

South Grafton Heights Precinct



A Strategy for the Future

*Adopted by Council – 21 August 2007
Amended Strategy adopted by Council – 19 April 2011*

South Grafton Heights Precinct – A Strategy for the Future

Executive Summary

Council resolved to adopt a Strategy for the South Grafton Heights Precinct (hereafter referred to as *the Precinct*) on 21 August 2007. Preparation of that Strategy followed receipt of two rezoning applications seeking to create residential land to which members of the local community raised concern. One of those concerns was that the applications being assessed by Council were not being considered in a strategic context.

Council resolved on 19 April 2011 to amend *The Strategy* at the same time as resolving to endorse a Planning Proposal to amend the Grafton Local Environmental Plan 1988 to enable a change of zoning on part of the Grafton & District Golf Course site. The proposed zone is Rural (Residential) or similar with the intention to enable development of large residential lots consistent with the rural-residential allotments on the opposite side of Bent Street.

The Strategy suggests that *the Precinct* and the town of South Grafton have additional capacity for both urban residential and rural-residential development. Constraints can be broadly grouped into infrastructure and services, physical and topographical, and social and human habitat. *The Strategy* concludes that future development is not limited, within the next 25 years or so, by significant constraints of infrastructure and services or physical and topographical types. This is not to suggest that there are no issues to address but simply to say that solutions to the likely issues are known, relatively uncomplicated and can be satisfactorily addressed. Social and human habitat considerations are more complex and present limiting factors to growth of the Precinct, eg impacts of zoning changes on local amenity and character, managing land use conflicts and community expectations. There is a range of solutions available to address those constraints the acceptance of the solutions is likely to have varying levels of support from the community, State agencies and Council.

The Strategy has had regard to the Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy (CVSS) adopted by the Clarence Valley Councils in 1999. The CVSS proposed a strategic direction to a planning horizon of 2016. *The Strategy* recognises that the principles contained in the CVSS are still valid (refer to Appendix 1). The principles for all levels of the settlement hierarchy in that Strategy will be adapted to be more relevant to *the Precinct* and South Grafton. Additional principles will be incorporated to recognise contemporary legislative requirements and site specific issues. Hence, *the Strategy* serves to implement the CVSS with a more detailed and contemporary planning direction for *the Precinct*.

The strategies and actions presented in the Strategy address the three broad groups of constraints in a context of existing legislation, Strategies and Plans adopted by both the State government and Council. A preferred development scenario is presented in *the Strategy*. The preferred scenario in this Strategy is consistent with the resolution of Council, dated 19 April 2011, ie it includes part of the Golf Course site for future rural-residential development.

Release of the Mid North Coast Regional Strategy (Department of Planning, 2009), provides additional context and direction for this review. That Strategy incorporates

additional Settlement Planning Principles which are also considered in devising a preferred strategy for South Grafton. The Mid North Coast Strategy identifies Grafton as a major regional centre for future urban growth. Urban growth in South Grafton, being a part of Grafton City, is consistent with that strategic direction. Additional population growth in Grafton City is required in part to make existing services more viable and hopefully reverse the reduction in access to services, government agencies and the like in the Valley.

Sustainability Assessment

The Clarence Valley Sustainability Initiative has identified guiding sustainability principles and five key elements of sustainability. The following assessment gives a summary of how *the Strategy*, and the preferred future scenario, impacts on each of the key elements and the guiding sustainability principles.

Summary Statement: The proposed strategy and actions and the preferred scenario are based on current 'best practice' settlement and urban design planning principles, and Council's resolution dated 19 April 2011. The adopted Strategies and Actions and future reviews will have regard to relevant 'best practice' and legislative requirements as relevant. The preferred scenario is considered to be a sustainable balance between the need for additional urban growth around Grafton, impacts on current and future residents in *the Precinct* and South Grafton, land capability and constraints, and environmental values.

Ecology: The preferred scenario is based on a network of open space which offers a range of ecological benefits. This enhances the opportunity to retain remnant vegetation for its ecological values and other benefits to the community. The intent of these corridors and associated security is to retain existing flora and fauna whilst accommodating additional development. Vegetated buffers along watercourses provide the ability to reduce potentially increased water quality impacts in watercourses downstream of urban development. Non-riparian buffers in the landscape containing vegetation provide additional utility value for wildlife, residents and the wider community and environment. The open space and buffer network was expanded following consultation on the original draft Strategy.

Economy: *The Strategy* and preferred scenario proposes to generally maintain the urban footprint of South Grafton, currently bounded by Musk Valley Creek, the Grafton & District Golf Course and Rushforth Road. Minor expansion to that 'footprint' is proposed in the Strategy (as amended in April 2011) for rural-residential development on part of the Grafton & District Golf Course land. Some expansion to existing urban residential zones and a subsequent reduction in rural-residential zoned land, within the 'footprint' is adopted. Residential development options within the existing residential and urban zoned areas are recommended and add to efficient supply of services and use of land resources, and lower 'whole of life' development costs. Open space networks provide for improved public access for low-impact recreational pursuits whilst providing buffers between incompatible land uses or different densities of development to reduce potential future conflict. This is particularly relevant to preserve local residential character and the viability of the industrial estate bordering the east side of *the Precinct*. In addition, the preferred scenario retains land for future growth immediately adjacent to the existing residential areas subject to further investigation and circumstances.

Society and Culture: The system of open space corridors improves the opportunity for the public to access open space. The Grafton Open Spaces Plan has identified

that parts of *the Precinct* are under supplied with open space. Further, that Plan indicates that open space is a key value for the community and culture of *the Precinct*, and wider area, and open space provision and management needs to reflect those values. Open space corridors offer the ability to buffer current and future residents from potentially conflicting activities or higher density development on nearby lands. Urban growth in *the Precinct* and other parts of South Grafton will produce change/s that is a concern for existing residents and Council alike. The preferred scenario, and adopted strategies and actions, respond to some improvements suggested by the public in the original public consultation phase for future development planning in *the Precinct*, and provide a framework to manage future change and ameliorate impacts to acceptable thresholds. In addition, the preferred scenario (as amended in April 2011) includes potential for rural-residential development on part of the Golf Course site in accordance with Council's resolution, dated 19 November 2008.

Human Habitat: *The Strategy* has looked outside *the Precinct* in an attempt to promote sustainable outcomes for future residential growth in South Grafton. Further, it is not proposed to simply subdivide more land to provide the volume of housing needed to accommodate future population. Again, the proposed open space corridors offer benefits under this key element in regards to amelioration of visual impacts and enhancement of urban amenity. Retaining clusters of remnant native vegetation on the eastern side of *the Precinct* assist in masking views towards the industrial estate from residential properties along the Bent St ridgeline. The preferred development scenario seeks to improve efficiencies in transport, infrastructure and service provision by increasing coverage of urban residential development within the existing 'footprint' of South Grafton. Some existing vacant residential zoned land in *the Precinct* may have reduced development potential due to nearby land use/s, topography or other environmental constraints, and this needs further investigation.

