holiday houses. Development of the area was initially slow, however change occurred more quickly after World War II. Some events of note include the following:

- 1944 Lake Ainsworth National Fitness Camp opened;
- 1948 Anglican Church moved from Upper North Creek to the Village;
- 1954 Electricity Supply;
- 1955 Catholic Church of the Holy Family moved from Alstonville;
- 1961 North Creek school closes and Lennox Head Public School opens;
- 1967 Ti-tree fence constructed to manage beach erosion;
- 1968 Town water supply, which was augmented in 1976
- 1970 North Creek Bridge closed;
- 1976 Tintenbar Shire amalgamation with Ballina Municipal Council to form Ballina Shire Council;
- 1977 Coast Road and Pat Morton Lookout officially opened (the road was, however, trafficable and used prior to this time); and
- 1983 Sewering of urban areas.

Mineral sand mining was undertaken extensively in the Lennox Head area. Initially, the mining was seeking to extract gold from the sand. Later efforts, however, focused on rutile, zircon and other minerals. Many access tracks were constructed to the foreshore areas by the sand miners, which were later used by fishermen, surfers and others to access the foreshore areas.

With improved access and infrastructure, the population of Lennox Head grew quickly – from a population of 437 in 1971 to 1320 in 1981. The population has continued to increase over the subsequent 20 years, with a range of subdivisions constructed both adjacent to the village area and along North Creek Road to Skennars Head. Major infrastructure projects during this time include the foreshore revetment wall in 1993 and both the construction of the Lennox Head Bypass and augmentation of the Sewage Treatment Works in 1994.

This material is not intended to be a comprehensive history of Lennox Head, but rather provide a brief outline of some key stages in the human history of the area. Much of the material was obtained from the collection compiled by the Heritage Committee of the Lennox Head Residents Association which is available as reference material in the Lennox Head Library. Of particular assistance was the transcript of a presentation entitled "The History of Lennox Head" made by Mrs Dorothy Southwell to the Lennox Head Probus Club on 6th September, 1990. Other reference material included:

- John Hawkesworth, LL.D, An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere Volume III Drawn up from the Journals of Commodore Byron, Captain Carteret, Captain Wallis & Captain Cook and the Papers of Joseph Banks. Dublin, MDCCLXXIII.
- I.W.Morley, Black Sands - A History of the Mineral Sand Mining Industry in Eastern Australia, University of Queensland Press, 1981.
- Jolanda Nayutah and Gail Finlay, Our Land Our Spirit – Aboriginal Sites of North Coast New South Wales, North Coast Institute for Aboriginal Community Education, 1998
- Department of Land and Water Conservation Website:
<http://www.nsw.gov.au/landnsw/about/> Accessed 16th January, 2003.
- Richmond River Historical Society Inc, Bulletin Number 162 – From North Creek to Lennox Head, September 1997.
- Discussions were also held with Mr Ted Henderson of Tenterfield (formerly Lennox Head) and Lennox Head resident, Mr Colin Gradwell. Ms Marelle Lee, also a Lennox Head resident, made a number of detailed suggestions concerning heritage matters during both the drafting and public exhibition phases of the draft Strategic Plan.

Lennox Head District Community Profile

The following information provides a “snapshot” of the demographic profile of the community which lives in the Lennox Head District. All actions arising out of the Strategic Plan will be based, in part, on the demographic information contained within the community profile. The information has been obtained from the Census of Population and Housing undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics

As Lennox Head and Skennars Head are separately defined by the Geographical Names Board, the term “Lennox Head District” has been used to describe the combined Lennox Head and Skennars Head areas. Unfortunately, due to the location of Census collection boundaries, the Fig Tree Hill / Sanctuary Village area is not included in the community profile. It is estimated, however, that an additional 300 people reside in this area.

The data provided has, at times, distinguished Lennox Head and Skennars Head. In some cases the information is further broken down to Lennox Village and the Pacific Pines/Lennox Meadows area. This has been done where noticeable differences occurred in the data between these areas.

Population Growth

As at September, 2001 in the order of 6150 people resided in the Lennox Head District. This includes actual populations of 4985 in Lennox Head and 858 in Skennars Head and an estimated 300 people at Figtree Hill and Sanctuary Village²⁹.

As shown in Table 1, the study area has experienced a high rate of growth in recent times - with an increase of approximately 215 per cent in the fifteen years from 1986. Population growth was highest in the 1986-1991 period with growth occurring at 10 per cent per annum. This has since slowed to the current growth rate of 5.3% between 1996 and 2001. One reason for the very high rate of growth in the earlier period was that growth was occurring on a low population base. Nevertheless, actual population increase has been relatively steady over the entire period (1986-2001) at an average of 266 persons per year.

Table 1 - Population Growth 1986-2001				
Year	1986	1991	1996	2001
Occupied Dwellings	805	1074	1626	2162
Total Dwellings	N/a	1271	1869	2398
Population	1851	3035	4511	5843 ³⁰
Annual Average Growth Rate (%) between Census Years	N/a	10.4	8.2	5.3
Average annual increase in persons between Census Years	N/a	237	294	266
Occupancy Rate (Persons/dwelling)	2.30	2.83	2.77	2.70
Vacancy Rate (Proportion of Total Dwellings Vacant)	N/a	15.5	13.0	9.8
(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data)				

The occupancy rate (the number of persons per dwelling) increased in the period of 1986-1991, followed by a decline to the present rate of 2.7 persons per dwelling. The reason for this is most likely related to the influx of young families associated with new developments, which occurred during the main growth period (1986-1991). The subsequent period of decline in occupancy rate mirrors the general trend in the wider Australian community.

²⁹ Fig Tree Hill and Sanctuary Village are located in Census Collector Districts which extend beyond the study area, so the population of these areas have been estimated based on dwelling numbers in the area. It should be noted that the various tables in the Lennox Head Community Profile located elsewhere in this document do not incorporate the Fig Tree Hill and Sanctuary Village areas.

³⁰ Not including Fig Tree Hill.

The vacancy rate (proportion of total dwellings which are vacant) in the District fell from 15% in 1991 to less than 10 per cent in 2001, compared with 8% for Ballina Shire as a whole. This may reflect the changing character of Lennox Head from a holiday location, with a large number of holiday homes being vacant for much of the year, to the area being increasingly seen as an attractive residential location. This follows the wider trend occurring in the North Coast region.

Age Structure

The population age structure of the Lennox Head District is markedly different from Ballina Shire as a whole, with a higher proportion of younger persons and a lower proportion of older persons. Table 2 shows the age structure characteristics for the Lennox Head District.

Table 2 - Age Structure, 2001				
Age Group	Lennox Head District	Lennox Head District (%)	Ballina (%)	NSW (%)
0-19	1,868	32.2	26.9	27.7
20-29	531	9.1	8.9	13.6
30-39	869	15.0	11.8	15.1
40-49	1,012	17.4	15.5	14.6
50-59	636	11.0	12.8	11.7
60-79	778	13.4	19.2	14.1
80+	110	1.9	5.0	3.3
TOTAL	5,804	100.0	100	100
(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data)				

At the 2001 Census, approximately 25% of Lennox Head population (1238 persons) and 30% of the Skennars Head population (252 persons) were children (aged 0-14 years). This is compared with the Ballina Shire total of 20% of the population being children. While the 15-19 age bracket in Lennox Head is similar to that of the Shire in total (at 7%), overall, the proportion of the population aged 0-19 years in the Lennox Head District (32%) is greater than the Shire total (27%).

With regard to the aged population, Lennox Head has approximately 16% and Skennars Head has approximately 13% of the total population aged over 60 years, compared with 24% of the total Shire population. The 60+ age bracket has declined as a proportion of the total population from 18% in 1996 to 15% in 2001, however it is anticipated that the number of persons aged over 60 years will increase significantly over the coming decades, following the general trend in the Australian population. It is expected that this will place considerable demands on aged and community services in the area.

Cultural Background

The community in the study area is not particularly culturally diverse, with the majority of people coming from English speaking backgrounds. In 2001, only 36 people (4.2%) in Skennars Head and 118 (2.4%) of Lennox Head indicated that they spoke a language other than English, and only 9.5% indicated that they were born overseas.

In 2001, there were 60 Aboriginal persons in Lennox Head and 6 Aboriginal persons living at Skennars Head, up from 18 and zero respectively in these areas in 1996. This amounts to approximately 1.1% of the total district population, compared with 2.4% of the total Ballina Shire population. This figure represents an increase in the Aboriginal population as a proportion of the total study area population of 0.7% from the 1996 Census.

Housing

While the District has a range of housing types available, the most predominant dwelling type remains the detached house, which constitutes approximately 60% of the total dwelling stock. As a total, the district is similar in terms of housing type availability to the Shire as a whole, and with other urban localities in the Shire. When identifiable localities in the study area are compared, however, several notable differences can be identified. The localities compared are Lennox Village, Skennars Head and Pacific Pines/Lennox Meadows localities. The composition of the dwelling stock in the various localities in the study area is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 indicates that markedly higher densities (as expressed by the predominance of non-detached dwelling types) occur in the Lennox Village locality. This generally follows the medium density zoning of that area (M1 in Ballina Council DCP No.1 Urban Land). Also, the Lennox Village locality has a higher vacancy rate (15%) compared to the other localities, and to Ballina as a whole (7.5%). This implies that a higher proportion of total dwellings in this area are holiday homes, perhaps being a reflection of the area's proximity to the beach and the nature of the dwelling stock, (having a high proportion of non-attached dwellings). It should be noted that the proportions shown in Table 3 are also strongly influenced by the location of caravan parks (in the Skennars Head and Lennox Village localities).

Table 3 - Dwelling Stock Characteristics, 2001									
Dwelling Type	Lennox Village	%	Skennars Head	%	Pacific Pines/Lennox Meadows	%	District Total	%	Total Ballina %
Separate house	456	37.3	211	66.1	780	91.1	1,447	60.3	62.2
Semi-detached, row house, townhouse terrace, etc.	275	22.5	20	6.3	24	2.8	319	13.3	15.1
Flat, unit or apartment:	278	22.7	6	1.9	3	0.4	287	12.0	9.5
Other dwelling	35	2.9	74	23.2	0	0.0	109	4.5	5.3
Not stated	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.4
Unoccupied private dwellings	179	14.6	8	2.5	49	5.7	236	9.8	7.5
(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census Data))									

Housing Tenure

The housing tenure characteristics of the Lennox Head district are compared to Ballina Shire as a whole in Table 4. Both the Lennox Head and Skennars Head areas have a higher proportion of houses in the process of being purchased (both approximately 29% - compared with 19% for Ballina Shire as a whole). This is likely due to the higher proportion of new homes in the study area than compared to the Shire as a whole. The Lennox Head area has a higher proportion of homes being rented (27%) than Skennars Head (19%), being only slightly lower than the proportion for the Shire as a whole (28% of all dwelling stock). The lower proportion of houses being rented in the Skennars Head locality may be due to a combination of factors, namely the high proportion of new homes and the comparatively low diversity of dwelling types (mainly detached dwellings).

Table 4 - Housing Tenure, 2001					
	Lennox Head		Skennars Head		Ballina Shire
	Dwellings	%	Dwellings	%	%
Fully Owned	834	38.8	141	45.5	44.8
Being Purchased	618	28.8	91	29.4	19.4
Being purchased under a rent to buy scheme	12	0.6	3	1.0	0.4
Being Rented	576	26.8	59	19.0	28.4
Other tenure type	42	2.0	7	2.3	3.4
Not stated	66	3.1	9	2.9	3.5
Total	2148	100.0	310	100.0	100.0
(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census Data))					

Housing Repayments

The median monthly housing repayments in the Lennox Head District are higher than that of Ballina as a whole at \$1,000-1,199 compared with \$800-999 Shirewide. In contrast, the median weekly rent for the district is equal to that of the Shire as a whole at \$150-199. The higher than average monthly loan repayments probably reflects the higher than average property prices in Lennox Head at the current time.

Family Characteristics

The family characteristics of the Lennox Head district are compared with Ballina Shire as a whole in Table 5. The district has a higher proportion of the total population as couple families with dependent children (43%) than Ballina Shire as a whole (33%). The total Lennox Head area also has a lower proportion of families as couple families with non-dependent children (3.7%) and couple families without children (35%) when compared with the Shire as a whole (6% and 43% respectively). This generally reflects other aspects of the demographic profile including age and housing characteristics. Otherwise the family characteristics of the study area generally mirrors that of the Shire, including the proportions of couple families in total, single parent families and other families.

Table 5 - Family Characteristics, 2001			
	Lennox Head District		Ballina Shire
	Families	%	%
Couple family:			
- with dependent children	687	42.8	32.9
- with non-dependent children	60	3.7	6.0
- without children	565	35.2	43.1
One parent family:			
- with dependent children	217	13.5	13.2
- with non-dependent children	51	3.2	3.7
Other family	24	1.5	1.1
Total	1,604	100.0	100.0
(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census Data))			

Income and Employment

At the time of the 2001 Census there were 1368 families living in Lennox Head and 236 families in Skennars Head, with a combined adult population (15+ yrs) of 4314. The median individual weekly income in Lennox Head and Skennars Head was \$300-\$399 and \$400-\$499 respectively. In comparison, the weekly individual income was \$300-\$399 for the Shire and \$400-\$499 for the State of NSW. Therefore, at the time of the 2001 Census the Lennox Head district had a median weekly individual income higher than the Shire but which was in line with that for the State.

At the time of preparing this community profile, household income data was not available from the 2001 Census, however that available from the 1996 Census mirrors the individual income data. Both Lennox Head and Skennars Head areas had a weekly household income of \$500-\$699, which is greater than the mean household income of Ballina Shire at \$300-\$499. The NSW state median weekly household income was \$500-\$699. Therefore, at the 1996 Census, the mean weekly household income for both Lennox Head and Skennars Head was higher than Ballina Shire and equal to that of the State.

