



ILLAWARRA SHOALHAVEN JOINT ORGANISATION
SUBMISSION ONTO
DRAFT NSW FUTURE TRANSPORT STRATEGY - 2056

1 December 2017

Prepared by:

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INTRODUCTION

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO) is the peak organisation representing Local Government in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions. Member Councils include Kiama Municipal, Shellharbour City, Shoalhaven City and Wollongong City Councils.

The area extends from Helensburgh in the north to Durras Waters in the south, a distance of approximately 230 kilometres.

RESOLUTION

At its meeting held 1 December 2017 ISJO resolved (Resolution 070) to endorse this response to NSW Transport on the Draft Future Transport Strategy 2056 by the 3 December 2017. NSW Future Transport Strategy .

BACKGROUND

ISJO is cognizant that this is a plan for a future well beyond current and short-term imperatives. It is therefore essential that it specifically recognises and plans for that future for both the Illawarra Shoalhaven region, the regional Centre of Wollongong City and the role both play in the State, nation and globally.

Transport networks are crucial to the region's economic development and critically impact the urban land use patterns. The Strategy appears to be introducing new strategic directions for the contribution of the Illawarra Shoalhaven to the State which are not articulated in the regional land use plan. This submission primarily addresses the region and the City of Wollongong's role in the hierarchy of state transport tasks (inter-region), rather than the intra-region challenges and opportunities which the plan addresses. The latter will be more comprehensively addressed by member Councils individually.

Navigating the draft documents on display can be confusing. The Illawarra Shoalhaven does not have a separate new draft Plan such as that for the newly proclaimed "Global Gateway" of Newcastle. Nor is it included in the "Draft Greater Sydney Services and Infrastructure Plan" with its vision for "3 Cities", despite being classified as one of the "5 cities of greater Sydney." This appears to leave the region

and its regional City in a no-man's land, lost between the greater Sydney conurbation and the new "global gateways" of Newcastle and Canberra.

Its future is primarily addressed within the Draft Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan -17 October 2017, a customer-outcomes based approach, which also introduces the "hub and spoke network" model. Comment on this plan is made below.

DRAFT REGIONAL NSW SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN -17 OCT 2017 (DRSIP)

The DRISP postulates that:

"Some Regional Cities will have stronger links to capital and Regional Cities in other states. While other Regional Cities will evolve to develop greater global connections with the Asia/Pacific Region through their nationally significant infrastructure."

The existing Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan is now nearly four years old and it is six years since consultation was commenced for it. Like the Hunter Regional Plan it was due for review after five years. However, the 2nd sentence of the quote above introduces the concept of "global gateway" cities, which the DRSIP identifies as Newcastle and Canberra, with a new Greater Newcastle Future Plan to support this function. Wollongong is not recognised as a global gateway, but as a satellite of Sydney with a transport task akin to the other satellite, City of Gosford.

The DRISP also proposes:

"the 'hub and spoke' network model radiating out from Regional Cities rather than a network just focused on Sydney."

and goes on to:

"set the customer outcomes and identify the networks and initiatives required to achieve these, including policy, service and infrastructure initiatives."

Customer outcomes

ISJO supports the first eight customer outcomes for connecting communities. It takes some issue with outcomes nine and ten.

► DRISP Outcome 10

ISJO supports the **Global Gateway** definition:

"A City that provides state level services and facilities to support a broad population catchment while also having international connections through their airport and/or port"

It agrees with the RDA Illawarra Inc. that, based on this definition, it is evident that Wollongong is as much a Global Gateway as Newcastle and probably more so than Canberra as it provides vital international access through Port Kembla and in addition to its own regional base of 400,000 residents, is proximate to a very large residential growth area in Macarthur.

It should be deemed a 'Global Gateway' in the Future Transport 2056 strategy because:

- ▶ **Port of Port Kembla is a state significant asset** which connects NSW to international trade corridors – deemed by NSW Ports as *“the NSW port of growth, which will continue to be NSW’s largest motor vehicle import hub and bulk grain export port, while catering for a growing range of dry bulk, bulk liquid and general cargo. Port Kembla will also be home to NSW’s second container port.”* The Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan’s Direction 1.2 is to “grow the capacity of the port of Port Kembla as an international trade gateway” and “to preserve the option of a new freight rail corridor to Sydney via the Maldon Dombarton rail link”.
- ▶ **Western Sydney Growth and Badgerys Creek coming on-line** in 2026, will require improved connectivity to Port Kembla, with conservative estimates contained in the report *Upgrading rail connectivity between the Illawarra and Sydney* that indicate that the South West Illawarra Rail Link (SWIRL) would deliver an additional \$2.6 billion in Gross Regional Product and 1,100 new jobs for the region at a benefit-cost ratio of 1.13.
- ▶ **Significant housing growth in Macarthur Land Release area** (in and around Wilton) is within 30 minutes of Wollongong. The decision to proceed with Badgerys Creek airport provides further economic and social benefits including the growth of Western Sydney residential areas, and specifically the Greater Macarthur Priority Growth Area, where 35,000 houses will be developed within a 30 minute drive from both Wollongong City, the University of Wollongong and the Illawarra Regional Airport and its tourism and light aeronautics focussed industries. This will have implications for the task of the North West inter-regional transport linkages.
- ▶ **The University of Wollongong**, its regional campuses across South East NSW, its Innovation Campus and its \$30 million Illawarra Health and medical research Institute, \$20 million iaccelerate Incubator Program and \$35 million Smart Infrastructure Facility also play a role in the region’s “global gateway” status. The University has strong international linkages through its Dubai –based programs and hosts over 14,000 international students annually, building global connections with recognised implications for the State’s economic development.

The importance of the definition and role of Global Gateway Cities is illustrated in Figure 28 from the DRISP as reproduced below. Even schematically, a significant section of the State is left in the cold by the failure to define Wollongong Shellharbour in the same way as Newcastle Maitland, with a sphere of influence that should be separate in this instance from its satellite connections to Sydney and that overlaps and complements the Canberra sphere.



Figure 28: Importance of the Global Gateway Cities

► DRISP Outcome 9

ISJO supports the ‘Hub and Spoke’ approach of the regional transport network for NSW but has some reservations about some aspects.

It supports Nowra being deemed a regional transport hub; and the recognized roles Vincentia and Milton/Ulladulla’s play as ancillary transport hubs, consistent with the Department of Planning’s hierarchy for centres, and in recognition of their growth potential.



Figure 4: Regional NSW transport network

However Figure 4 of the Draft (above) is confusing and not reflective of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan. For example it incorrectly locates Dapto as a regional hub on the National Link between Sydney and Canberra. Nor is it reflective of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan which shows four north-western linkages from the region. This is partly due to the scale of the state “hub” diagram, and in part due to the failure of this diagram to capture the distinct geographic divide between coast and inland NSW. This is better addressed on page 74 of the DRISP document under “Improving east west connectivity” and in Figure 46, but unfortunately, a picture paints a thousand words. Figures 28 and 4 are misleading conceptualizations of the scale of the State and global transport and economic tasks which the Illawarra Shoalhaven region and the city of Wollongong (or Wollongong/Shellharbour) play.

The DRISP hierarchy of transport “hubs” places Wollongong/Shellharbour on a par with Gosford’s role in the Central Coast region, with whose region it shares a Sydney commuter task. However there is little commonality for freight import/export tasks, or airport or port-related activities.

The hierarchy is at odds with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan which recognises Wollongong as “*the major regional city in the Illawarra region and the third largest in NSW, servicing an existing regional population (on a par with the ACT) and which in 2013 generated \$16.2 billion in Gross Regional Product (GRP), making it **the third-largest economic contributor to regional growth in NSW***”.

► Illawarra Shoalhaven Initiatives for investigation

The ISJO is disappointed that there has been so little consultation with the joint organisation of Councils in the preparation of the Strategy and the DRISP despite the role of the JO in the monitoring of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan and the ability that could be afforded to discuss plans and new initiatives with all four Councils of the region collectively. Rather, any consultations within the region have been hurriedly advertised and have engaged community representation on a far smaller scale than Councils’ have at their disposal through their integrated planning and reporting mechanisms; and have concentrated on the first 8 themes, rather than initiatives for investigation in the context of Themes 9 and 10.

The infrastructure initiatives list provided appears somewhat short-sighted for a 40 year vision out to 2056. It is focussed on existing and relatively short term activity, rather than recognising and capitalising on recent State investments, and new opportunities.

A more comprehensive document such as the Draft Greater Newcastle Future Transport Plan is required for the Illawarra Shoalhaven, underpinned by a meaningful level of consultation with local government and other key peak economic development interests across the region.

Recommendations:

- That Wollongong be recognised as BOTH a NSW Global gateway and a Satellite City.
- That meaningful consultation be undertaken with Councils in the region on the contribution of the region to the State transport task.
- That a Future Transport Plan for the region be developed for the Illawarra Shoalhaven based on both of the above.