

Maclean Urban Growth Management Strategy – Motion and speech in support by Cr Tiley

Motion (part 1 was amended a little to better define the lands concerned)

1. That Council endorse the Maclean Urban Catchment Local Growth Management Strategy, as amended by the “Schedule of Recommended Amendments” at the end of the first report, and with the inclusion of the area at James Creek referred to as Priority area one, and seek the Director-General, Department of Planning and Infrastructure’s endorsement as a residential Strategy under the North Coast Regional Environmental Plan.
2. That the Strategy be reviewed in five years, at which time addition to the urban growth areas, west of Sheehans Lane and north of James Creek Road (referred to as Priority two area), be considered

It is important that, as a minimum, the council support the Strategy as presented, to plan for inevitable growth in this lifestyle/retiree destination.

The Gulmarrad proposal provides a more sustainable and efficient use of residential land given the increasingly scarcity and escalating price of residential land in Maclean and Townsend.

It is also valid to plan to accommodate future growth in the James Creek locality where the Priority one area represents a different market option with cleared residential to compliment the 80 odd existing rural residential dwellings.

James Creek has proximity to Yamba and in time could become a substantial dormitory suburb of Yamba and it is the closest flood free land to Yamba. It is problematic whether there will be total development at West Yamba given that land costs will approximate 250K or more per lot given land filling and other infrastructure costs.

Conversely James Creek lots can be delivered for at least 100K less than at West Yamba, which is very important for battlers on lower incomes.

There exists a unique situation where the primary Gulmarrad developer is likely to link with the owner of the James Creek priority one area to contribute the essential sewerage and road upgrades in each location. This is an opportunity that should be embraced by Council.

Recently the NSW Minister for Roads committed to matching the Commonwealth contribution to the pacific highway upgrade which should see completion of the dual carriageway Brisbane to Sydney by close to the 2016 target date. This will make millions of city people much more accessible to and wanting a part of our special lifestyle region.

Let's not overlook that the baby boomers are commencing to retire and they have money. Many want to share our lifestyle. Gulmarrad and James Creek urban development will be vital to meet their needs.

I did not include other areas in the motion because Council needs to be careful, as our staff have advised us, that we do not present an over-the-top strategy to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure which it would reject because lots could not be expected to be developed in a reasonable period, and where there would also be heightened and unwarranted expectation by land owners.

A fresh examination in 5 years is appropriate and gives time for land development as supported by the strategy and the amendment to be substantially commenced.

I encourage your support of this motion to articulate a vision and way forward for urban development on the Lower Clarence well into the future.

Ian Tiley

19 July 2011