1996 unemployment rates for the Lennox Head and Skennars Head localities, Ballina Shire and the State of NSW are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 - Unemployment Rates (%), 1996			
Area	Unemployment Rate (%)		
	Males	Females	Total
Lennox Head	16.2	13.0	14.7
Skennars Head	23.3	14.3	19.1
Ballina	14.0	10.8	12.6
NSW	9.5	7.9	8.8

In 1996 both Lennox Head and Skennars Head had higher rates of unemployment of both males and females than the Shire in total, which in itself had higher rates than the State of NSW. Skennars Head had significantly higher rates of unemployment for males than all other areas/scales, although this is working from a lower population base. The total unemployment rate for Skennars Head was also significantly higher at 19% compared with 15% for Lennox Head, 13% for the Shire and approximately 9% for the State. This appears inconsistent with other available data such as income and housing repayments, both of which are higher in the Skennars Head locality than elsewhere. This incongruity may in part be due to the location of the caravan park within the Census collection district of Skennars Head.

Education and Qualifications

Data from the 2001 Census indicates that a greater proportion of Lennox Head and Skennars Head residents left school with some form of formal school leaving qualification than in other areas of the Shire. Table 7 compares the highest level of (secondary) schooling completed by Lennox Head respondents (to the 2001 Census), as a proportion of total persons, with that for the Shire as a whole and with the State of NSW.

Table 7 - Highest Level of Schooling Completed					
Highest Level of Schooling Completed	Proportion (%) of Total Population				
	Lennox	Skennars	Total	Ballina Shire	NSW
Year 8 or below	4.5	3.8	4.4	10.1	8.6
Year 9 or equivalent	7.4	8.6	7.5	10.9	8.4
Year 10 or equivalent	33.4	36.9	33.9	33.0	26.8
Year 11 or equivalent	7.1	5.1	6.8	6.2	5.3
Year 12 or equivalent	38.5	35.0	38.0	29.6	38.0
Still at school	4.3	4.1	4.2	3.7	3.3
Did not go to school	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	1.2
Not stated	4.9	6.4	5.1	6.2	8.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census Data))

Table 7 indicates that a higher proportion of residents in both Lennox Head and Skennars Head completed school to Year 12 (38%), compared with Ballina Shire as a whole (30%). This proportion was equal to that of the State of NSW. Also, the proportions of persons leaving school upon completion of Year 10 (34%) and Year 11 (7%) were both marginally higher than both Ballina Shire (33% and 6% respectively) and NSW as a whole (27% and 5% respectively). This was balanced by a lower proportion of residents that had left school upon completion of Year 8 (or earlier) (4%) or Year 9 (7.5%) than both the Shire and the State. The Lennox Head District also had a higher proportion of the total population still at school (4.2%) than both the Shire (3.7%) and the State (3.3%).

Tertiary Qualifications

Data from the 1996 Census indicates that a higher proportion of Lennox Head district respondents over 15 years and with a qualification had gained university qualifications (Bachelor Degree or higher) (23%) compared to Ballina Shire as a whole (19%). Similar proportions of respondents had gained basic (approximately 7%) and skilled vocational (approximately 28%) qualifications when compared to Ballina Shire in total.

Occupation and Industry

At the time of preparing this Community Profile, occupation and industry data was not available for the 2001 Census. As such, data from the 1996 Census has been substituted. Table 8 provides the ranking of Industry by the number of persons employed in the Lennox Head study area with comparison to Ballina Shire as a whole. The major industries of the Lennox Head district, reflect the industry base of Ballina as a regional service centre providing among others Retail Trade, Health and Education services.

Table 8 - Industry Ranking, 1996						
R A N K	Lennox Head District			Ballina Shire Total		
	Industry	Persons Empl'd	%	Industry	Persons Empl'd	%
1	Retail Trade	312	17.3	Retail Trade	2,177	17.8
2	Health and Community Services	221	12.3	Health and Community Services	1,460	12.0
3	Education	221	12.3	Education	1,122	9.2
4	Property and Business Services	183	10.2	Manufacturing	1,030	8.4
5	Construction	175	9.7	Agriculture , Forestry and Fishing	1,028	8.4
6	Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	142	7.9	Construction	1,007	8.2
7	Manufacturing	123	6.8	Property and Business Services	886	7.3
8	Personal and Other Services	103	5.7	Accommodation , Cafes and Restaurants	822	6.7
9	Wholesale Trade	82	4.6	Wholesale Trade	563	4.6
10	Agriculture , Forestry and Fishing	48	2.7	Personal and Other Services	474	3.9
11	Cultural and Recreational Services	45	2.5	Finance and Insurance	340	2.8
12	Transport and Storage	40	2.2	Cultural and Recreational Services	336	2.8
13	Finance and Insurance	38	2.1	Transport and Storage	332	2.7
14	Government Admin. and Defence	38	2.1	Government Admin. and Defence	327	2.7
15	Communication Services	20	1.1	Communication Services	199	1.6
16	Mining	6	0.3	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	63	0.5
17	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	3	0.2	Mining	51	0.4

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Census Data))

Method of Travel to Work

Data on methods of travel to work indicates a high dependency on private car ownership and a low rate of use for public transport. Of employed persons approximately 71% from Lennox Head and 77% from Skennars Head (in the 1996 Census) travelled to work either by car or motorbike/motor-scooter. Of Lennox Head respondents, only approximately 6% either walked or travelled by bicycle to work, and approximately 6% worked from home. Close to 3% of respondents took the bus (0.8%) or other (non-specified) method of travel to work. In comparison for Skennars Head, no residents travelled to work either by bus or by walking and only 3 persons (1.2%) travelled by bicycle. This data also indicates that the majority of Lennox Head residents work outside the Village.

The Existing Plans for Lennox Head

As with other areas in New South Wales, planning and development matters are controlled via the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. This Act sets out procedures and other requirements for making and amending Plans as well as lodging and assessing development applications.

Within this context, the current planning for Lennox Head is multi-layered and comprises a series of local, State and regional planning documents. All planning decisions must be made within the broad planning framework provided by each of these documents. Some of these documents are legally binding on Council, the community and developers whilst others operate more as policy documents. Following is a brief summary³¹ of each of the main planning documents:

State Environmental Planning Policies ("SEPPs") – There are a large number of SEPPs in force relating to planning issues considered to be of State significance. Three of these Policies are of particular relevance in Lennox Head – being SEPP 14 (Coastal Wetlands), SEPP 26 (Littoral Rainforests) and SEPP 71 (Coastal Protection). SEPP 14 and 26 both identify a series of important wetland and littoral rainforest environments and set in place approval processes for proposed development or other activities within these lands. SEPP 71 establishes a approval process for significant development within the Coastal Zone as defined by the NSW Coastal Policy 1997 (see below). This SEPP applies to all land within Lennox Head.

NSW Coastal Policy 1997 (the "Coastal Policy") – This Policy applies to all parts of Lennox Head and provides a series of objectives and controls for developments in the Coastal Zone³². Importantly, the Coastal Policy requires that all proposed rezonings in the area require detailed environmental assessment in the form of a Local Environmental Study. The Coastal Policy also requires that headlands, beaches and prominent ridgelines are protected. The nine goals of the Coastal Policy are as follows:

- Goal 1 - To protect, rehabilitate and improve the natural environment;
- Goal 2 - To recognise and accommodate natural processes and climate change;
- Goal 3 - To protect and enhance the aesthetic qualities of the coastal zone;
- Goal 4 - To protect and conserve cultural heritage;
- Goal 5 - To promote ecologically sustainable development and use of resources;
- Goal 6 - To provide for ecologically sustainable human settlement;
- Goal 7 - To provide for appropriate public access and use;
- Goal 8 - To provide information to enable effective management; and
- Goal 9 - To provide for integrated planning and management.

³¹ This is intended to provide a short summary of some of the key components of these documents and should be used with caution. Detailed interpretation of these controls should only be made after referral to the complete documents.

³² The Coastal Zone includes all land within a distance of 1 Kilometre of the coastal high water mark and all bays, estuaries, coastal lakes, lagoons, islands and tidal waters of coastal rivers (to the limit of mangroves).

North Coast Regional Environmental Plan 1988 (the “REP”) – The REP provides policies which guide the preparation of draft plans and the assessment of development applications on the North Coast. The objectives of the REP promote the protection of the natural environment, encourage an efficient and attractive built environment and guide development into a productive yet environmentally sound future. One of the important aspects of the REP is the requirement that each Council on the North Coast prepare an Urban Land Release Strategy³³. Also prepared under the auspices of the REP are the “North Coast Urban Design Guidelines”, a copy of which are provided at Appendix 7.

Ballina Local Environmental Plan 1987 (the “LEP”) - The LEP is the main planning document used in Ballina. It divides land in the Shire into various zones and nominates objectives and controls for each of these. For example, within a commercial zone the full range of commercial activities are encouraged, whilst in environmental protection zones far stricter controls apply. The provisions of the LEP are legally binding and amendment of this document requires the agreement of the NSW Minister for Planning.

Within the LEP, the urban areas of Lennox Head are typically zoned “Living Area” or “Village Area”. In addition, most of the large undeveloped area between Pacific Pines Estate and Lennox Meadows is zoned “Village Area” and is proposed to be developed for future stages of Pacific Pines Estate. A copy of the current LEP zoning map for the Lennox Head area can be found at Map 4 on page 55.

The LEP was developed in the mid 1980’s and was finalised in 1987. This involved the preparation and exhibition of both a Local Environmental Study (the “LES”) and a draft Local Environmental Plan and was the subject of a Public Hearing. The LES process examined a number of population growth models – being “high”, “medium”, “low” and “no growth”. The planning process at that time concluded that a medium growth model was appropriate and the zoning framework was developed accordingly. The LES also envisaged a growth area within the coastal corridor between East Ballina and Lennox Head with a total population of about 8100 people by 2001 which is substantially more than the actual 2001 population.

Development Control Plans (DCPs). DCPs provide more detailed controls regarding planning and development matters than would normally be found in the LEP. DCPs can be created and amended by Ballina Shire Council by way of a process involving community consultation. There are eight DCPs in Ballina Shire, however the following are of particular relevance to Lennox Head:

- **Ballina Development Control Plan No.1** (“DCP No.1”) - DCP No.1 provides a framework for guiding developments within the urban areas of the Shire. For example, it illustrates areas which Council has identified as being suitable for medium density housing and outlines the design controls that apply to these. It also provides landscaping and car parking requirements for all types of development. A copy of the DCP map for the Lennox Head locality can be found at Map 5 on page 56.

It should be noted that the map for DCP No.1 includes the current layout for future stages of Pacific Pines Estate. This layout originated with a development control policy for the Estate which was adopted by Ballina Council in 1989 after public exhibition. Since this time, a number of amendments have been made to the layout at the request of the developers, with these amendments involving community consultation.

- **Other Development Control Plans** - There are 2 other specific DCPs which apply to Lennox Head. DCP No.3 provides specific controls for the Allens Parade and Rayners Lane areas relating to coastal processes, such as erosion. DCP No.4 provides controls relating to aircraft noise in the vicinity of Skennars Head Road associated with the operation of the Ballina Airport. Map 6 (on page 57) illustrates the areas to which these Development Control Plans apply.

³³ Further information about ULRS-2000 can be found on page 53.

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- There are also DCPs which apply to the whole of the Shire relating to matters such as Bed and Breakfast Establishments, Energy Smart Homes, Exempt & Complying Development and Brothels. A draft DCP has also been prepared relating to mosquito management.³⁴

Ballina Urban Land Release Strategy (the "ULRS") – The ULRS has been developed as a requirement of the REP. This document provides an analysis of supply and demand for residential land in the Shire and provides criteria for the release of additional land for this purpose. The land release strategy for Lennox Head is based on the following principles:

- Ongoing commitment to Council's existing zoning strategy;
- Providing an adequate land supply for various market segments;
- Achieving and maintaining reasonable developer competition in the market place;
- Ensuring the timely and economic provision of services;
- Masterplan rezoning followed by staged subdivision release; and
- Planning over a 5-20 year timeframe.

The latest version of the Urban Land Release Strategy was finalised in 2000 following community consultation and has been agreed to by Planning NSW³⁵. This document envisaged a future resident population in the order of 12,500 people in the Lennox Head area. It is important to note that this population projection did not include the Skennars Head area. An extract from the current land release strategy can be found at Appendix 8.

Other Strategic Planning Documents - The preceding documents have all been prepared under the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. In addition to these, there are a large number of other documents either being prepared or finalised which are relevant in the planning for Lennox Head. These include the following:

- Draft Blueprint for the Northern Rivers Catchment;
- Ballina Community Plan;
- Draft Ballina Urban Water Strategy;
- Draft Ballina Retail Strategy;
- Draft Ballina Tourism Strategy;
- Draft Single Coastal Reserves Plan of Management;
- Plan of Management for Lake Ainsworth;
- Vegetation Management Plans for Boulder Beach, Lennox Headland and western side of Lake Ainsworth; and
- Plan of Management for Williams Reserve;

Local Government Act 1993 – The responsibilities and functions of all local government Councils in NSW are set out in the *Local Government Act 1993*. This Act provides the legal framework for an effective, efficient, environmentally responsible and open system of local government in NSW. As such, the actions of Ballina Shire Council in the preparation and implementation of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan need to be consistent with the requirements of this Act.

Other Relevant Legislation – There is a variety of other environmental legislation impacting on planning and development matters in NSW. Such legislation is typically administered by State Government Agencies and includes the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, *Heritage Act 1977*, *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*, *Rivers and Foreshores Improvement Act 1948* and the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1999*.

³⁵ Formerly NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP).