Governance: The Grafton Open Space Plan (2004) recognised the potential for cooperative partnerships to provide better open space land and facilities in this area of South Grafton. *The Strategy* promotes that goal. *The Strategy* recognises contemporary legislation, planning guidelines and 'best practice' to achieve more sustainable and acceptable development outcomes. The Strategy incorporates a range of improvements that have been suggested by the public, State agencies and Council staff during the original consultation period, as well as proposed rural-residential potential on part of the Golf Course site as supported by Council in 2008. Options for future urban growth beyond the potential identified in the preferred scenario are available. The outcomes presented are likely to achieve a better balance between local and broader public interest. Future outcomes that are uncertain due to inadequate knowledge are identified for investigation before making final decisions. It is essential that adopted Strategies and Action in *the Strategy* are incorporated into Council's local environmental plan/s and relevant development control plan to ensure implementation on the ground. Issues and faults with past urban, neighbourhood and building design may not be removed from the future urban landscape of *the Precinct* without that statutory support.

Guiding Sustainability Principles: *The Strategy* proposes a more balanced and sustainable outcome for current and future generations than is likely to be achieved under current planning circumstances. A focus on continual improvement is evident, as is respect for land capability, constraints and opportunities associated with location of new residential development. Where necessary the precautionary principle is followed to ensure Council has better information to make decisions with certainty.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Preamble

The Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy (CVSS) was adopted by the five former Clarence Valley Councils (Copmanhurst, Grafton City, Maclean, Nymboida and Ulmarra) and the then Department of Urban Affairs and Planning in March 1999. That Strategy indicated that South Grafton was occupied by 6468 persons in 1996. The population of South Grafton was estimated to grow to 7250 persons in 2016. Since 1996 incremental and peripheral expansion to the urban residential area has occurred by way of residential subdivision of urban residential land and rezoning of rural-residential land. This development pattern is consistent with the strategy for South Grafton in the adopted CVSS.

Two rezoning applications lodged with Council, for land owned by the 7th-Day Adventist Church and Grafton & District Golf Club, in recent times seek to provide urban residential development on land zoned rural-residential and open space (special purposes), respectively. Council resolved to proceed with assessment of the applications and draft amendments to the Grafton Local Environmental Plan 1988 (hereafter, referred to as the GLEP). In response to these applications the local community has presented concerns to Council. Apart from the relative merits of these proposals there is concern that these applications are being considered outside of a strategic approach for South Grafton and more specifically the South Hill/South Grafton Heights area. Hence, Council resolved to conduct a strategic review of the South Grafton Heights Precinct (hereafter referred to as *the Precinct*) as shown in Figure 1. Due to the nature of the proposals and the relationship of *the Precinct* to the town of South Grafton *the Strategy* concentrates on urban residential development issues across South Grafton.

Council adopted the original *Strategy* in August 2007 and endorsed a preferred scenario which did not include any rezoning at the Grafton District Golf Course site as Council specifically resolved to make that change at its meeting on 21 August 2007. Council, at its meeting on 19 November 2008, subsequently resolved to support rezoning of a part of the Golf Course site for rural-residential development purposes. That change has been included in the preferred scenario at Figure 2. Council also resolved in August 2007 to apply a minimum lot size of 750m² for future residential development at the 7th Day Adventist Church site in Bent Street.

This approach is considered supplementary to the CVSS and will provide a finer level of detail for future settlement and infrastructure planning within *the Precinct* for the term as the CVSS, ie to 2016. In addition, this review will provide a strategic direction for settlement planning in South Grafton and the wider Clarence Valley beyond that timeframe.

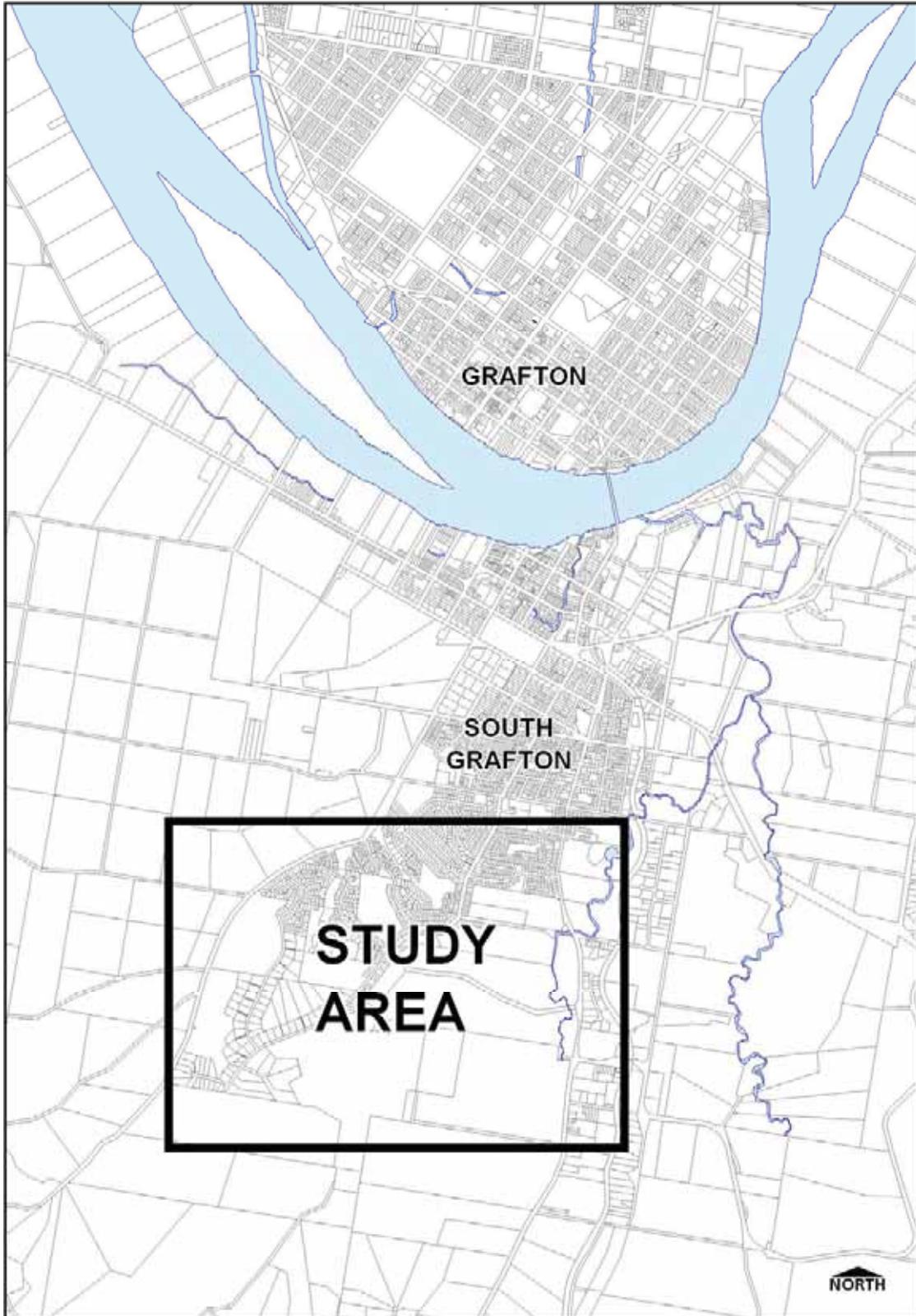


Figure 1 – Location of the South Grafton Heights Precinct in a broader local context

1.2 Our Vision

The Council's vision as displayed in the Clarence Valley Sustainability Initiative (CVC, 2006) is:

A sustainable Clarence Valley



Life in the Clarence Valley, now and in the future, is based on a culture of living sustainably that protects and carefully utilises the natural environment, its beauty and resources, our cultural heritage and unique identity of our valley and its communities.



