

9.2. Commercial Centres Strategy - Review of Merimbula/Pambula/Tura Beach Catchment

A review of the Commercial Centres Strategy for 'Tura Beach/Merimbula/ Pambula Catchment' has been prepared and is recommended as a draft for public exhibition purposes.

Director Planning and Environment

Background

During the exhibition of Draft Bega Valley LEP 2010 a submission was received in relation to a site on the corner of Sapphire Coast Drive and Tura Beach Drive, Tura Beach (Figure 1 below) requesting the land be zoned R3 Medium Density Residential which Council resolved to support. The land was exhibited as R2 Low Density Residential. Subsequent to the Council resolution, a further submission was received requesting the land be zoned B5 Business Development to allow for a Bunnings style development. Council resolved at the meeting of 12 February 2014 to proceed with a Planning Proposal to rezone this site to B5 Business Development.

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Figure 1. Tura Beach Drive, Tura Beach

In accordance with the Council resolution staff prepared a Planning Proposal which was forwarded to the NSW Department of Planning for Gateway consideration. The Gateway Panel considered the matter and determined that the Planning Proposal should not proceed on the basis that it did not adequately consider the Local and Regional Planning Strategies nor were the potential impacts of a B5 zoning in this location assessed or justified.

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A Planning Proposal was subsequently lodged in February 2016 by DFP Consultants, on behalf of Bunnings Pty Ltd, requesting the land be zoned B5 Business Development which was supported by Council and forwarded to the NSW Department of Planning for Gateway consideration. The Planning Proposal was accompanied by a comprehensive economic impact assessment.

The Gateway Panel determined that the Planning Proposal should not proceed for a number of reasons relating to the inadequate consideration of the Local and Regional Planning Strategies.

- 30 The proponent formally requested a review of the Gateway determination by the Joint Regional Planning Panel. On 2 February 2017 the Southern Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) considered the Gateway Review and was of the view that ‘with appropriate limits on use and measures to mitigate potential impact on neighbouring land uses, a Bunnings store could be accommodated on the site, without significant detrimental impacts on the hierarchy of centres’.

- 40 The Panel was of the view that ‘the underlying zone should be changed to R5 Large Lot Residential, similar to the zoning of lands along the eastern side of Sapphire Coast Drive as a holding zone until such time as Council completes its strategic work to determine whether or not the site should support a greater range of uses’. The Panel also recommended that Council finalise its strategic work in respect to the location of employment lands and commercial hierarchy to determine the appropriate strategic framework for the site and the function of the Tura Beach centre.

The Department of Planning advised Council by letter dated 23 March 2017 that the Gateway determination would not be altered and encouraged Council to liaise with the proponent regarding the recommendations of the JRPP and review the role of Tura Beach in the context of the 2006 Commercial Centres Strategy. Staff sought further clarification from the Department as to the requirements for the review with the following received:

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- A discussion of Tura Beach centre in the context of the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036;
 - Determine the current and preferred future role and function of the Tura Beach centre, identifying how the local and sub-regional activities at Tura Beach fit strategically with projected growth in other centres in the Bega Valley;
 - Principles for considering any future commercial proposals of a sub-regional nature for local centre or out-of-centre locations;
 - Suitability of land identified for B5 Business Development zoning to accommodate bulky goods warehouse type development; and
 - Design considerations for the site, particularly in relation to adjoining land uses and the role of the site as a gateway to the Tura Beach residential area.

- 60 In accordance with the advice of the Department a review of the Merimbula/Pambula/Tura Beach catchment has been undertaken in particular, identifying the current functions and future directions of each of these localities in the context of the commercial centres hierarchy within the Shire. The review, if adopted, would replace the Merimbula/Pambula/Tura Beach Local Centre chapter in the 2006 Commercial Centres Strategy.

Discussion

The review of the Merimbula/Pambula/Tura Beach Catchment includes the following:

1. Specific planning advice regarding the functions and directions of the Merimbula/Pambula/Tura Beach commercial precinct in the context of the directions of the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan.

70 This advice has been guided by correspondence between the Department of Planning and Bega Valley Shire Council concerning the review of Council’s Commercial Strategy. In particular, this advice responds to the requirement to provide a discussion in the context of

the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan. In doing so, the relevant directions and actions of key Council and NSW Government strategic documents are identified to provide background. These are the South Coast Regional Strategy, South East and Tablelands Regional Plan, Bega Valley Shire Commercial Strategy 2006, Bega Valley Shire Land Use Planning Strategy 2008 and a report prepared by Hill PDA for the Department of Planning & Environment in 2008.

2. Discussion of the changes within the retail industry sector, the subsequent demand for bulky goods retail type development within the Merimbula/Pambula/Tura Beach catchment and the need for additional B5 Business Development zoned land.

80 The key difficulties for Council in considering applications for new retail entrants such as large plate bulky goods retailers is that these types of retailers are not readily comparable with most existing retail formats in Australia. As a result, special consideration of their unique retail model is required in the policy and decision-making process. With wide ranging retailing characteristics, it is important for the Commercial Centres Strategy to provide strong policy guidance to Council in relation to how new innovative retail formats and market entrants can be appropriately accommodated.

3. Analysis of available commercial land within the centres of Merimbula and Pambula suitable for bulky goods retail type development.

90 The availability of commercial land within the centres of Merimbula and Pambula was assessed against criteria including environmental constraints, topography, exposure to passing traffic, location, potential for land use conflict, land capability, clustering and the availability of services.

4. Analysis of the suitability of land within the Merimbula/Pambula/Tura Beach catchment for future B5 Business Development zoning and bulky goods retail type development.

Three sites within the Merimbula/Pambula/Tura catchment were identified and assessed against criteria including environmental constraints, topography, exposure to passing traffic, location, potential for land use conflict, land capability, clustering and the availability of services.

100 5. Design considerations for bulky goods retail type development or other suitable development within the B5 Business Development zone.

Design criteria have been prepared that should be considered as part of any bulky goods retail type development or for large plate retail development in the B5 Business Development zone. The design criteria includes general considerations, building elements, colours and materials, landscaping, amenity, infrastructure considerations and particular requirements for gateway buildings and corner treatments.

Conclusion

110 The review concludes that commercial use of land at Tura would not undermine the primacy of Bega as the regional centre, but instead would reinforce the role of Merimbula/Pambula/Tura Beach as a major town with strong district functions and optimise use of existing infrastructure by co-location with similar scale retail facilities. Further zoning to facilitate the development of homemakers, hardware, building supplies and gardening supplies would provide these needs to the immediate area and beyond into the larger regional market.

Land capacity for additional commercial development exists at Tura Beach and Pambula that will assist to relieve pressure on Merimbula by providing goods and services to cater to local day-to-day shopping as well as limited weekly comparison goods. New commercial

development should be consistent with the desired future character for Merimbula as stated in Bega Valley Development Control Plan 2013 and demonstrate economic and community benefits in accordance with the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan (Action 12.5).

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Attachments

1. Draft Commercial Centres Strategy Review

Recommendation

1. That Council place the draft Commercial Centres Strategy Review of Merimbula, Pambula and Tura Beach Catchment on public exhibition for 28 days.
2. That a further report be submitted to Council for consideration at the completion of the exhibition period.