Development Application Procedures

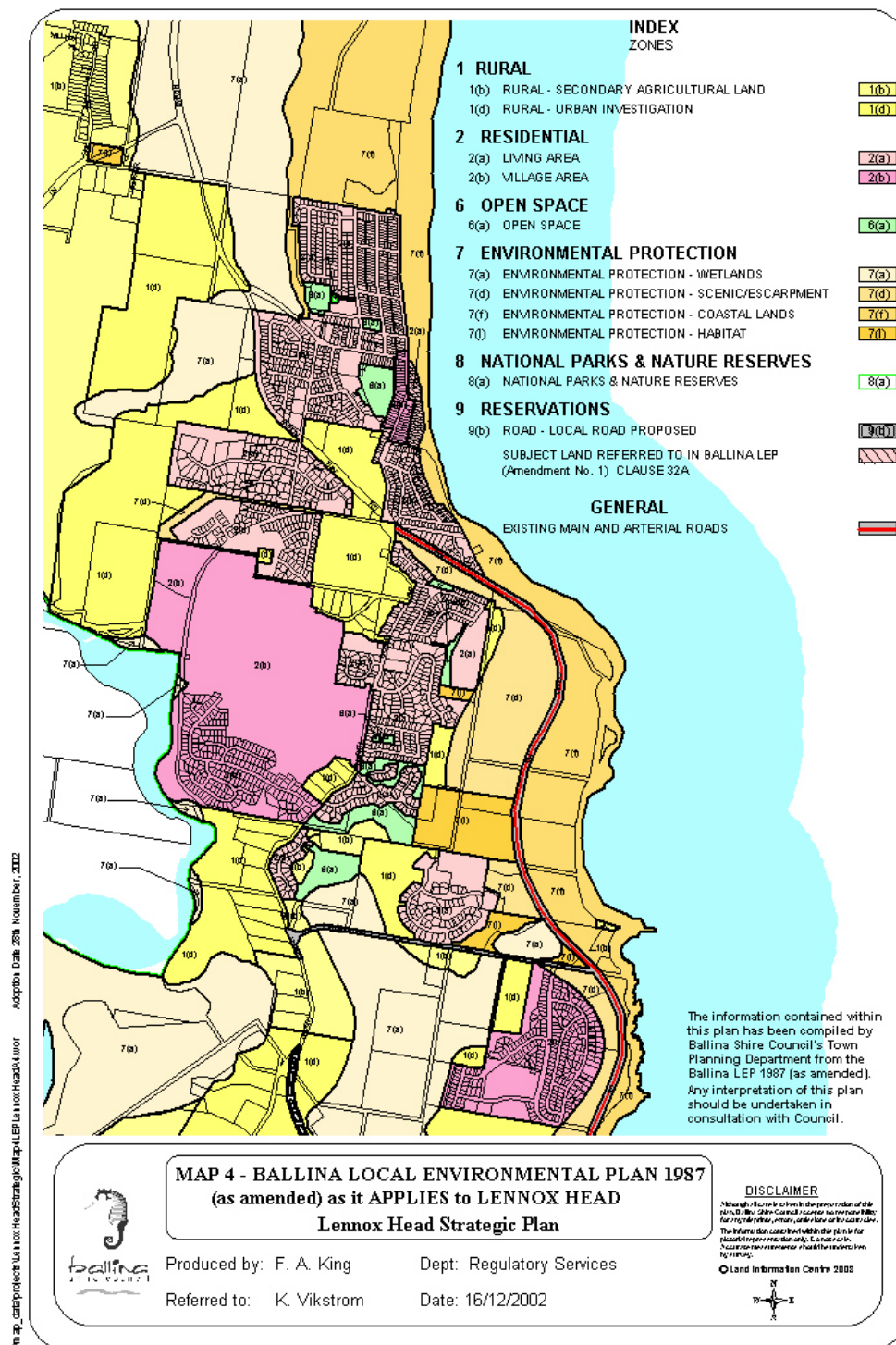
The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* sets out the procedures and requirements for processing development applications in New South Wales. These procedures tend to be complex for those applications which potentially impact on sensitive environments and are likely to involve detailed environmental impact assessments and community consultation. For applications which are less likely to have significant impact, such as shops in commercial areas, the approval processes are more straightforward. Some low impact forms of development, such as single storey dwelling houses, have a streamlined approval process.

The Act requires that the following matters be considered for all development applications:

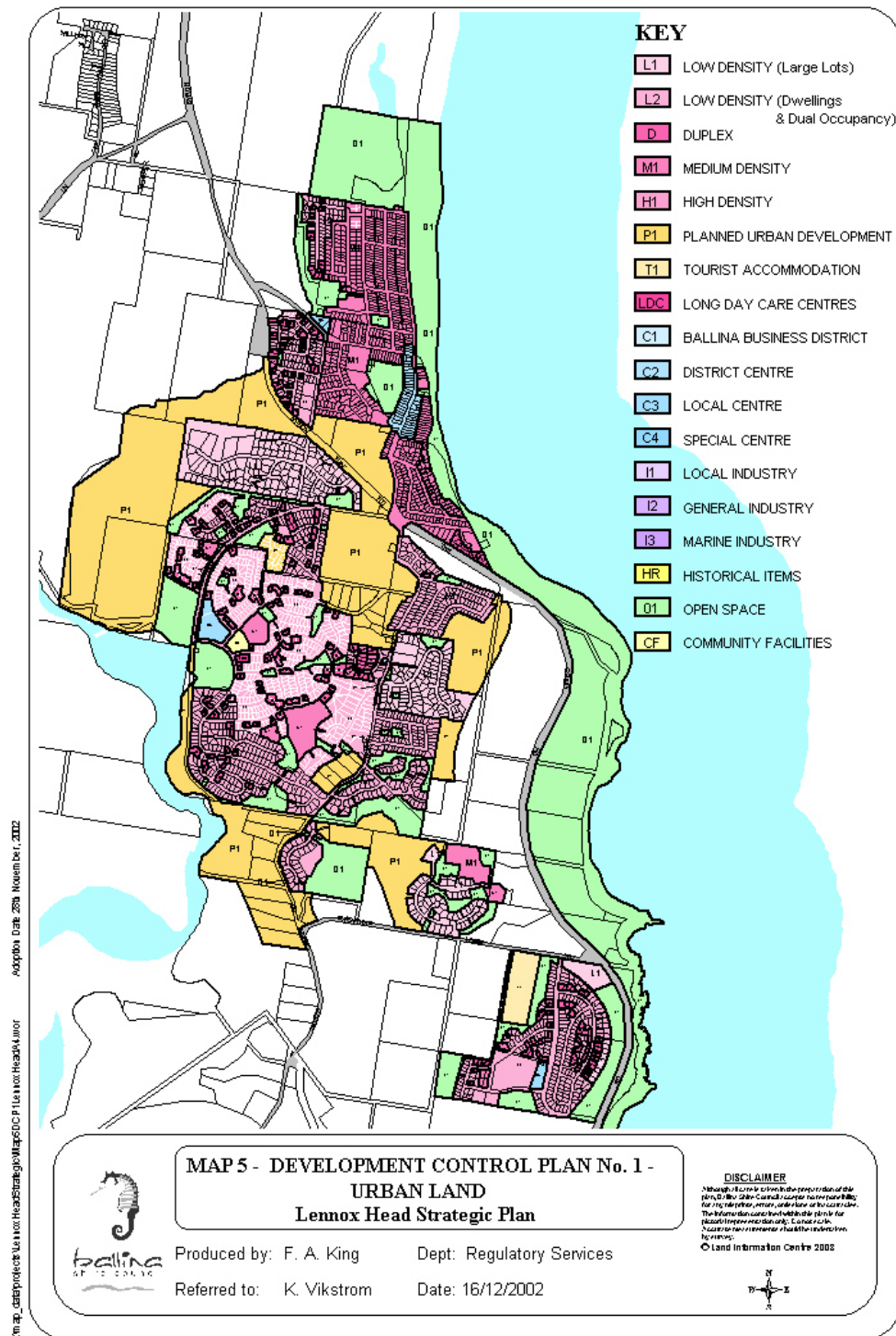
- The provisions of any existing or draft Environmental Planning Instrument (ie SEPPs, REPs or LEPs);
- Any Development Control Plan;
- Matters prescribed by the Regulations, including the Coastal Policy;
- The likely impact of the development, including environmental, social and economic impacts;
- Any submissions received regarding the application; and
- The public interest.

In some instances, it is necessary to obtain approval from both Ballina Shire Council and relevant State Government Agencies such as Planning NSW, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Department of Land and Water Conservation, the Environmental Protection Authority and NSW Fisheries. The relevant legislation sets out whether these Agencies need to be involved and at what stage in the approval process.

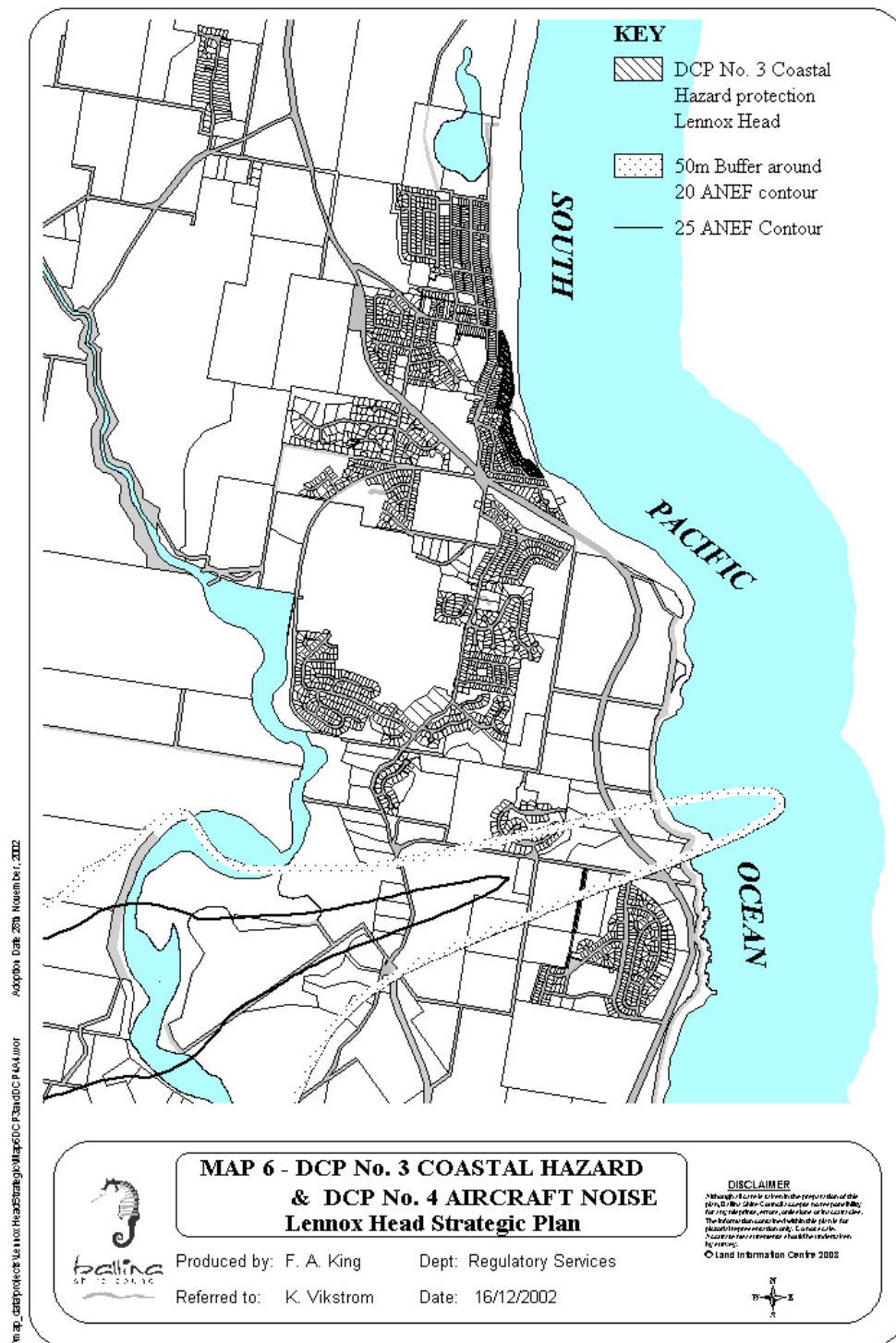
Map 4 - Ballina Local Environmental Plan 1987



Map 5 - Ballina Development Control Plan No. 1 – Urban Land



[Map 6 - DCP No.3 Coastal Hazard and DCP No.4 Airport Noise](#)



Issues Arising During Plan Preparation Process

As one might expect, the plan preparation process revealed a range of views within the community regarding planning and development in Lennox Head. These have been summarised into the following list of issues which warrant consideration in the new Strategic Plan for the area³⁶:

General Issues

- The community places a very high value on the existing “village atmosphere” and “lifestyle” experienced in Lennox Head and wishes to ensure that these elements are protected and enhanced in the future.
- Lennox Head is located in close proximity to a number of important environments which need to be protected into the future. Many of these environments are degraded and require restoration.
- The Lennox Head Village Commercial Centre is the heart of the community and fulfils an important social and economic function. There is a need, however, for streetscape improvements and a rationalisation of traffic and parking within the Centre.
- There are concerns about significant future population growth in Lennox Head and its impact on the village atmosphere, lifestyle and environment currently enjoyed. There are also concerns regarding the rate of population growth in the area.
- Community infrastructure, such as playing fields and community halls, are inadequate to meet the current needs of the community. In this regard, improved sporting facilities, particularly playing fields, have been identified as a priority in the community consultation process. A community centre and youth facilities located on sites which are central and accessible have also been identified as priorities, as well as the need for aged care facilities.
- There is limited land within Lennox Head which is relatively unconstrained and reasonably capable of accommodating urban development.
- There has been strong historic population growth in Lennox Head. Population pressures are expected to continue or increase in the future. The completion of the Pacific Highway upgrade and the Byron Shire development moratorium are expected to contribute to this.
- Decisions have been made in the past which impact on planning for the future. In some instances it will be necessary to review these decisions to improve the outcomes.
- Lennox Head has many landscapes of visual prominence including dramatic coastal areas. The protection and enhancement of these areas is important to the character and amenity of the area.
- Increasing property and housing values are resulting in a decrease in housing affordability. As Lennox Head reaches its population capacity, this is expected to intensify.
- The community of Skennars Head has a strong social connection to Lennox Head. The planning for these areas needs to occur in a co-ordinated and cohesive manner.
- Lennox Head needs to be visually and physically separate from other urban areas so as to retain its sense of identity and minimise urban sprawl. The area located between East Ballina and Skennars Head has been identified by the community as requiring a significant green buffer between housing developments.