We cooperatively plan for and achieve:

- **protection of ecological systems**
- **positive social and community development**
- **cultural diversity, expression and creativity**
- **economic prosperity and efficient resource use**
- **quality human habitat and essential services, and**
- **protection of our valuable natural and cultural heritage through supportive, accountable and participatory decision-making, management and action that actively involves the wider community**



Council works with the valley community for a sustainable future through its own actions, leadership and support.

1.3 Sustainability Principles

The Clarence Valley Sustainability Initiative (CVC, 2006) has established a framework for making everyday, short-term decisions and actions within a long-term intergenerational perspective. This perspective is based on minimising our impacts on and protecting the shared values the Clarence Valley community hold.

The sustainability planning web identifies guiding sustainability principles and five key elements of sustainability that need to be addressed and actioned, so that our present communities and future generations, as well as a myriad of other life forms in the Valley can be sustained.

The guiding sustainability principles are:

1. Protecting ecological processes and biodiversity
2. Supporting social and intergenerational equity
3. Promoting ecologically sustainable development
4. Encouraging community involvement and awareness
5. Taking a precautionary and anticipatory approach
6. Focusing on continuous improvement

The 5 key elements and their underlining goals are as follows:-

Ecology	goal 1: protecting the land goal 2: maintaining healthy waterways goal 3: protecting biodiversity
Economy	goal 1: efficient & careful resource use goal 2: healthy economic activity goal 3: meaningful work & employment
Society & Culture	goal 1: community health & wellbeing goal 2: creative culture & recreation goal 3: good community relations
Human Habitat	goal 1: quality built environment & places goal 2: efficient transport & access goal 3: effective essential services
Governance	goal 1: accountability & compliance goal 2: participation & communication goal 3: resourcing & support

Table 1 provides a sustainability assessment for the preferred development scenario (as amended in April 2011) later in this Strategy. The assessment identifies the five key elements, the guiding sustainability principles, and the main positive and negative outcomes.

1.4 Objectives of the strategic review

The following broad objectives are considered relevant to this strategic plan for future residential development in South Grafton:

- A. To identify areas in South Grafton for future residential development that balances the need to effectively utilise land and infrastructure against local amenity and community views;
- B. To ensure that future residential development is compatible with local character and amenity;
- C. To ensure that future residential development and planning provisions have regard to relevant legislation and contemporary guidelines; and
- D. To provide strategic planning input into the Clarence Valley local growth management strategy.

2 The Proposed Amended Draft Strategy

The Strategy for residential development in South Grafton is framed by a series of strategies and actions that are proposed to achieve the objectives of *the Strategy*. *The Strategy* guides development of the preferred scenario (refer to Section 3).

2.1 Strategies

The strategies below are proposed to guide better development outcomes for the Precinct and wider South Grafton area. Strategies added since public exhibition of *the Draft Strategy* have an 'a' in their code, for example, Strategy C.2a.

A. Areas for development

Strategy A.1 New urban residential development to be located adjacent to existing urban development, transport nodes and services, infrastructure, employment opportunities, business and community services before spreading to more remote locations.

Strategy A.2 Council should encourage increased residential development in existing urban areas compatible with local character, amenity and infrastructure requirements.

Strategy A.3 The provision of new infrastructure and services, or upgrading to capacity, should be paid by developers, where reasonable.

Strategy A.4 Urban development should avoid land containing prime agricultural lands, deposits of significant resources, natural hazards (acid sulfate soil, bushfire risk, flooding, etc), major infrastructure (eg transmission lines, sewerage treatment plants, etc), contaminated land, significant cultural heritage values, significant natural features or environmental values.

B. Local Character and Amenity

Strategy B.1 The density and character of new urban residential and rural-residential development should be compatible with the existing development of that type in the Precinct.

Strategy B.2 Lands should be developed efficiently to avoid wastage of valuable land resources and reduce the urban footprint of South Grafton.

Strategy B.3 Incompatible, or potentially conflicting, land uses should be separated by appropriate buffers.

Strategy B.4 Natural habitat should be enhanced and incorporated into corridors that allow for multiple uses.

Strategy B.5 New urban development areas should be designed to promote pedestrian and cycle movements for short trips rather than use of motor vehicles.

C. *Legislation & Guidelines*

- Strategy C.1 Land use provisions in residential zones should provide for a variety of residential housing options with development consent.
- Strategy C.2 Land use provisions in residential zones should provide for the provision of neighbourhood scale business opportunities with development consent.
- Strategy C.2a Valid development consent/s for existing undeveloped subdivision/s shall be recognised whilst seeking improvements in the design of such development/s compatible with the adopted Strategy in consultation with developers.
- Strategy C.3 River flow and water quality in downstream watercourses shall comply with NSW Government River Flow Objectives and Water Quality Objectives (1999).
- Strategy C.4 The safety and function of arterial roads shall be maintained or enhanced.
- Strategy C.5 Ensure that the rate and location of residential development is monitored.
- Strategy C.6 Open space provision and management should follow the strategic direction and goals in the adopted Grafton Open Spaces Plan (2004).
- Strategy C.6a Provision and management of major stormwater management devices should satisfy the 'Sustainable Water' provisions in the Clarence Valley Development Control Plan/s, as relevant.
- Strategy C.7 New development should contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, providing efficient and sustainable resource use, and producing natural flow regimes in downstream watercourses
- Strategy C.8 Community facilities and welfare services should be adequate and appropriate for the demographics of South Grafton.
- Strategy C.8a The location and design of development, open spaces and other land use should be compatible with relevant legislation, eg Threatened Species Conservation Act, BASIX, etc.

D. *Input to Regional Strategy*

- Strategy D.1 Planning should be compatible with the Outcomes of the Mid North Coast Regional Strategy

2.2 Actions

To implement the strategies in Section 2.1 the following actions are considered appropriate. Links to relevant Strategies are indicated in brackets after each Action. Actions added since public exhibition of the original *Draft Strategy* have a lower case letter in their code, for example, Action A.3a. Actions added to this Strategy (in adopted amendments) have a lower case letter and are shown in bold for public exhibition purposes, eg Action B.1a.