³⁶ These issues have arisen either during the Community Aspirations Survey, the ongoing plan preparation process or the land holder meetings convened by Council.

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- The various headlands and undeveloped coastal areas are key elements of the landscape. In particular, Lennox Point provides an important visual backdrop to the village area of Lennox Head. Many of these areas require weed removal and environmental restoration work and a commitment to ongoing maintenance.
 - Prominent ridgelines are very important to the scenic quality, character and amenity of Lennox Head.
 - There is a view within the community that Council processes have not allowed for adequate community involvement and that these processes need to be improved into the future.
 - The built form in Lennox Head does not generally reflect the sub tropical climate of the area, nor does it provide for a "Lennox Head identity".
 - There is community concern about the proposed upgrade of the Lennox Head Sewage Treatment Works. The disposal of treated effluent into the ocean is of particular concern to many residents of Lennox Head.
 - There is a need to recognise and promote the role of indigenous culture within the Lennox Head area.
 - The management of stormwater in Lennox Head needs to be improved. The improvement of the quality of stormwater discharging into Seven Mile Beach and Lake Ainsworth are priority issues for the Lennox Head community.
 - There is increasing demand for a low-key light industrial/arts/craft area in Lennox Head to provide facilities for local trades and crafts people and to manage potential impacts of these activities.
 - Tourism will continue to be an important part of the economy of Lennox Head. As the Pacific Highway upgrade improves, motor vehicle access to the area this can be expected to grow. It is important that the needs of the resident community are not undermined by the needs of tourists.
 - Public safety and anti-social behaviour (particularly in the village area at night) is of concern to the community.
 - It is important to ensure that the actions identified in the Strategic Plan can be staged and resourced.
 - Road networks and traffic flows need to be planned and developed in an integrated manner having regard to the size and location of future populations.
 - Current public transport services do not meet the needs of the local community and are consequently under utilised. Better planning and co-ordination of these services should be encouraged. Similarly, planning for Lennox Head needs to provide for pedestrian and cycle access linking residential areas with key attractions in the district.
 - Lake Ainsworth is a major recreational and environmental resource for Lennox Head residents and visitors. Planning for this area should seek to ensure the health of this environment and the safety and enjoyment of users. Management of stormwater impacts and improvement to water quality are considered particularly important.
 - Beach access needs to be improved, particularly to Seven Mile Beach, so as to provide safe, sustainable and attractive access for all members of the community.
 - There is a seasonal (November – April) mosquito hazard in Lennox Head. This has important quality of life and health issues for the community of Lennox Head. Whilst a Development Control Plan is being developed relating to this issue, there is a need to advance this work as a matter of priority.
 - Telecommunication facilities, particularly mobile phone and internet services, are poor and require improvement.

Major Issues

Whilst each of the issues documented above are important, the following issues have been identified as requiring particular attention in the Strategic Plan.

Issue 1 – Lifestyle and Village Atmosphere

The community places a very high value on the existing “lifestyle” and “village atmosphere” of Lennox Head and wishes to ensure that these qualities are protected and enhanced in the future.

Introduction

The strategic planning process commenced with a survey to determine the aspirations of the Lennox Head community. When, as part of the telephone survey component of this work, respondents were asked to give a reason for living in the Lennox Head area, 61% of respondents nominated “lifestyle” as the reason. Other questions in the survey asked for views on the “good points” about Lennox Head. The issues of village atmosphere and lifestyle totalled 38% of telephone survey responses and 46% of workshop responses. During the drafting phase of the Strategic Plan, the issues of lifestyle and village atmosphere have repeatedly been raised by the Access Group and members of the broader community.

What is a Village?

The Coastal Design Guidelines for New South Wales Discussion Paper, December 2001 includes a classification of settlement types in the coastal zone. The Discussion Paper defines a “coastal village” as a small centre with a population of up to 3000 whilst “coastal towns” are small centres with a population of about 10,000. “Coastal cities” are large coastal centres with a population in excess of 30,000 people.

The guidelines advise that in coastal villages *“the natural environment dominates in terms of view, environmental systems and vegetation types. Ecological systems surrounding and penetrating the settlement have a high level of integrity and tend to dominate the built environment. The boundaries between developed and natural areas within the village are indistinct. Soft landscaped surfaces characterise both public and private land.”*

With regard to coastal towns, the Guidelines advises *“whilst each coastal town has a unique combination of urban form and relationship to the natural environment, in general they are characterised by:*

- *A strong relationship to the landscape and the coast;*
- *A direct relationship to the foreshore;*
- *Centrally and conveniently located community facilities and public spaces;*
- *Intact grid subdivisions and appropriate building types; and*
- *Low, small scale buildings.*

They may be surrounded by older style grid subdivisions, new cul-de-sac subdivisions or a combination of both.”

The Region of Villages Discussion Paper 2001 arising from the Northern Rivers Regional Strategy also provides a useful discussion about the characteristics of a village. The Discussion Paper indicates that there is difficulty in defining a “village” as there are a number of interpretations of this term. The population size ranges from 30-50 households, 100 – 1000 persons, 1000 - 5000 persons or 3000 – 5000 persons. The Paper identifies that there are a number of qualities that make up a village. These can be broadly categorised as:

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- Community identity;
 - Connectedness and integration;
 - Function and design;
 - Diversity and multi-functionality;
 - Relationship with surroundings and landscape;
 - Linkages to other urban areas; and
 - Range of services and facilities available within walking distance of the residential areas.

It should be noted that the Region of Villages Discussion Paper flags the concept of larger settlements being designed so as to provide for a series of “villages” within the larger area.

What are the Lifestyle and Village Atmosphere Characteristics of Lennox Head?

The “Lennox Head lifestyle” is highly valued by many residents in the area. The Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary defines lifestyle as being the “particular way of life of a person or group”. Whilst difficult to generalise on the qualities which make up the combined lifestyle of 6500 individuals, it is reasonable to assume that there is a strong emphasis on the outdoors because of the climate and proximity to beaches and other natural environments. The casual, low key, friendly way of life also plays an important role. In September, 2001 the Community Access Group endeavoured to define the qualities which make up the “village atmosphere” of Lennox Head. The following list of qualities was developed by the Group, with assistance from community members in attendance at the meeting³⁷:

- Don't have multi-storey developments; Diversity of housing types;
- Knowing most people; Small population;
- Lots of things within walking & cycling distance;
- Spread out, but not continual houses;
- Not governed by tourism;
- Has a “heart” – central area, town square, village green, beach;
- Size of “heart” – not just one place but many;
- Not dominated by government control / autonomy;
- Freedom of access to beach;
- Casual & relaxed; family oriented; still natural feel;
- Nature of shops – small, locally owned, one main street;
- Lower crime rate & sense of safety;
- Bypass takes the through traffic; major traffic removed from residential areas; traffic slower in town;
- Mix of people – age, race, employment etc;
- Not joined to Ballina or Byron; and
- Internal buffers.

As the plan preparation process has developed, the Access Group subsequently added the following qualities to this list:

- Access to a wide variety of natural amenities – including Lake Ainsworth, beaches, headlands and natural environments;
- Fresh air and low levels of noise;
- The way people “connect”; and
- Scenic vistas.

Conclusion

Lennox Head already has a population which exceeds that typically associated with a village and this population is expected to grow. The area retains, however, a village atmosphere and lifestyle which is highly valued by the community. As such, it is important that measures be put in place which endeavour to protect these qualities as the area evolves into the future. The Strategic Plan is proposing a variety of measures to achieve this.

³⁷ It is noted that many of these issues were raised repeatedly in the Community Aspirations Survey.

Issue 2 – The Environment

Lennox Head is located in close proximity to a number of important environments which need to be adequately protected into the future. Many of these environments are degraded and require restoration.

Introduction

The Community Aspirations Survey asked community members about issues of future importance to planning in Lennox Head. The concept of “protecting the natural environment of the area” was supported by 93% of the telephone survey respondents. This was the second highest level of support received in this section of the survey. Related to this, the importance of tree preservation and planting was supported by 77% of respondents. In addition, the protection, linking and restoration of natural environments in the area has been raised on many occasions throughout the plan drafting phase.

Why are the Environments Important?

The Northern Rivers Catchment Management Board First Draft Catchment Blueprint December, 2001 advises that *“the Northern Rivers region falls within the Macleay-McPherson overlap, which incorporates subtropical and temperate climates. The region is therefore fortunate to have a diverse range of ecosystems with a great variety of plants and animals. It is the most biologically diverse region in New South Wales and the third most in Australia, exceeded only by south western Australia and the wet tropics of Queensland.”*

The Lennox Head area contains a range of natural vegetation habitats including wet and dry heathlands, Paperbark swamp forests, Swamp Oak forests, littoral rainforests, subtropical rainforests and dunal lake systems. Maps 7,8 and 9 illustrate the locations of some of these vegetation systems. The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has advised a number of areas in Lennox Head are of high conservation value.

In this regard, the NPWS advises that SEPP 14 and SEPP 26 areas, as shown on Map 8, are widely regarded as being of high conservation value. In addition to the SEPP 14 and SEPP 26 areas there are other areas of high conservation value. These communities include endangered ecological communities, endangered populations, critical habitat, threatened species habitat, remnant vegetation, riparian areas, estuarine habitat, coastal foreshores, coastal heath, and wildlife corridors. Sites and areas of aboriginal heritage significance are also of high conservation value.

The NP&WS further advises that *“The Key Habitats and Corridors Project (KH&C) undertaken by the NP&WS (Scotts 2002) provides predicted centres of endemism for fauna species and linkages between areas of endemism across the landscape. The mapped key habitats and corridors are also focus areas for the protection, enhancement and restoration of native vegetation...Several wildlife corridors have been identified from the NPWS KH&C project within Lennox Head linking areas identified as key habitat...”* These mapped corridors are illustrated on Map 9.

A total of 5 species of threatened flora listed in the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* are known to occur within the Lennox Head area. This includes Fontainea (*Fontainea oraria*) a species that is only known occur at 2 locations in Australia, both of which are in Lennox Head. Other threatened flora species found in the area are the Red Lilly Pilly (*Syzygium hodgkinsoniae*), Stinking Cryptocarya (*Cryptocarya foetida*), White Lace Flower (*Archidendron hendersonii*) and the Queensland Nut (*Macadamia tetraphylla*).

23 species of threatened fauna listed in the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* are known to occur within the Lennox Head area. This comprises 2 species of amphibians, 13 species of avifauna, 7 species of mammals and 1 invertebrate species. In addition, Lennox Point is recognised as providing one of the best land based observation points to observe the annual migration of whales.

What are the Threats to these Environments?

Council's State of the Environment Report 2000 identifies that biodiversity within the Shire is affected by a range of threatening processes including habitat modification, introduced species (including noxious weeds) and bush fire occurrence and severity. In addition, a report prepared for the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service³⁸ identified the most serious threats to the long term viability of the littoral rainforest remnants as being fragmentation, weed invasion and urban expansion. Other threats include wind shearing, grazing, feral pigs and human visitation. It is considered that these threats apply also to other sensitive environments within the locality.

Conclusion

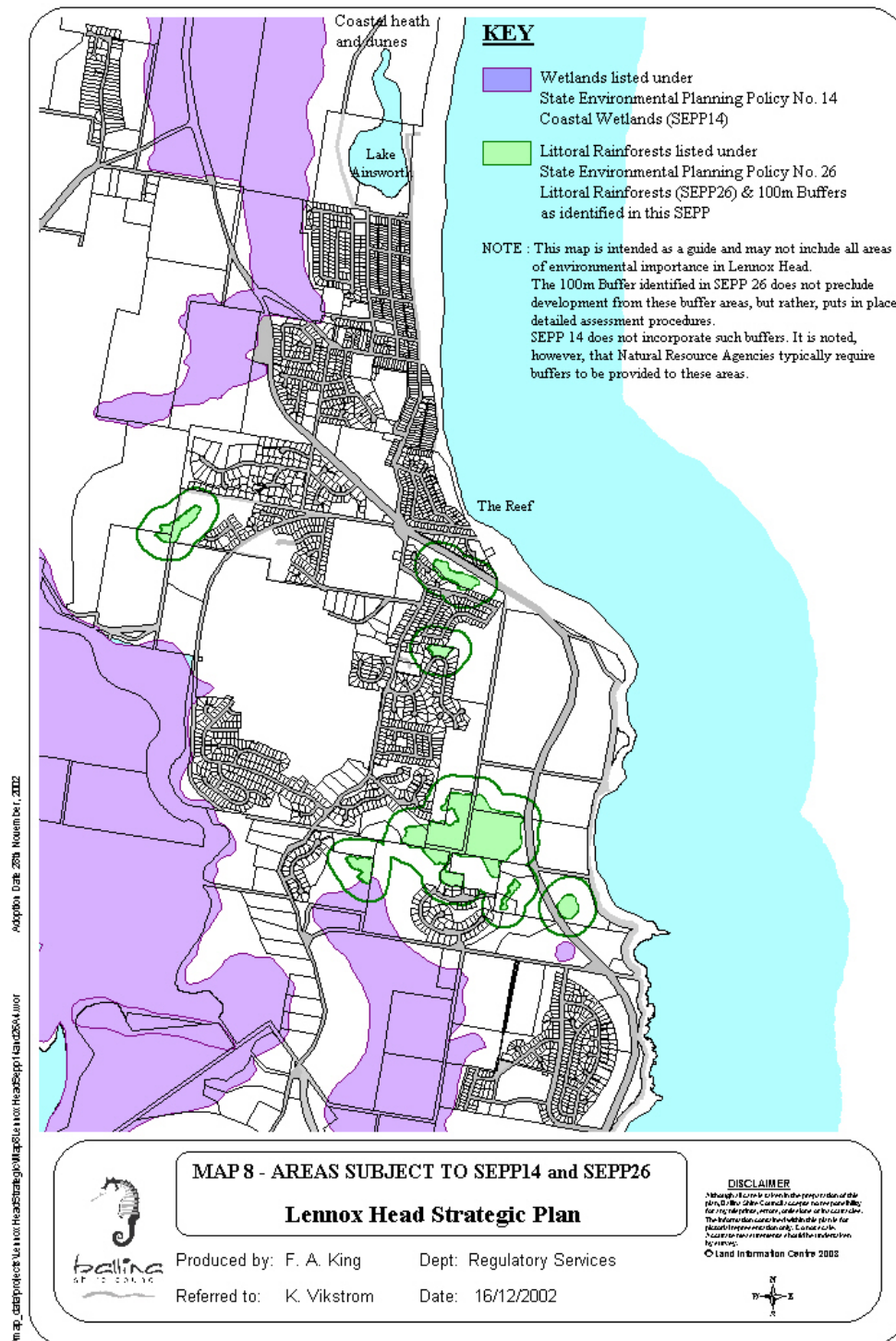
The protection and restoration of these areas will not only provide ecological and aesthetic benefits, it will also provide education and scientific resources, and promote recreational and tourism opportunities. As such, the Strategic Plan needs to identify actions which will assist in minimising the impact of humans and future development on these areas.

³⁸ Source - *Identification of Littoral Rainforest on Krasnozom Soils Between the Queensland-New South Wales Border and the Richmond River*, Landmark Ecological Services Pty Ltd, May 1999.

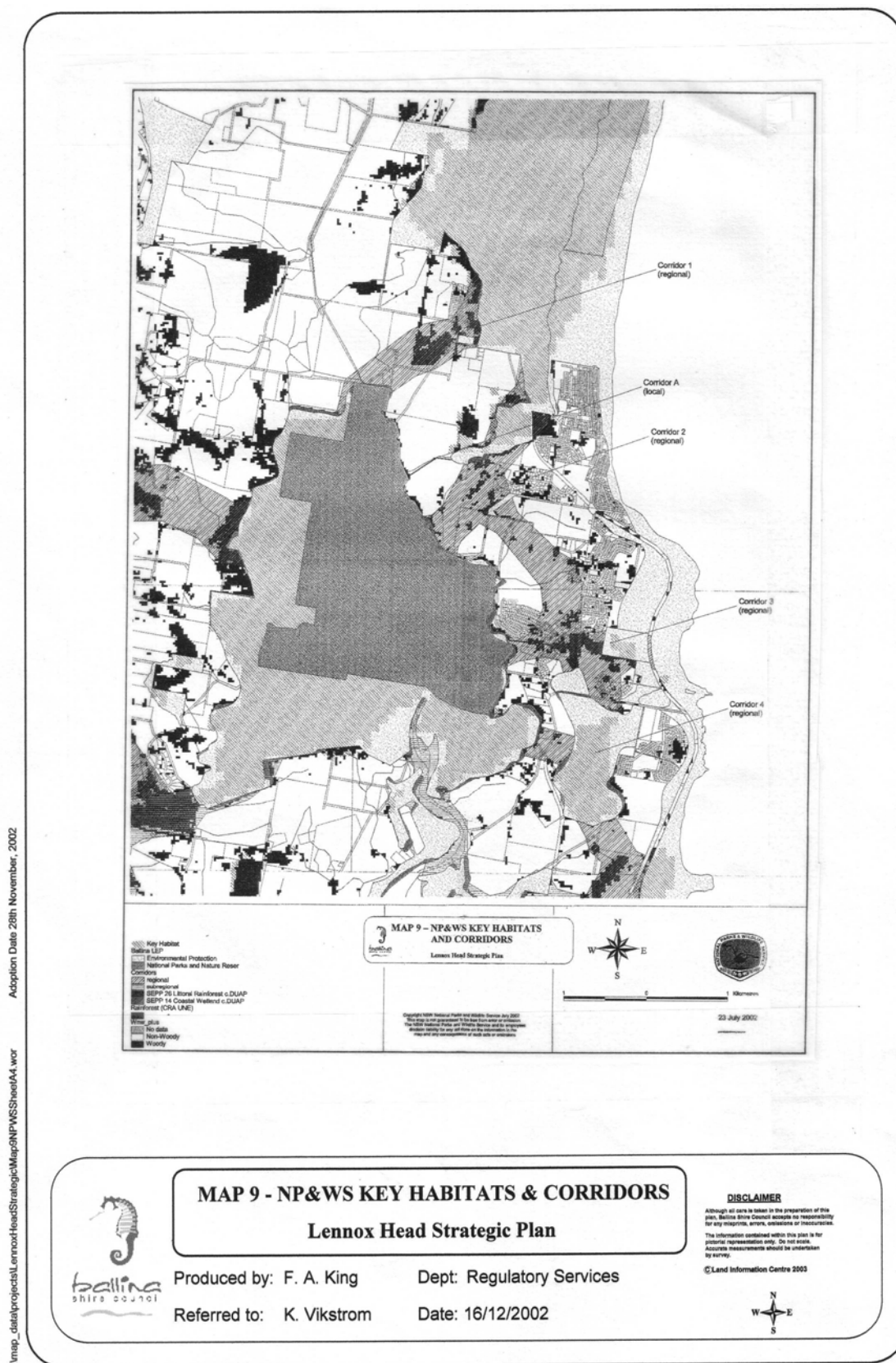
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Map 8 – Areas Subject to SEPP 14 and SEPP 26



Map 9 – NP&WS Key Habitats and Corridors



Issue 3 – Lennox Head Village Centre

The Lennox Head Village Commercial Centre is the heart of the community and fulfils an important social and economic function. There is a need, however, for streetscape improvements, a rationalisation of traffic and parking within the centre and adoption of guidelines concerning built form to retain the village atmosphere within the Centre.

Introduction

The importance of the village centre to the local community has emerged during the plan preparation phase of the project. As part of this work, it has become evident that the village centre performs not only an economic function for Lennox Head, but also acts as the social “heart” of the community. The need for beautification and traffic rationalisation in the village area is, however, considered to be very important by the community. This identified need was also supported by 91% of respondents to the telephone survey.

What are the existing planning controls for the Village Centre?

The existing planning controls for this area are largely contained within Ballina Development Control Plan No.1 Urban Land which nominates it as “Control Plan Area C2 - District Centre”. The relevant³⁹ objectives of the C2 Control Plan Area are as follows:

- To encourage the consolidation and development of an intermediate range of commercial and service centres at Lennox Head;
- To ensure that architectural styles and the range of facilities provided are consistent with the features and user needs of the district; and
- To encourage a vibrant low scale, vegetated commercial streetscape in Lennox Head. In this regard, the DCP requires developers to stagger building lines, providing large paved and pedestrian environments and architecture suitable to the beachside locality.

Map 10 shows the location of the existing Lennox Head Village Commercial Centre, as well as other commercial areas existing and proposed.

What are the important issues for future commercial development in the area?

The Community Access Group has identified the following matters as being the key issues to be considered in the planning of the village centre and commercial development of Lennox Head;

- The village centre should remain the main commercial area in Lennox Head, with other commercial areas being lower in the retail hierarchy. Large supermarkets and malls should be provided in Ballina;
- There needs to be a rationalisation of parking and traffic flows in the village centre;
- Development should be low scale and not more than two storeys in height;
- Alfresco dining and eating establishments are likely to become more popular in the future and suitable controls should be provided for such facilities;
- There is a need for improved maintenance and cleanliness in the village centre;
- New commercial developments should not limit access to the beach and should aim to improve pedestrian access between Park Lane and Ballina Street; and
- There is increasing demand for a low-key light industrial / arts / craft estate in Lennox Head.

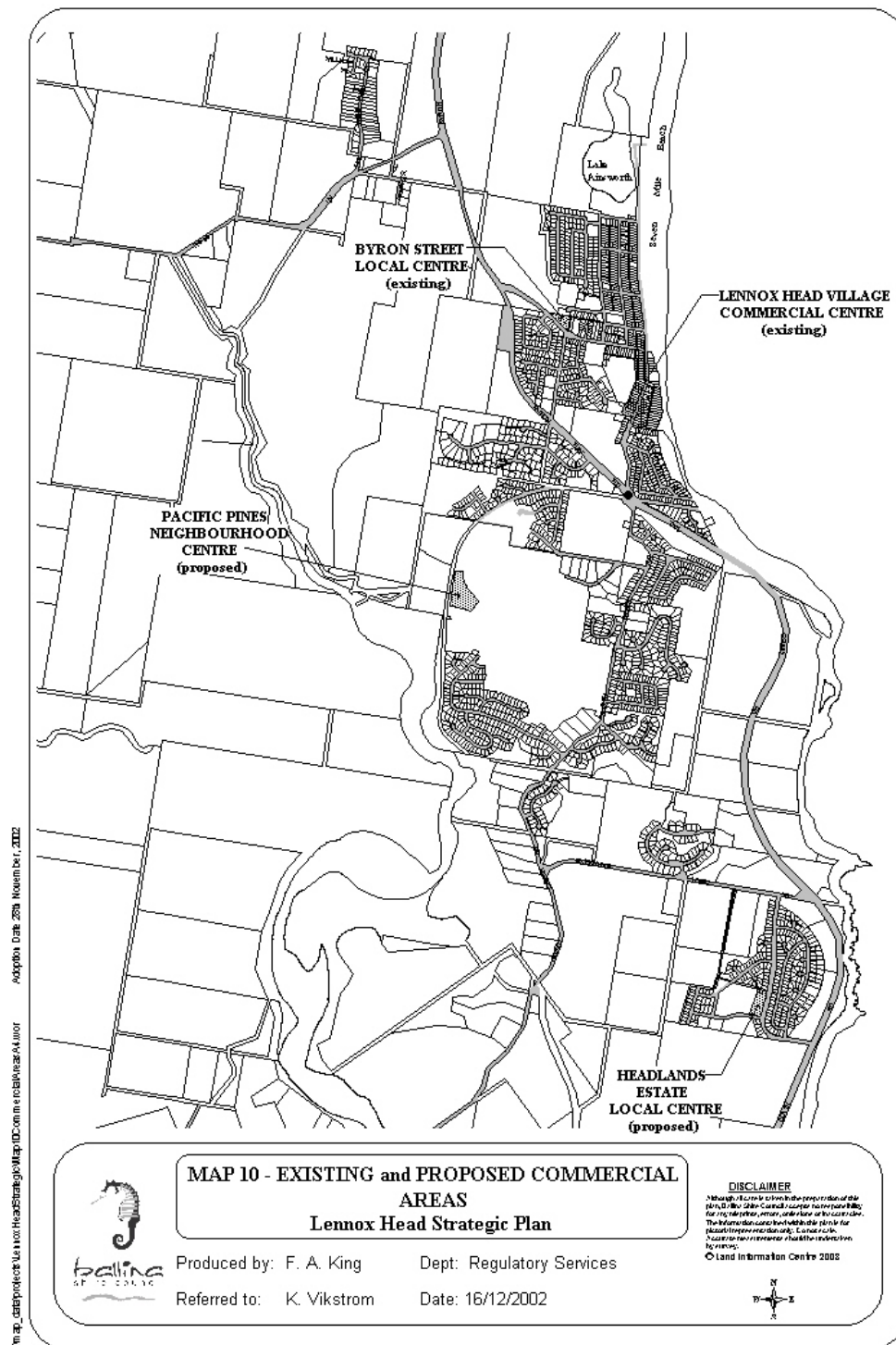
³⁹ *The C2 District Centre also applies to the Alstonville District Centre, and some of the objectives relate particularly to the heritage character of Alstonville.*

Conclusion

One of the measures proposed in the Strategic Plan to address the above, involves the preparation of a detailed development control plan for the Lennox Head Village Commercial Centre. This would incorporate controls concerning urban design (encouraging a low scale built form), streetscaping, parking, traffic and signage.

The Lennox Head Village Commercial Centre currently plays an important role in the social, economic and community life of Lennox Head and the Strategic Plan is proposing that this continues into the future. Low scale commercial facilities in other areas of the District are also proposed however, which will provide for neighbourhood facilities in the newer areas of Lennox Head. The possibility of a low-key light industrial / arts / craft estate in Lennox Head will also be investigated.

Map 10 - Existing and Proposed Commercial Centres



Issue 4 – Population Growth

There are concerns about significant future population growth in Lennox Head and its impact on the village atmosphere and environment currently enjoyed. There are also concerns regarding the rate of population growth in the area.

Interpretive Note – The figures contained in the draft Strategic Plan relating to population growth were based on 1996 Census data. The final adopted Plan has been updated to incorporate the trends of the 1996 – 2001 Census.