A. Areas for development

- Action A.1 Council will develop an infrastructure and servicing plan for the South Grafton locality to ensure adequate capacity for new development is provided. (Strategy A.1)
- Action A.2 Council will prepare a land release strategy or staging plan to guide the location and timing of new residential land in South Grafton. This plan shall consider land release management in nearby proposed new urban residential developments, eg Clarenza and Junction Hill. In addition, the opportunity for South Grafton to achieve a population of 7250 persons (as estimated by the CVSS) in 2016 shall be enabled. (Strategy A.1)
- Action A.3 Council shall investigate, and promote, suitable opportunities for additional residential development, via infill and redevelopment, in existing urban areas of South Grafton. This includes potential for rezoning of land not currently zoned residential, such as business (special development) zone. (Strategy A.2)
- Action A.3a New development, and public open spaces, at subdivision and lot-scale should be designed and maintained using relevant 'best practice' guidelines to reduce the potential for crime. (Strategy A.2)
- Action A.4 Existing residential zoned lands (with unapproved development potential or not subject of valid development consent to attain that potential) that have remained vacant for considerable time should be reviewed to determine suitability for residential development. (Strategy A.1 and A.2)
- Action A.5 New urban residential development areas should be serviced by bus transport to provide options for residents to access shops, employment, business and community services in South Grafton and Grafton. (Strategy A.1 and C.7)
- Action A.6 Council will revise the existing Water and Sewer Servicing Plans under Section 64 of the Local Government Act 1993 to ensure contributions from the development industry are suitable for expected urban growth. (Strategy A.3)
- Action A.7 Council will prepare a Contributions Plan under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 to ensure

contributions towards public amenities and facilities from the development industry are commensurate with expected urban growth and need for such assets. (Strategy A.3)

- Action A.8 Council will promote the preparation of voluntary developer agreements under section 93F of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to accelerate provision of services or facilities for public benefit. (Strategy A.3)
- Action A.9 New urban residential subdivisions will not be released until such time as Council is satisfied that necessary infrastructure, services and capacity are either provided or secured by appropriate contribution or similar arrangement. (Strategy A.1 and A.3)
- Action A.10 Cultural heritage values identified by the Aboriginal community and/or the Department of Environment and Climate Change as being significant shall be preserved with suitable management, such as buffers. Where practical these values should be incorporated into the open space network. (Strategy A.4)
- Action A.11 Acid sulfate soil provisions such as those contained in the Standard LEP Template (2005) shall be provided in any future local environmental plan for this area. (Strategy A.4)
- Action A.12 The Grafton Bush Fire Prone Land Map should be modified in consultation with the NSW Rural Fire Service to more accurately reflect bush fire hazard in the Precinct. (Strategy A.4)
- Action A.12a Further to Action A.12 Council resolved on 19 April 2011 to recommend to the NSW Rural Fire Service that the buffer for bush fire, at Part Lot 400 DP 1153969, being land fronting Bent Street and since zoned R5 in the Clarence Valley LEP 2011, be amended to be a 10-metre wide strip along the south west boundary and a 20-metre wide strip along the southern boundary of the subject land. (*Council wrote to RFS on 9 May 2011 – DWS 719080*)
- Action A.13 A management plan to ensure the local population of kangaroos is appropriately managed throughout the future development of the Precinct shall be completed in consultation with the Department of Environment and Climate Change. (Strategy A.4)
- Action A.13a Council should review tree clearing controls to limit clearing of remnant vegetation that would be inconsistent with the adopted Strategies and Actions contained in *the Strategy*, especially where controls under other legislation is not deemed adequate. (Strategy A.4, B.4, C.2a, C.3 and C.6)
- Action A.14 New residential subdivision developments or proposed rezonings should not be approved unless Council is satisfied that the need for buffers from hazards or potentially conflicting land use has been assessed and suitable management will be implemented to control potential risk or conflict as part of the proposed development. (Strategy A.4 and B.3)

- Action A.15 Future residential development or other sensitive land use should be located a minimum of 500 metres from the South Grafton Brickworks clay pit. (Strategy A.4 and B.3)
- B. *Local Character and Amenity*
- Action B.1 Local environmental plans will set building heights in urban areas. Height limits should reflect the landscape character, function and hierarchy of the future settlement and visual and cultural amenity of its location. (Strategy B.1)
- Action B.1a Any future rural-residential subdivision of the golf course land (subject to rezoning application/planning proposal) should maintain a frontage for all allotments fronting Bent Street, excluding battle-axe allotments, in the order of 40 metres. (Strategy B.1)
- Action B.2 New urban residential development should aim for a dwelling density of 10 dwellings per hectare, where practical. (Strategy B.1 and B.2)
- Action B.3 Settlements should aim for landscaping, sign posting and the like to give a distinct sense of place, aiming to foster a sense of belonging and community pride. (Strategy B.1 and C.6)
- Action B.4 Lands with higher development capability should be developed for urban residential development and not rural-residential purposes consistent with the development potential shown on the preferred development scenario at Figure 2. (Strategy B.2)
- Action B.5 No new rural residential areas will be supported beyond those identified in this Strategy unless it can demonstrated that the proposed areas:
- are consistent with the Sustainability Criteria contained in the Mid North Coast Regional Strategy, and
 - maintain the character and role of the existing Precinct and South Grafton. (Strategy B.2)
- Action B.6 Potentially contaminated lands shall be identified, the suitability of the land for the proposed use, and the feasibility of remediation to be assessed before any rezoning proceeds or prior to increased sensitive development in the vicinity of such lands. (Strategy B.3)
- Action B.7 Open space buffers should be provided at the interface between rural-residential and urban residential development, and between rural-residential and rural small holdings development to reduce conflict and improve local amenity. *This requirement does not apply to the interface between the Winwood Lane small holdings subdivision and proposed rural-residential land within the Grafton District Golf Club fronting Bent Street (as resolved by Council on 19 April 2011).* In particular, an open space buffer shall be provided along the southern boundary of the 7th-Day Adventist site (except where adjacent to the church and hall) and extend such that the setback to each side of the adjacent gully/drainage line in is the order of 35 metres, subject to detailed site assessment. Other buffers of this type within *the Precinct*

should generally be about 35 metres wide, subject to detailed site assessment. (Strategy B.3)

- Action B.8 Future residential development shall maintain a suitable setback or buffer, in the order of 30 metres wide, to the 66kV electricity transmission line traversing the Precinct (based on the concept of 'prudent avoidance' and the 'precautionary principle') (Strategy B.3)
- Action B.9 Natural vegetation on ridgelines and providing a visual buffer to industrial areas and uses shall be retained and enhanced, and where practical incorporated into public open space corridors. (Strategy B.3, B. 4, C.6 and C.8a)
- Action B.10 Streams of 3rd order or higher shall be provided with a 50-metre buffer (minimum) to either side of the watercourse. The buffer should be zoned for environmental protection. (Strategy B.4 and C.6)
- Action B.11 Buffers to watercourses should be made accessible to the public by ensuring appropriate land tenure (eg dedication to Council or Crown, or right of access) and provision of access trails or tracks. (Strategy B.4 and C.6)
- Action B.12 Open spaces, buffer areas and other public areas should be zoned and managed for multiple use, such as stormwater management, environmental conservation and restoration, passive and active recreation, etc, as compatible with the land constraints and adjacent land uses. (Strategy B.4, C.6 and C.8a)
- Action B.13 Areas of open space should be located with good access or frontage (in part) to streets or other public spaces rather than being located behind rear boundaries of residential development in order to foster use, ownership and community value of those spaces. (Strategy B.4 and C.6)
- Action B.14 Riparian buffers should be zoned and managed to enhance natural values and function as wildlife corridors while recognising the potential for bushfire risk to adjoining or nearby urban development. (Strategy A.4, B.4, C.6 and C.8a)
- Action B.15 Remnant native vegetation should be retained, particularly along waterways and where vegetation provides a visual buffer to the industrial lands, and expanded where possible to link in with larger natural areas. Such linkages shall be provided generally in accordance with the Concept Plan in the Grafton Open Spaces Plan (2004). Land use zoning of such linkages should reflect the prime purpose of the connection. Environmental protection or an open space zoning may be appropriate. (Strategy B.4, C.3, C.6 and C.8a)
- Action B.16 At least 85% of new residential dwellings should be located within 'walkable' distance of a bus route, say 400 metres. (Strategy B.5 and C.7)
- Action B.17 Networks of paths, tracks and trails should be incorporated into open spaces, buffer areas, and alongside roads to provide safe, convenient

and sustainable transport options for pedestrians and cyclists.
(Strategy B.5 and C.6)

C. *Legislation & Guidelines*

- Action C.1 Land use provisions in residential zones should enable affordable housing, medium density housing types, caravan parks, manufactured home estates and housing for older persons with development consent. (Strategy C.1)
- Action C.1a Council shall investigate options for the provision of affordable housing and prepare appropriate development controls to encourage the provision of affordable housing. (Strategy C.1)
- Action C.2 Land use provisions in residential zones should provide for the provision of general stores and neighbourhood scale business facilities, such as home occupations, with development consent. (Strategy C.2)
- Action C.3 Land use provisions and on-ground management shall maintain, and preferably improve, contributions towards achievement of Catchment Targets and Management Targets in the Northern Rivers Catchment Action Plan (2006). (Strategy C.3)
- Action C.4 New urban residential and rural-residential developments shall be serviced by reticulated potable water, reticulated recycled water (where practical) and sewer services. No on-site effluent disposal to be permitted where reticulated water is available unless part of approved grey water reuse scheme. (Strategy C.3 and C.7)
- Action C.5 New urban residential development (at precinct, subdivision and lot scale) shall contribute to water and energy efficiency and integrated water cycle management outcomes. This includes, but is not limited to, implementation of Council's Water Efficiency Strategic Plan, Grafton Effluent Management Strategy, BASIX, Grafton Stormwater Management Plan and development controls in Council's zone-based development control plans. (Strategy C.2a, C.3 and C.7)
- Action C.6 The capacity of downstream stormwater systems and measures to reduce post- development runoff to pre-development runoff volumes should be investigated prior to rezoning, or prior to subdivision approval when land is already zoned residential. (Strategy C.3 and C.7)
- Action C.7 Access to arterial roads shall be minimised, especially where speed zones exceed 60 km/hr, and controlled through intersections where necessary. (Strategy C.4)
- Action C.8 The rate of development (new allotments and dwelling construction) and vacant land supply should be monitored on an annual basis. (Strategy C.5)
- Action C.9 Results of monitoring land development and supply shall be documented in an appropriate publication once every 5 years at a

minimum. Such reporting shall compare actual rates to predictions and discuss implications of findings. (Strategy C.5)

- Action C.10 Settlements should aim to foster community identity by maintaining, strengthening and enhancing community facilities such as halls, community gardens, recreational facilities, heritage resources and public open space. (Strategy C.6)
- Action C.11 Neighbourhood parks with facilities for children and adults should be provided in the vicinity of the golf course or 7th-Day Adventist Church, and in new open space off Fairway Drive. (Strategy C.6)
- Action C.11a Major stormwater management infrastructure required in conjunction with new development, such as subdivisions, should be transferred to Council ownership and management and incorporated into the public open space network whilst ensuring public safety. (Strategy 6a)
- Action C.12 Community facilities and welfare support should be available prior to or in conjunction with new development. (Strategy C.8)
- Action C.13 Social impact assessment should be carried out prior to rezoning or subdividing land for residential development when implementation of the Clarence Valley Social Plan is not deemed adequate. (Strategy C.8)
- Action C.14 Land use provisions shall ensure that schools can be used for community purposes. (Strategy C.8)
- Action C.14a Council and community groups should investigate opportunities for school and church grounds and facilities to be available for community use when not used by the occupant in liaison with schools and church groups in *the Precinct*. (Strategy C.8)
- Action C.14b All applications for rezoning and subdivision approval shall be subject to assessment to ensure relevant legislation is satisfied. (Strategy C.8a)
- Action C.14c The provision of open space and buffers should incorporate valuable environmental assets such as 'potential koala habitat' or 'endangered ecological communities' where practical. (Strategy C.8a)
- Action C.14d Relevant development controls necessary to implement the adopted Strategy shall be incorporated into Council's local environmental plan/s and development control plan/s, as relevant, to ensure implementation of the adopted Strategy. (Strategy – All)
- D. *Input to Regional Strategy*
- Action D.1 This Strategy should be incorporated into the local growth management strategy for the Clarence Valley LGA prepared in accordance with the Mid North Coast Regional Strategy (Strategy D.1)

2.3 Outcomes

Completion of the Actions will:

- give residents, landowners and investors greater certainty about the short to medium term future for South Grafton;
- provide more organised and predictable land use planning and development outcomes;
- decrease conflict over future land use decisions;
- improve efficient use of public or private resources and provision of services;
- ensure there is enough residential land available to reduce large increases in land prices;
- provide the basis for more liveable urban environments whilst catering for additional population growth;
- land with environmental assets, special community values or productive natural resources can be protected;
- future residential land uses will be separated from incompatible land use; and
- encourage the provision of affordable housing options.

3 The Amended Preferred Scenario

The preferred scenario aims to enable additional urban development within the 'footprint' of South Grafton and ameliorate impact of that development on social, human habitat, economic, and ecological elements. It has been estimated that the scenario will provide for over 700 lots or land supply to about the year 2030. South Grafton is predicted in 2030 to have a population of 7445 persons.

This scenario provides a reasonable balance between the need to accommodate future growth in an efficient way whilst recognising constraints posed by existing subdivision and development patterns, site topography and environmental assets, the need to respect local character and amenity, and avoid potential land use conflict.