Introduction

The issue which generated most discussion and debate within the Community Access Group is that of population growth in Lennox Head. Whilst the Group has reached consensus on the need to manage the style and rate of growth, no agreement has been reached on the appropriate method by which to achieve this. The telephone survey also revealed a variety of views within the community on this matter – with 56% of the community wanting a slower rate of growth, 28% wanting a similar rate and 11% a higher rate of growth than experienced in the past. 5% of respondents provided no comment on this matter. The public meetings and workshops also highlighted this matter.

What is the current population of the Lennox Head district?

As at September, 2001 in the order of 6150 people resided in the study area. This includes actual populations of 4985 in Lennox Head and 858 in Skennars Head and an estimated 300 people at Figtree Hill and Sanctuary Village⁴⁰.

During the 1996 – 2001 Census period, the population grew at an average annual growth rate of 5.3% which was the fastest growth rate in Ballina Shire for that period. By way of comparison, the average annual growth rate for the Shire as a whole was 1.41% whilst West Ballina and Wollongbar experienced 2.0% and 1.1% respectively. This was a substantial slowing in the growth rate from the 8.2% experienced in the combined Lennox Head / Skennars Head area during the 1991-1996 census period.

The average occupancy rate in the study area was 2.69 persons per dwelling. This was a slight decrease from that experienced in the 1991-1996 Census period.

How far will Lennox Head “expand”?

The Access Group has identified the need to set limits to the future physical size (or footprint) of Lennox Head. These limits were determined by the constraints mapping exercise undertaken as part of the planning work. This mapping identified those areas which appear to be “relatively unconstrained” and possibly suited to future urban development⁴¹. The results of this work are shown on Map 11, with those unzoned areas possibly suited to urban development coloured “blue”.

Broadly speaking, this work has identified that the footprint of Lennox Head is constrained by the ocean to the east; the coastal heath vegetation to the north; the Ballina Nature Reserve and associated low lying flood plain to the west; and the desire to provide a visual buffer between Ballina and Lennox Head in the south. It is noted that these constraints relate to the physical and environmental qualities of the land, rather than social issues regarding the characteristics of the Lennox Head community and lifestyle. It is also noted that all land is constrained in one way or another – by factors such as access, stormwater

⁴⁰ Fig Tree Hill and Sanctuary Village are located in Census Collector Districts which extend beyond the study area, so the population of these areas have been estimated based on dwelling numbers in the area. It should be noted that the various tables in the Lennox Head Community Profile located elsewhere in this document do not incorporate the Fig Tree Hill and Sanctuary Village areas.

⁴¹ It is important to note that this work is indicative only and has been undertaken using the information available to Council. Detailed site specific environmental assessments are required to determine their suitability or otherwise for accommodating such development.

management, visual amenity, vegetation, archaeology and infrastructure requirements. As such, detailed environmental assessment and design work is required before it can be determined whether or not any parcel of land is suitable for urban development. This work is likely to determine that some of the areas coloured “blue” on Map 11 are limited to varying degrees.

How many people will there be if all the available land is developed?

It is difficult to determine the maximum population yield for Lennox Head as this is dependent upon a wide range of factors - including environmental constraints, infrastructure needs, social issues and Council and Government policy. However, two scenarios have been developed to provide a guide for discussion purposes:

- 1) All “relatively unconstrained” land is developed at a density of 8 dwellings per hectare. As part of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan, Ballina Council has adopted this rate as it’s preferred average density for new release areas in Lennox Head. This rate is approximately that which is currently achieved in new release areas in Lennox Head and reflects issues such as the environmental constraints which exist in the area and the characteristics of the local property market. The occupancy rate⁴² is calculated as being 2.7 persons per dwelling which is based on the 1996 – 2001 ABS Census data; or
- 2) All “relatively unconstrained” land is developed at a density of 15 dwellings per hectare. This density is advocated by Planning NSW in the North Coast Urban Planning Strategy as being a target figure for new release areas, particularly in localities experiencing high growth rates. Once again, the occupancy rate is calculated to be 2.7 persons per dwelling

Table 9 illustrates the existing population and a projected “maximum” population using these scenarios⁴³. This table illustrates that if all of the existing zoned areas are developed to their current permitted density and all of the “unconstrained areas” developed, the population of the Lennox Head district could be in the order of 13,000 to 19,000 people. These figures are over estimations as they assume that all areas which are relatively unconstrained are developed for housing and that all areas currently allocated for medium density are developed to their maximum permitted density. Detailed environmental assessment and subdivision design needs to occur before the actual figure can be determined. It is expected that this work will result in the population yield being closer to 13,000 people, particularly given that as part of the adopted Strategic Plan, Council has identified 8 dwellings / hectare as the target density for new release areas in Lennox Head. Important infrastructure (such as roads, playing fields and stormwater management areas) as well as environmental protection areas and wildlife corridors will also impact on the yield achieved.

Table 9 – Projected Population Yields				
	Scenario 1 8 dwellings/ hectare <i>As adopted by Ballina Council for new release areas in Lennox Head.</i>		Scenario 2 15 dwellings / hectare <i>As advocated in North Coast Urban Planning Strategy</i>	
		(Cumulative Total)		(Cumulative Total)
Lennox Head (Actual 2001)	4985	4985	4985	4985
Fig Tree Hill / Sanctuary Village (Estimate 2001)	300	5285	300	5285
Skennars Head (Actual 2001)	858	6143	858	6143
Vacant Zoned Land	2,720	8863	6,000	12143
Infill*	1,300*	10163	1,300	13443
“Relatively Unconstrained” Unzoned Land	3190	13353	5980	18423
*Assumes all medium density sites built to maximum density of 1 unit per 250m ² .				
**Flood prone or visually prominent land.				

⁴² The “Occupancy Rate” is the average number of people which live in each dwelling.

⁴³ To determine the maximum possible population yield in the area, the following formula has been used:

$$\text{hectares of land available} \times \text{number of dwellings per hectare} \times 2.7 \text{ persons per dwelling} = \text{number of persons.}$$

When might Lennox Head reach the estimated “maximum” population?

The increase in the population of Lennox Head is largely the result of people moving to Lennox Head (as opposed to birth rates). The rate of this population growth is influenced by land supply and market demand as well as other external influences. Within the Lennox Head property market these issues are effected by a range of inter-related factors. For example, market demand is influenced by issues such as the physical and social setting, range of infrastructure provided, availability and affordability of land in other areas, changes to State or Federal Government Policy and improved access and communications. Land supply is affected by issues such as availability of land zoned for urban purposes, availability of properties with development consent and the financial situation and marketing strategy of individual property developers. Decisions arising from the Lennox Head Strategic Plan will also play an important role in this. Given the above, it is not possible to accurately determine when the maximum population would be reached. The following two scenarios have been developed, however, for discussion purposes:

- A) That the population continues to grow at a compounding rate of 5.3% per annum. This is based on the growth rate experienced in the Lennox Head District during the 1996 – 2001 ABS Census period; and
- B) That the population grows at a rate of 266 persons per annum. This is based on average annual population increase over the period 1986 – 2001

The following table illustrates population projections based on these scenarios.

Table 10 – Projected Population Timeframes		
Year	Scenario A 5.3% / Year 96 - 01 Average Annual Growth Rate for Lennox Head District	Scenario B 266 Persons / Year Average annual increase in population per year based on 1986-2001 Census data.
2001	6150	6150
2002	6475	6416
2003	6819	6682
2004	7180	6948
2005	7561	7214
2006	7961	7480
2007	8383	7746
2008	8828	8012
2009	9296	8278
2010	9788	8544
2011	10307	8810
2012	10853	9076
2013	11429	9342
2014	12034	9608
2015	12672	9874
2016	13344*	10140
2017	14051	10406
2018	14796	10672
2019	15580	10938
2020	16406	11204
2021	17275	11470
2022	18191	11736
2023	19155**	12002
2024		12268
2025		12534
2026		12800
2027		13066
2028		13332*
2029		13598
2030		13864
2035		15194
2040		16524
2045		17854
2050		19184**

*Shaded areas illustrate approximate timing of maximum population at 8 dwellings per hectare.
 **Projections have not continued beyond approximate timing of maximum population at 15 dwellings per hectare.

Access Group Positions

As advised above, the key issue that the Community Access Group has not been able to reach consensus on is that of population growth in Lennox Head, either in terms of ultimate population size or rate of growth. The Group did agree, however, that it is desirable for population growth to be managed in the future. The Access Group also agreed that there was a need for improved community and sporting infrastructure in Lennox Head regardless of the population growth model adopted by Council.

The Access Group spent many hours debating this matter. This included exploring issues relating to land supply and market demand in the Lennox Head area. This work concluded that the principal way that population growth can be controlled involves managing land supply and the main way that this legally can occur is via the rezoning process. As such, the discussion within the Group focussed on the timing of future rezonings in the Lennox Head area.

In this regard, the broad options debated by the Access Group were as follows:

- Option 1- Allow rezonings to continue as per the current system.
- Option 2 - No more rezonings until necessary community facilities are provided, with a review process at such time as the facilities become available.
- Option 3 – No more rezonings for ten years, with this decision reviewed after this time.

More detailed information concerning these options is provided on the following pages.

Option 1- Allow rezonings to continue as per the current system.

Description

- Development applications for areas coloured “pink” on Map 11 are considered as the proponents are ready. All applications to comply with the endorsed Lennox Head Strategic Plan.
- Rezoning applications for areas coloured “blue” on Map 11 are considered as the proponents are ready (provided that they are consistent with the Urban Land Release Strategy). All applications to comply with the adopted Lennox Head Strategic Plan.
- All actions proposed in adopted Strategic Plan implemented.
- Anticipated permanent population about 13,700⁴⁴ which is about as big as the current population of Lennox Head and East Ballina combined. This figure does not take into account seasonal fluctuations in the population of the area.
- This population reached at some point between 2011 and 2024, depending on the timing of release of land onto the property market during the intervening period and population growth rates.

Some issues to keep in mind when considering Option 1

- The Urban Investigation Zone in the Ballina Local Environmental Plan has been in place since 1987. People who own land in this zone are likely to have purchased this land with the intention of having it available for urban development in the future. Many of these people live and work in the local community.
- The objectives of the Urban Investigation Zone do not provide certainty to property owners or prospective developers that the land will be rezoned, or within any particular timeframe. Rather, the zone identifies land which will, at some stage in the future, be the subject of detailed investigation to determine whether or not it is suitable for urban development.
- Whilst the Urban Investigation zone does not provide timeframes for the rezoning of land, Council's Urban Land Release Strategy provides timeframes for the commencement of rezoning processes. In Lennox Head this document generally permits the rezoning process to commence in the short (within 5 years) to medium (5-10 years) term.
- Council is able to amend the Urban Land Release Strategy, following community consultation and endorsement of PlanningNSW, and has done so on a number of occasions.
- The current village atmosphere is likely to change if Lennox Head has substantially more people.
- By adopting the principles and implementing the actions proposed in the Strategic Plan many of the elements that contribute to the village atmosphere will be retained as Lennox Head evolves into the future.
- Rezoning of additional urban land will provide for increased competition in the market place (particularly once the smaller zoned areas referred to above are developed). This may assist in containing land prices in the area and increasing housing choice.
- There are a number of factors beyond the control of Ballina Shire Council which are resulting in an increase in demand for property in Lennox Head. As such, housing affordability is decreasing and this trend is expected to continue irrespective of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan.

⁴⁴ Calculated at 8 dwellings per hectare.

Option 2 - No more rezonings until necessary community facilities are provided, with a review process at such time as the facilities become available.

Description

- Development applications for areas coloured “pink” on Map 11 are considered as the proponents are ready. All applications to comply with the adopted Lennox Head Strategic Plan.
- Rezoning applications for areas coloured “blue” on Map 11 are deferred until necessary community facilities are provided. All applications to comply with the Lennox Head Strategic Plan.
- All actions proposed in adopted Strategic Plan implemented.
- Anticipated population about 13,700. A population of 13,700 people means a permanent community about twice the size of the existing Lennox Head urban area. The time that this population is reached depends on how quickly community and sporting facilities are provided and the timing of the release of land onto the property market.

In addition to the issues listed in Option 1, the following matters should be kept in mind when considering Option 2

- Delaying the rezoning of additional land will provide more time for Council to provide additional community and sporting facilities in Lennox Head. Once this infrastructure is provided, the community will be better placed to accommodate more people.
- At this stage, the scope of desired community and sporting facilities has not been identified and mechanisms for funding the construction of facilities have not been explored. As such, it is not clear how long any “embargo” on rezonings would need to be in place. Landowners and service providers would prefer certainty as to if and when land will be developed, so that they can make informed investment and financial decisions.
- Many residents of Lennox Head have moved to the area recently. It could be perceived as being unfair to stop more people from moving here.
- It is estimated that the existing vacant zoned land and redevelopment in the older village area can accommodate in the order of an additional 4,000 people. This will take the population of the area to about 10,500. A decision to put rezonings “on hold” will therefore not stop population growth in the area.

Option 3 - No more rezonings for ten years, with this decision reviewed after this time.

Description

- Development applications for areas coloured “pink” on Map 11 are considered as the proponents are ready. All applications to comply with the adopted Lennox Head Strategic Plan.
- None of the areas coloured “blue” on Map 11 are rezoned during the life of the Strategic Plan – ie for ten years. When a new Strategic Plan is prepared in about 2012, this decision will be reviewed.
- All actions proposed in adopted Strategic Plan implemented.
- Maximum population of about 10,500 (with a review after ten years). This population is expected to be reached at some point between 2008 and 2016, depending on the timing of release of land onto the property market over the intervening period and population growth rates. A population of 10,500 means that it will be about as big as Casino.