The 'backbone' to this scenario is the planned approach for the provision and management of an open space network within the Precinct and providing connections beyond. These green spaces offer multiple benefits, including public access and recreation, wildlife habitat, stormwater amelioration, separation of conflicting land uses and visual buffers. This scenario acknowledges that refinement to some of the development opportunities is likely as a result of detailed site assessment of issues such as flora and fauna, conflict risk assessment and buffers, and cultural heritage. Beyond *the Precinct*, reports such as traffic studies and strategies guiding affordable housing development and provision of community facilities will also influence on how the preferred scenario is implemented.

Figure 2 (on following page) shows a diagrammatic representation of the general structure and key features of development under the preferred scenario consistent with the adopted Strategies and Actions contained in Section 2.

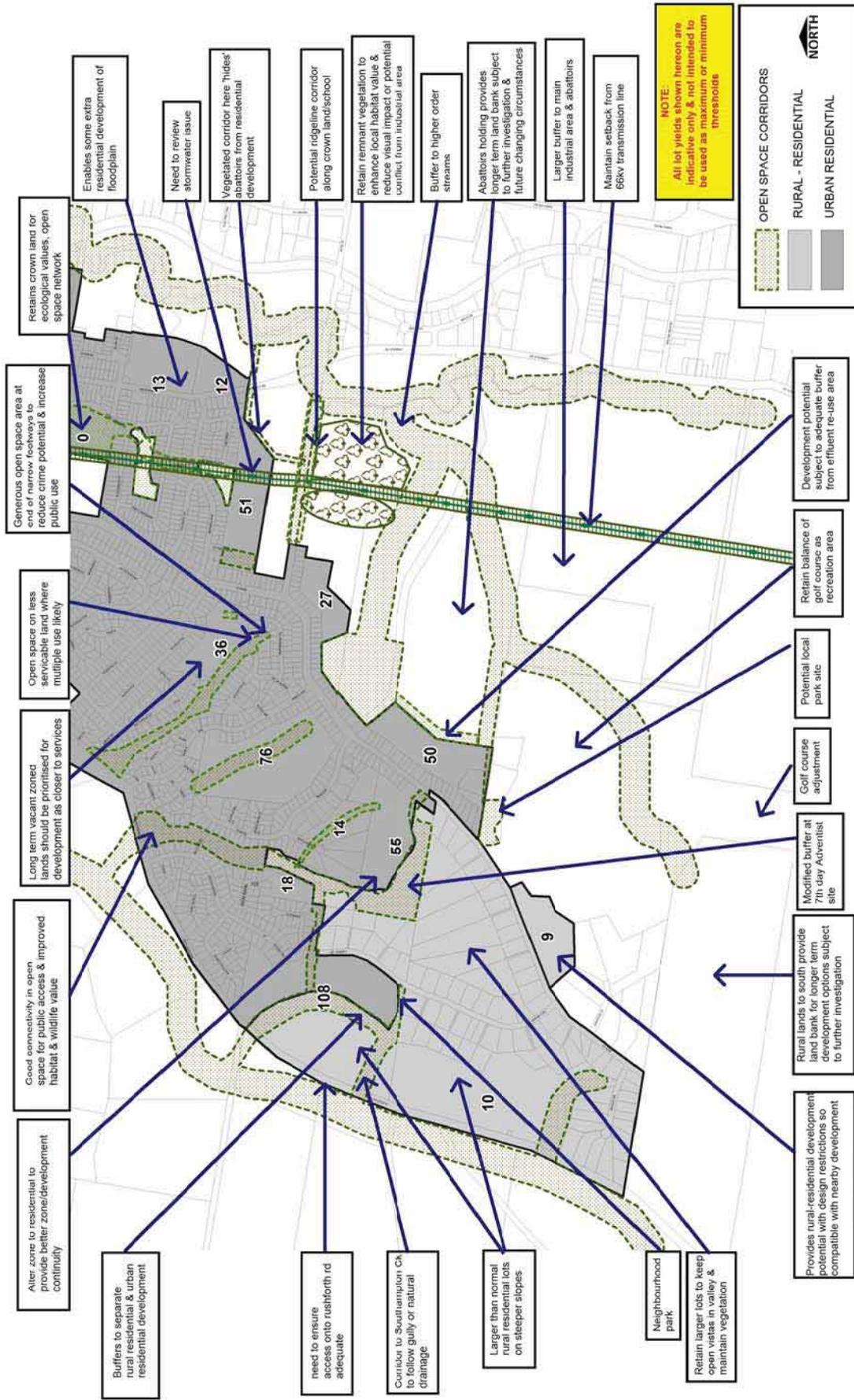


Figure 2 - Future development potential under the Amended preferred scenario.

Some existing rural zoned lands outside *the Precinct* have been included in this **Amended** scenario. Dwelling density of 10 per hectare for land zoned residential and 2 dwellings per hectare for rural-residential zone land is generally assumed. Approvals for new dwellings in South Grafton in the five year period 2001-2006 amount to 145, or an average of 29 per year.

Assuming a constant rate of residential development continues and land is developed in a reasonably efficient manner this **Amended** scenario would generate a yield of approximately 700 lots, or over 24 years supply to 2030.

It is relevant to note that this **Amended** scenario does not count redevelopment of occupied urban zoned land which will occur over time. Any redevelopment may well extend the timeframe over which the **Amended** preferred scenario can be implemented. This will be dependent on development rates. One dwelling per allotment as land uptake is also assumed.

A Sustainability Assessment of the **Amended** preferred strategy is provided in Table 1 (on next page).

Sustainability Assessment: Amended Preferred Scenario		
Key Sustainability Element	Positive Outcomes	Negative Outcomes
Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffers/corridors to creeks for open space and habitat • Improves habitat connectivity • This scenario would produce less greenhouse gas per capita compared to traditional urban development • Improved management and potential for enhancement of native vegetation and associated values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased potential for water quality impacts • Some loss of native vegetation likely
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal change to South Grafton 'footprint' • Improved efficiency of land utilization compared to existing development patterns • Looks beyond the existing zoning and Precinct 'square' at alternatives • Recognises constraints on steep rural-residential land • Land zoned rural-residential with high development capability recommended for urban residential use • Improved open space network and public access • Buffers to industrial area • Retains lands for future growth (subject to further investigation and circumstances) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less efficient in terms of land utilization and service provision compared to full/maximum potential development scenarios • Public concern regarding reduced land values
Society & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved open space network and public access • Less impact on existing residents compared to traditional urban development forms • Buffers to industrial area and between development of different densities or potential conflict • Beneficial to wider community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public and resident concern at a localised scale
Human Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced open space network and pedestrian linkages • Buffers/open space between development of different densities or where conflict between land uses likely • Transport efficiency improved • Road and service capacity can be upgraded to cater for additional growth • Retains a buffer to 66kV transmission line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most significant aspect of local resident objection, especially management of interface between existing & future development
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for partnerships to enhance open space • Incorporates 'best practice' settlement and urban design principles • Retains land bank for future urban growth close to existing development • Strikes a better balance between local and broader public interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all concerns of residents addressed in Amended Draft Strategy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment considered and improvements made in response to submissions made 	
Guiding Sustainability Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More balanced and sustainable outcome for current and future generations • Respects land capability and location issues • Enhances urban amenity compared to traditional urban residential development • Allows for future growth beyond scenario 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable

Table 1 – Sustainability Assessment for preferred scenario.