In addition to the issues listed in Options 1 and 2, the following matters should be kept in mind when considering Option 3

- As population growth occurs incrementally, Lennox Head will change “bit by bit”. At this stage it is hard to know exactly what the impact of 4,000 more people will be on the existing lifestyle and village atmosphere of the area, so it may be appropriate to put a halt to new rezonings for a while so that the community can “test drive” a population of 10,500 before committing to a population greater than this.
- As the population will grow a bit each year, the community will be able to gradually adjust to the additional people.
- Experience suggests that the rezoning and development approval process for larger subdivisions take between two and five years. Given that the review of the Strategic Plan is scheduled for 2012 and the target population of 10,500 is expected to be reached at some time between 2008 and 2016, there is a risk that there will be no vacant land available on the property market. This could be expected to increase property prices and impact on the local construction industry with associated flow-on effects.
- The interim five year review of the Strategic Plan and the ongoing monitoring process will be able to keep track of land supply in the area and make recommendations to Council (in consultation with the community) to review the population growth model.

Conclusion

The work undertaken as part of the preparation of the Strategic Plan has identified that there appears to be a number of areas in and around Lennox Head which, subject to detailed environmental assessment, appear to be relatively unconstrained and possibly suited to urban development. Should such land be developed, it can reasonably be assumed that population growth in the Lennox Head area will result in changes to the current character of the area. The various measures identified in the Strategic Plan are proposed to mitigate the impact of these changes by setting a framework for future development which protects the key qualities currently enjoyed by the community.

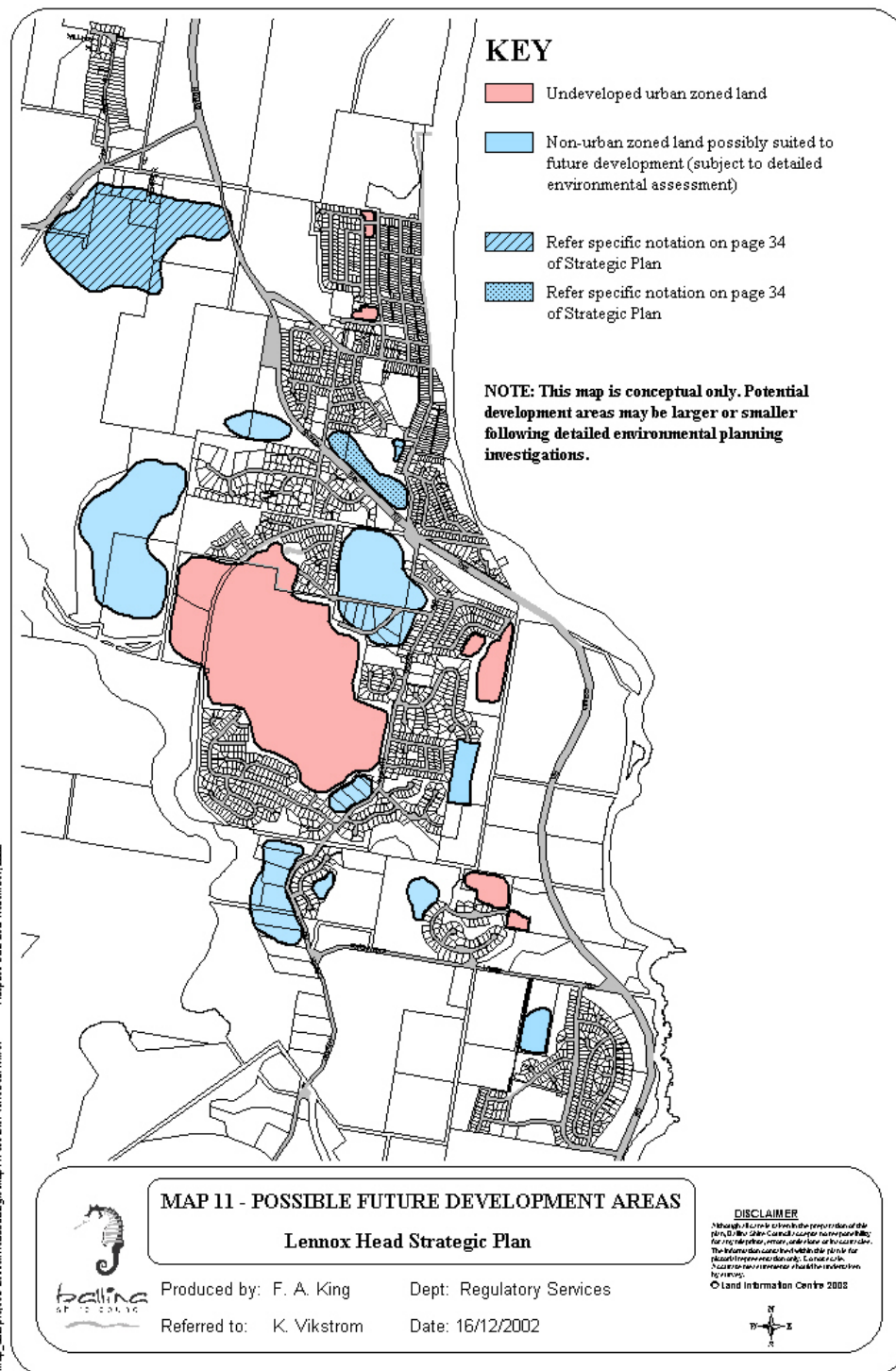
Notwithstanding the above, Council and the Community Access Group particularly sought community feedback on the issue of population growth in Lennox Head during the exhibition of the draft Strategic Plan. This included seeking feedback on the three options discussed above. Following consideration of the submissions received, Council resolved to adopt the following population growth model:

1. For the Lennox Head village area (being all land north of the Coast Road) no more rezoning requests will be considered for 10 years, with this decision reviewed after that time; and
2. For the broader Lennox Head district, the current moratorium on rezonings is to remain in place for 10 years or until a Structure Plan has been prepared, adopted and implemented for Lennox Head. The Structure Plan will identify preferred locations for environmental protection and enhancement, community and sporting infrastructure and conceptual road, pedestrian and cycle linkages. This will involve completion of the community and sporting needs analysis, transport network strategy, stage I of the environmental restoration plan, landscape visual analysis and assessment of water and sewer infrastructure .

The timeframe as to when rezonings will recommence is not known at this stage. In this regard, Council has committed to finishing the technical work associated with the preparation of the Structure Plan within 9 - 12 months. The Structure Plan will then be forwarded to the elected Council for adoption. It is envisaged that when the Structure Plan is forwarded for adoption, Council will also be asked to determine the level of implementation required prior to rezonings recommencing.

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Map 11 – Possible Future Development Areas



Issue 5 – Community Infrastructure

Community infrastructure such as playing fields and community halls are inadequate to meet the current needs of the community.

Introduction

The strategic planning process has identified that the provision of adequate community and open space facilities are very important to the Lennox Head community. In this regard, the future need for a community hall & meeting rooms was supported by 95% of those telephone surveyed, while 90% supported the concept of new sporting fields being planned with new housing.

The depth of concern within the community regarding these issues has also been prominent in the plan drafting phase, with the identification of community needs (and the subsequent provision of such facilities) being nominated by the Community Access Group as the highest priority action arising from this Strategic Plan. Whilst the "Community and Sporting Facility Needs Analysis" will determine the level of facilities appropriate for the size and demographics of both existing and future communities, the following information provides some background material about this matter.

What Open Space is provided in Lennox Head?

Table 11 identifies the playing fields provided for public use in Lennox Head, whilst Map 12 shows the location of these facilities.

Table 11 - Active Open Space in Lennox Head ⁴⁵				
Facility	Total Size	Area Used as Active Open Space	Facilities For Summer Use	Facilities For Winter Use
Williams Reserve	4.6ha	2ha	1 Cricket Field 2 Practice Nets	1 Senior Field & 1 Junior Field <i>Currently used by soccer, rugby & league</i>
Megan Crescent	1.6ha	1.5ha	1 Cricket Field	<i>Not Currently Used in Winter</i>
Skennars Head Road	6.9ha	3.1ha	1 Cricket Field	2 Senior Fields & 1 Intermediate Field <i>Currently used by soccer</i>
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>10.5ha</i>	6.6		
Pacific Pines (Proposed)	6.1ha	4.5ha	<i>See Note Below⁴⁶</i>	<i>See Note Below</i>
Total	16.6ha	11.1ha		

It is noted that one issue which has been raised during the preparation of the draft Strategic Plan relates to the functionality of the existing playing fields. That is, the location, shape and design of some of these facilities do not meet the needs of the local sporting community. The Megan Crescent fields have attracted particular concern, in that they do not readily enable use for both summer and winter sports. As such, the Strategic Plan is proposing that the Lennox Head sporting community be consulted with regard to decisions concerning the development, use and allocation of sporting facilities in the area.

⁴⁶ As part of the development known as Pacific Pines Estate, it is proposed that playing fields will be constructed on part of the estate as illustrated on Map 12. Indicatively this involves 2 cricket fields for summer use, four senior fields for winter use and 6 netball/tennis courts, however the detailed design for the complete facility is yet to be finalised. In late 2002 development consent was granted for the first stage of this development, comprising a cricket oval for summer usage and two full size fields for winter sports. Construction is expected to commence in early 2003.

It should also be remembered that active open space is not limited to playing fields and there are a variety of other active open space facilities in Lennox Head. These include the beaches and Lake Ainsworth which provide important recreation opportunities for the community. There are also facilities such as the Lennox Head Bowling Club and the Squash Courts. However, these facilities are under the management of organisations other than Council and may not necessarily be available to the community as and when required. Similarly, the Lake Ainsworth Sport and Recreation Centre also provides a range of community and sporting facilities which are available to the community, however their availability is subject to the needs of the residents of the Centre at the time.

How many playing fields are needed?

The level of open space in new residential release areas in Ballina Shire has traditionally been based on the provision of 2.83 hectares per 1000 incoming people. The NSW Department of Sport and Recreation has referred to this level as a generally accepted guide for a number of years. There is no apportionment of the amount required to be allocated between active and passive purposes with each Council determining their own ratios based on demographics, community profiles and "incidental" recreation opportunities (such as beaches). In Ballina Shire, a ratio of 40% (being 1.21ha) active and 60% (or 1.62ha) passive is normally required.

Table 12 – Active Open Space Comparisons (North Coast)					
Location	Ratio	Open Space Required For Different Populations			
	Rate Per 1000 people	6150 People	10,000 People	12,000 People	15,000 People
Coffs Harbour	2.0ha	12.3ha	20ha	24ha	30ha
Lismore City	2.0ha	12.3ha	20ha	24ha	30ha
Tweed Shire	1.7ha	10.5ha	17ha	20.4ha	25.5ha
Byron Shire	1.62ha	9.9ha	16.2ha	19.44ha	24.3ha
Ballina Shire	1.21ha	7.4ha	12.10ha	14.52ha	18.1ha

In Lennox Head, there is currently approximately 6.6 ha of active open space available comprising Williams Reserve, Megan Crescent & the Skennars Head Road playing fields. As such, the level of active open space generally complies with the requirements in the Ballina Council area, however falls short of the standards of some other areas of the North Coast. In addition, it is evident that, should the population of Lennox Head increase substantially, it will be necessary to provide additional playing fields over and above those which are existing or proposed.

How does Council typically fund playing field construction?

Where possible, playing fields are provided by developers when they subdivide land. Council will, however, accept a monetary contribution in lieu of dedication of land in some circumstances⁴⁷. This occurs when there is no suitable land within a development to provide for recreation areas or when, for integrated planning purposes, it is decided to provide playing fields in an alternate area. For example, in 2000/2001 Council developed the Skennars Head Road Playing Fields largely utilising funds generated by development contributions. In the 2002/2003 financial year the development contribution towards public open space requirements amount to \$578 per residential lot or \$422 per unit. One of the initiatives proposed within the Strategic Plan involves reviewing this Contributions Plan to ensure that it adequately meets the contemporary needs of the community.

⁴⁷ The S94 Contribution Plan for Public Gardens and Recreation Space Enhancement was introduced in 1993. As such, contributions have not been collected for developments approved prior to this time.

Community Facilities

The planning process has also identified the need for improved community facilities in Lennox Head to meet the needs of both the existing community and future populations. In Lennox Head there is currently one community hall provided by Council, being the Recreation Hall in Williams Reserve. It is noted, however, that this hall is relatively old and small and in very high demand. Council also provides a library. In addition, there are also facilities such as the Lake Ainsworth Sport and Recreation Centre, the CWA Hall, Church Halls, the Scout Hall and the Surf Club. However, these facilities are under the management of groups and organisations other than Council and are not necessarily freely available to the community.

Related to this, the Access Group has observed that some other communities in the region of a similar size have access to higher levels of community facilities (provided by their Councils) than are available in Lennox Head. For example Nambucca Heads, which had a population of about 6250 in 1996, has access to a library, the Nambucca Entertainment Centre (comprising one large function room and one small one and is used primarily for community and cultural events), a senior citizens centre and a tourism centre (which is currently under construction). The urban communities of Alstonville / Wollongbar (which currently have a combined population of about 6,730) have access to the Alstonville Community and Entertainment Centre (comprising an indoor sports hall, multi-purpose hall, meeting room and library) as well as a smaller public hall in Wollongbar.

As such, one of the highest priorities in the Strategic Plan involves a detailed community and sporting facility needs analysis. This work will determine the size, role and function of facilities required in Lennox Head, their optimum location and the preparation of a process to enable the necessary facilities to be provided. As part of the needs analysis, consideration will be given to the following matters identified by the community during the Strategic Plan preparation process:

- The need to review current Council policy which requires the provision of a neighbourhood centre or multiple use hall for each additional 1500 dwellings (being in the order of 4000 people).
- There is a need for a multi-purpose community centre which is designed and located in a manner which meets the needs of the community. The preferred location for such a facility is the northern end of Williams Reserve.
- Youth facilities should be provided as part of the above, with the design and function of this facility determined in consultation with young people in the community and the Ballina Youth Service; and
- Until such time as the above facility is constructed, alternate "interim" youth facilities should be provided as a matter of priority;
- The construction of such a facility should be a community building project. For example the community should be involved in the fund raising for the building;
- There is a need for an enhanced library service providing internet and other information technology facilities, particularly "after hours";
- There is support for a band stand/amphitheatre/soundshell at Williams Reserve; and
- Planning should occur for aged care facilities in Lennox Head so as to provide for the local aged population.