References

Clarence Valley Council & Sustainable Futures (2006) *Clarence Valley Sustainability Initiative – Our Sustainability Framework*. Adopted by Clarence Valley Council - March 2006.

Clarence Valley Council & Sustainable Futures (2006) *Grafton Open Spaces Plan*. Adopted by Council – 18 May 2004.

Department of Planning (2009) *Mid North Coast Regional Strategy*. Department of Planning, Sydney.

Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (1999) *Clarence Valley Settlement Strategy (and Appendices)*. Prepared by DUAP and the Clarence Valley Councils of Copmanhurst, Grafton City, Maclean, Nymboida and Ulmarra.

Appendix 1 – Extracts from CVSS

2

THE PRINCIPLES

2.1 NORTHERN RIVERS REGIONAL STRATEGY SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

The Northern Rivers Regional Strategy document entitled “Northern Rivers - Framework for a Sustainable Future” (NRRS, 1997) recommends a vision for the future of the region in order to give us something to work towards. The suggested vision for where the region wants to be in 2016 is:

A healthy, prosperous and sustainable future for the communities of the Northern Rivers Region.

In order to achieve this vision the Northern Rivers Regional Strategy Management Committee adopts the following guiding principles:

SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

Precautionary Principle

If there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation (or prevent immediate mitigation action). In the application of the precautionary principle, public and private decisions should be guided by:

- (i) careful evaluation to avoid, where practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment; and
- (ii) an assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of various options.

Conservation of Biodiversity and Ecological Integrity

Conservation of biodiversity and protection of ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration. The non-evolutionary loss of species and genetic diversity needs to be halted and the future of evolutionary processes secured.

Inter-generational Equity

The present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations.

Improved Valuation, Pricing and Incentive Mechanisms

Environmental factors should be included in the valuation of assets and services, such as:

- (i) polluter pays - that is, those who generate pollution and waste should bear the cost of containment, avoidance or abatement;
- (ii) the users of goods and services should pay prices based on the full life cycle of costs of providing goods and services, including the use of natural resources and assets and the ultimate disposal of any waste;
- (iii) environmental goals, having been established should be pursued in the most cost effective way, by establishing incentive structures including market mechanisms, that enable those best placed to maximise benefits or minimise costs to develop their own solutions and responses to environmental problems

Global Perspective

A global perspective is needed to ensure that Australia does not simply move its environmental problems elsewhere. This requires recognition and consideration of the ecological footprint of our activities and developments. We must share the global responsibility for action on greenhouse gases, ozone depleting substances, biodiversity and habitat protection and pollution reduction.

Qualitative Development

Qualitative development requires an increase in the qualitative dimension of human welfare and not the quantitative growth in resource throughput as a key objective. Conservation of resources needs to be an integral component of the planning and implementation of development and activities. However, investment is needed to replenish and expand the capital base, and the human, technological and natural productive base should not be depleted.

Limits on Natural Resource Use

The scale and throughput of material resources need to be limited by the capacity of the environment to both supply renewable resources and to assimilate wastes. Harvesting rates of renewable resources should not exceed their rate of regeneration.

Constant Natural Capital and Sustainable Income

Our stock of capital - natural environment, technology and knowledge - is required to sustain our lifestyles and activities. The natural capital (eg, biological diversity, healthy environments, fresh water supplies, productive soils) must be maintained or enhanced from one generation to the next. Only that income which can be sustained indefinitely, taking account of the biodiversity conservation principle, should be taken.

Community Participation

Strong community participation will be a vital pre-requisite for effecting a smooth transition to an ecologically sustainable society.

Efficiency and Resilience

Efficiency of resource use must become a major objective in economic policy. Economic policy needs to focus on developing a resilience to withstand economic or ecological shocks. A resource-driven economy is unlikely to be resilient. We should aim to establish a range of inputs and outputs in economic activities.

To maximise efficiency, projects undertaken and processes used in production should be those which are efficient; that is, they yield the greatest output per unit input.

2.2 SPECIFIC PLANNING ELEMENTS

Planning elements reflecting the North Coast Regional Environmental Plan (1988), the North Coast Urban Planning Strategy (1995), the Rural Settlement Guidelines (1995) and Northern Rivers Regional Strategy Policies have been adopted as a second layer of principles to provide specific direction for the location and design of future settlement. A future Social Plan will become a further part of the planning framework.

PROTECTING THE RESOURCE BASE AND NATURAL AREAS:

Urban and rural settlements should

- 1) avoid riverine corridors
- 2) avoid areas of acid sulphate soil
- 3) avoid wetlands
- 4) avoid areas with habitat or conservation significance
- 5) avoid sensitive coastal lands
- 6) not occupy good agricultural land
- 7) be isolated from agricultural pursuits
- 4) not encroach on extractive resources
- 5) be isolated from rural industry, including haulage routes
- 6) not contribute to soil erosion
- 7) not affect environmentally significant land, natural habitat & vegetation
- 8) avoid impacts on drinking water catchments
- 9) protect scenic areas
- 10) avoid impacts on water quality in water courses/groundwater
- 11) avoid Aboriginal sites and areas
- 12) contribute to catchment management

MAXIMISING ACCESS TO GOODS, SERVICES & OPPORTUNITIES, AND REDUCING THE NEED TO TRAVEL.

Urban settlement should:

- 1) improve potential for public transport
- 2) provide land for community services
- 3) locate commercial & community services close to housing

- 4) provide new housing with good access to core services
- 5) be compact rather than sprawl, and encourage higher density development
- 6) provide good access to higher order services

Rural residential settlement should:

- 1) be close to settlements with human services/community facilities, linking into the functional hierarchy
- 2) link into existing local or sub-regional services without pressure, or provide for self-reliance
- 3) provide good access to higher order services
- 4) encourage efficient use of vehicles through proximity to services/access to public transport/car pooling initiatives
- 5) be of a population size suitable to maintain human services
- 7) establish human services to suit the scale and location of the development

MAXIMISING RESOURCE EFFICIENCY & MINIMISING ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT

Urban settlement should

- 1) employ measures to achieve better urban design & utilisation of urban land, and provide a range of housing options
- 3) identify suitable land for employment
- 4) be readily provided with reticulated water and sewerage
- 5) be located in an area near urban land which is economic to service
- 6) encourage energy and water conservation
- 8) be in a form which is conducive to economical servicing
- 9) use infrastructure which is designed as part of water cycle management

Rural settlement should

- 1) be located where the cost and impact of infrastructure can be minimised
- 2) allocate true costs to users
- 3) not encroach on land identified for future urban development
- 4) protect the safety and efficiency of arterial roads
- 5) utilise effluent disposal arrangements which safeguard water quality in creeks and rivers