As with playing fields, community facilities required to meet the demand generated by new residents are typically funded by way of development contributions⁴⁸. In the 2002 / 2003 financial year the development contribution towards community facility requirements amount to \$941 per residential lot or \$676 per unit. One of the proposals contained within the Strategic Plan is to review the Community Facility Contributions Plan to ensure that it adequately meets the needs of the community. It is important to note that contributions collected in the future cannot be utilised to fund existing shortfalls. It is also noted that there are a variety of options for funding community infrastructure, such as State and Federal government funding programs, which Ballina Shire Council has not effectively accessed to date. As such, Council will need to endeavour to obtain funds from such sources.

⁴⁸ The S94 Contribution Plan for Community Facilities was introduced in 1993. As such, contributions have not been collected for developments approved prior to this time.

Some thoughts for the future of Williams Reserve

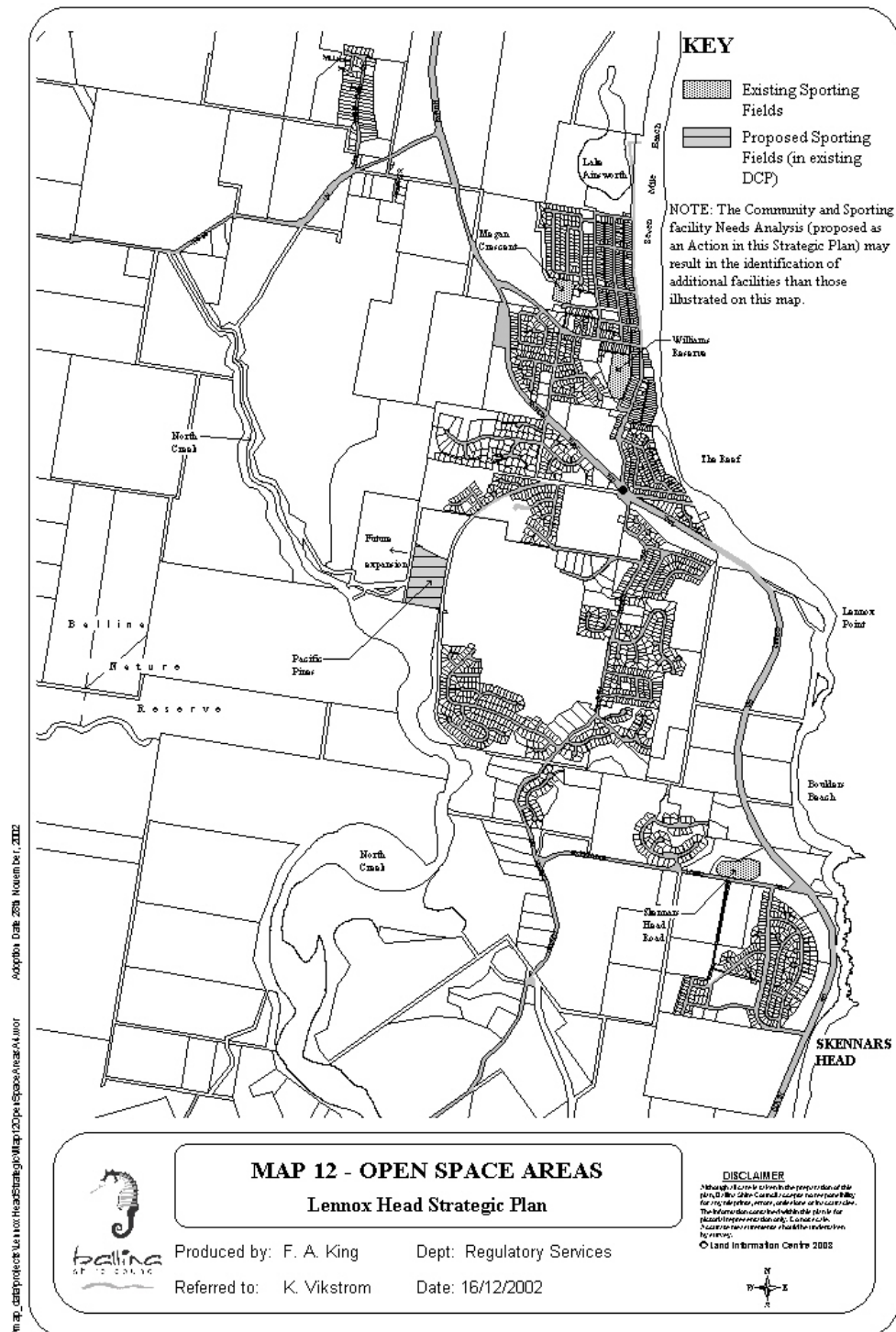
The Community Access Group has identified the social, recreational and environmental importance of Williams Reserve to the Lennox Head community. The Group is advocating that once adequate adult playing fields are provided, Williams Reserve should become a “village green” or “gathering place” whilst preferably continuing to provide some low key playing field function. Complementary to this, the Access Group is proposing that a multi-purpose community centre (including youth facilities) be constructed in the northern end of Williams Reserve, generally in the vicinity of the existing community buildings. The Group recognises that it is important, however, that Williams Reserve should remain predominately green, with only minimal incursions into existing green spaces. As such, more detailed assessment is required to ensure that these various interests can be achieved. This proposal is considered to be broadly consistent with the recently adopted Williams Reserve Plan of Management.⁴⁹ Nonetheless it is proposed to review this document as one of the actions arising from the Strategic Plan.

Conclusion

Playing fields and community facilities currently play an important social and community development role in Lennox Head. This role is expected to remain important as the community grows and evolves in the future. The Strategic Plan is proposing a number of initiatives which will lead to the provision of adequate community and sporting facilities in the area.

⁴⁹ Refer to page 87 for more information on this matter.

Map 12 - Existing and Proposed Active Open Space



Other Issues

The Lennox Head Strategic Plan has been prepared concurrently with a number of other important planning projects. The community consultation process for the Strategic Plan has, as outlined below, identified issues to be referred to the other concurrent processes.

Ballina Urban Water Strategy

Ballina Shire Council is currently in the process of preparing an Urban Water Strategy for the Shire. This Strategy involves a “whole of water cycle” approach to making decisions about stormwater, sewage and water supply. This process is complex and involves detailed investigation into the range of environmental, social and economic matters relating to urban water management. Given the nature of the Urban Water Strategy project and its timetable for completion, it has been necessary to keep that process separate from the broader Lennox Head Strategic Plan. It is proposed, however, that the outcomes of the Urban Water Strategy process will be incorporated into the future planning and development of Lennox Head.

It is noted, however, that the community consultation for the Lennox Strategy has identified strong community interest in the Urban Water Strategy process - particularly with regard to the disposal of treated effluent at the Skennars Head outfall. As such, the Community Access Group has raised the following matters for further consideration as part of the Ballina Urban Water Strategy process:

“The continuing treatment and disposal of effluent at the Lennox Head Sewage Treatment Works is of particular concern to the Lennox Head community. The Lennox Head Community Access Group therefore recommends that the Urban Water Strategy process thoroughly investigate effluent reuse strategies and other alternatives to the Skennars Head ocean outfall (such as constructed wetlands). The Urban Water Strategy process should also investigate alternative water use strategies such as dual reticulation, rainwater collection and composting toilets.” Given that the Ballina Urban Water Strategy and Lennox Head Strategic Plan processes were occurring simultaneously, the recommendations of the Community Access Group have been forwarded to the Urban Water Strategy process prior to the exhibition of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan.

Following an eighteen month period of public consultation and development, Ballina Shire Council placed the Urban Water Management Strategy - Issues and Opportunities Working Paper, together with extensive supporting studies, on public exhibition. The documents were on exhibition from the 18th October to 15th November, 2002 and the process was extensively supported with a broad communication strategy. The public exhibition attracted a large community response with over 6000 individual responses. A representations report is currently being prepared but has been delayed due to the large community response and diversion of resources to manage the current drought crisis. The report is expected to be completed by the end of February, 2003.

Lake Ainsworth

The community consultation process has revealed that Lake Ainsworth is one of the most important environmental and recreational assets in Lennox Head. This finding is consistent with the outcomes of the process undertaken to prepare the Plan of Management for Lake Ainsworth. The drafting of the Plan of Management was overseen by Ballina Council's Lake Ainsworth Committee. This Committee included representation from the Lennox Head Residents Association as well and each of the riding Councillors. The exhibition of the Lake Ainsworth Management Plan occurred during the final drafting phase of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan. As part of this exhibition process the Community Access Group raised the following matters for further consideration as part of the finalisation of the Management Plan:

-
- The community should not be alienated from Lake Ainsworth by traffic, development or other means. The current road to the Sport and Recreation Centre impacts on the enjoyment of the Lake and detailed investigations should be undertaken with the view to closing this road to through traffic; and
 - Council needs to ensure that adequate funding mechanisms are in place to fund the actions arising from the Management Plan.

The final Plan of Management was adopted by Council in November, 2002.

Single Coastal Reserve Plan of Management

The community consultation process has revealed a variety of community views and concerns regarding the use and maintenance of foreshore areas – including the beaches and frontal dunes and the public reserves adjoining these areas. The management of these areas is currently being investigated in detail through the preparation of the Single Coastal Reserve Plan of Management for Coastal Crown Lands in Ballina Shire (north of the Richmond River). This plan is being developed by way of a partnership between the Department of Land and Water Conservation and Ballina Shire Council's Coastal Committee. The interests of Lennox Head residents are being incorporated into this process through both the membership of the Coastal Committee (which includes 2 Lennox Head community representatives and each of the riding Councillors) and by way of a series of discussions with stakeholders in the area.

The issues raised during the preparation of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan regarding matters of relevance to the Single Coastal Reserve Plan of Management were referred to that process. The draft POM was placed on exhibition for public comment in August, 2002 and the document is currently being reviewed in light of the submissions received.

Coastline Management Planning

The Lennox Head Beach Management Plan, implemented in 1993, addressed concerns about coastline hazards, particularly beach erosion and long-term recession on the foreshore and adjoining public lands in Lennox Head Village. Implementation included construction of rock revetment seawalls at Lennox Head Village and at the southern corner of Seven Mile Beach, construction of a dune levee linking the rock revetment walls, recreational amenity improvements, and planning controls for new buildings and redevelopment of properties, ratified under Ballina DCP No.3 – Coastal Hazard Protection.

In 2001, Council commenced a Coastline Hazard Definition Study for the Shire's coastline. For the Lennox Head area in particular this study will:

- Assess the coastline hazards and the potential impacts of hazards on development and infrastructure both now and into the future; and
- Assess the performance of existing coastline protection works, including their impact on coastal processes and beach amenity.

When complete, this Hazard Definition Study will provide the basis for the preparation of a Coastline Management Study and Plan for the Ballina Coastline, that couples coastal processes together with environmental, economic, cultural and recreational needs, consistent with the goals of the NSW Coastal Policy 1997. A holistic Coastline Management Plan will also incorporate the Ballina Coastal Reserve Plan of Management, referred to above.

Mosquitos and Other Biting Insects

The Lennox Head area includes many sites suitable for the breeding of biting insects, which annoy residents and have potentially serious implications for public health. Council has identified a need to develop policy and provide advice not only to developers, but to the community in general, regarding biting insects. Council's view regarding this matter has been reinforced during the community consultations on the Lennox Head Strategic Plan.

To address this matter, a draft Development Control Plan has been prepared to provide strategic direction for future development and to propose practical protective measures that can be incorporated into development design and construction to mitigate insect nuisance. At the same time Council requested advice on the feasibility of mounting a mosquito control program with a clear indication as to the likely limitations of such a program, initial set up costs, and the order of cost involved in maintaining it into the future. The Community Access Group has noted that issues which appear to be impacting on mosquito breeding in Lennox Head include the management and functioning of wetland systems and feral animals within these areas. The Community Access Group has also identified the need to undertake community education on mosquito management issues. This information has been forwarded to the entomologist working on this project.

The draft Development Control Plan is to be placed on exhibition for public comment in February 2003. Following exhibition, Council will review and finalise the document in light of the submissions received from the community. Until such time as this document is finalised, Council will refer developers to the publication "Biting Midge and Mosquito Control in the Tweed" (Development Control Plan No 25) 1993 prepared by Tweed Shire's Entomologist as a guide to address the issue. In this regard, for new urban land releases the Tweed DCP generally requires a cleared buffer of 50metres to key mosquito habitats.

Williams Reserve Plan of Management

Williams Reserve is also known as "Crown Reserve No. 82927". It was reserved for the purposes of "Public Recreation" in November, 1960. Ballina Shire Council is the appointed Reserve Trust Manager and is generally responsible for the management of the Reserve. In March, 2000 Council resolved to prepare a Plan of Management (POM) for Williams Reserve. The draft POM endeavoured to ensure that the management of Williams Reserve addresses continuing community and recreational needs as they develop, whilst recognising, protecting and enhancing the environmental values of the Reserve. To achieve this, it divided the Reserve into two broad management units – namely the Natural Conservation Area and the Active Recreation and Community Area. The draft POM was exhibited for public comment in December 2000 / January 2001. Submissions received were considered and a number of changes made to the document, including an increase in the size of the Natural Conservation Area.

The final Plan of Management was approved by the NSW Minister for Land and Water Conservation in June, 2002. Whilst the direction of the Lennox Head Strategic Plan initiatives relating to Williams Reserve are broadly consistent with the Plan of Management, it will be necessary to review aspects of the Plan of Management in the future.