CREATING & MAINTAINING A HIGH LEVEL OF LIVABILITY AND SAFETY

Urban settlement should

- 1) be consistent with any floodplain, estuary or coastline management plan
- 2) be free of flooding or any other environmental hazard
- 3) be free of airport noise
- 4) encourage a sense of community and identity, livability, and neighbourhood character
- 5) maintain the character or heritage significance of towns, villages and small coastal settlements
- 6) provide access to open space/recreational space
- 7) put aside land for indoor and outdoor community use
- 8) include a 'heart' within easy access of all areas, where community development can occur
- 9) avoid land which has heritage or cultural significance

Rural settlement should:

- 1) be free from contamination
- 2) be free from bushfire risk
- 3) be free from any other significant environmental hazard
- 4) avoid land which has heritage or cultural significance
- 5) protect visual and scenic amenity
- 6) be located and designed to avoid conflicts with nearby land-use
- 7) identify and enhance distinctive rural character

4

THE STRATEGY

4.1 VISION

For the purpose of this Settlement Strategy, a suggested vision for where the Clarence Valley should be in the year 2016 is:

A healthy, prosperous and sustainable future for all forms of life in the Clarence Valley by acknowledging and building on the strengths of the Valley, particularly the river, and by encouraging a settlement pattern which builds on existing communities and minimises urban and rural residential sprawl.

4.2 A SCENARIO FOR THE FUTURE

A Clarence Valley Committee workshop in April 1997 discussed the sustainability of three basic settlement scenarios. These scenarios were devised to examine different ways in which the same volume of population growth could be accommodated. They comprised a sprawling, dispersed model, a tightly compact model and a model which focused growth while allowing a range of living opportunities.

The settlement strategy suggested for the Clarence Valley to the year 2016 is generally based on the model characterised by the following:

- higher densities in Grafton close to the CBD
- settlements close to Grafton to be higher density in strategic areas, and to be designed for community identity and self-reliance in terms of local services and employment opportunities
- existing small villages to expand to suitable population levels to maintain existing services and seek improved outreach services, while retaining village character and minimising environmental impact
- further rural residential development to be clustered in areas having a direct functional relationship with town or village settlements.

Details of the scenarios are provided at section C2 of the Appendices. The strategy also incorporates the relevant provisions of the Maclean Shire Strategic Land Use Plan. A map illustrating the settlement strategy is shown in Figure S.3. Figure S.4 shows how the settlement strategy fits into the basic agricultural, transport and vegetation context of the Clarence Valley.

4.3 THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

The Clarence Valley landscape has a basic hierarchical pattern of city, towns, villages and rural areas which has evolved since white settlement. The following settlement hierarchy builds on that pattern to maintain social and economic viability while preserving natural landscape values. The dot points under each sub-heading list the agreed outcomes proposed to be achieved by implementation of the strategy. Individual elements of the hierarchy are discussed in more detail at section 5.

1. **The sub-regional centre** of Grafton and South Grafton:

- Grafton may reach a population of approximately 18,350 around 2016 following urban infill and minor peripheral additions to the existing residential zone;
- Grafton will continue to function as a sub-regional centre (as originally defined in the North Coast Urban Planning Strategy (NCUPS) 1995), providing a focus for services to the Clarence Valley community providing sub-regional educational, health, community and recreational services, and providing outreach services to smaller centres;
- Grafton will continue to provide a primary focus for major commercial activity;
- Grafton will continue to fulfil the role of sub-regional administrative centre for State Government;
- residents' access to services will be optimised by higher densities being encouraged closer to the Central Business Districts, while a design approach to urban infill is adopted which emphasises human scale, compatibility with heritage values, access to open space, and high quality landscaping;
- Grafton and South Grafton's character and heritage significance will be maintained;
- Grafton and South Grafton will be linked by improved public transport access to higher order services in other sub-regional centres;
- the town of South Grafton will aim to provide enhanced commercial/retail services to settlements south of the Clarence River as well as accommodating industrial development; and
- Grafton and South Grafton will aim to provide good cycle and pedestrian access to CBDs.

4.4 PRINCIPLES FOR ALL LEVELS OF THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY:

Water Cycle Management

- Water supply, sewage, stormwater and greywater in urban, village and rural residential areas should be managed in an integrated way, along with tools such as demand management and re-use. Larger expansion areas such as Clarenza, any village precinct at Waterview Heights, Yamba, Gulmarrad, Iluka, Maclean and to some extent Junction Hill and Lawrence offer great potential for the cost-effective application of an integrated water cycle.
- Water use should be as effective and efficient as possible to minimise impacts on natural water systems. Decisions in terms of regulatory and institutional arrangements, water source management and water demand management should be consistent with the Lower Clarence County Council's draft Regional Water Efficiency Strategic Plan.
- Before reticulated water is supplied to areas using on-site sewage treatment systems, the capacity of those systems should be re-assessed and upgraded if necessary.
- Low water use devices should be encouraged, particularly in unsewered areas.
- In areas where reticulated water is not available, strategies should be developed to ensure that assessment of the suitability of alternative supplies is undertaken, including an assessment of impact on the water environment. Riparian water use is discouraged; rural households should provide adequate rainwater harvesting infrastructure. To protect river flows and improve public access to rivers, riparian lands affected by a residential subdivision should be dedicated as public open space. This could be achieved through developer contributions or as a dedication to the Crown or council.
- All settlements should utilise effluent disposal arrangements which aim to safeguard water quality in creeks, rivers and groundwater, particularly in water supply catchment areas. A number of small settlements in the Clarence Valley do not expect to financially sustain

conventional sewage treatment infrastructure but current on-site wastewater management may not be environmentally sustainable. Villages and localities in this category include Copmanhurst, Waterview Heights, Eatonsville, Seelands, Ulmarra, Nymboida, Pillar Valley, Sandon, Diggers Camp, Minnie Water, Tucabia, Glenreagh, Wooli, Brooms Head, Cowper, Brushgrove, Chatsworth Island, Harwood, Lawrence, Ashby and Woombah. Existing and future development in those areas should meet the principles and performance objectives set out in the “Environment and Health Guidelines - On-site Sewage Management for Single Households” and should be consistent with the On-Site Sewage Management Strategy being prepared by Clarence Valley councils. This may entail reviewing lot sizes or requiring a higher level of treatment for new subdivisions. Small-scale effluent treatment package plants servicing multiple households and managed as part of a Community Titles development may be effective in rural residential areas or in any village development at Waterview Heights. Impacts of holiday loadings should be considered in any evaluation of sewage infrastructure, particularly in the Lower Clarence. Recycling of wastewater should take place where appropriate, with a priority placed on reuse activities that offset the use of current resources.

- Stormwater management plans should be developed for all new areas prior to rezoning, linking in with councils’ catchment-based stormwater plans. Innovative methods should be utilised including collection of rainwater for non-potable uses, reducing paved areas, and maintaining natural vegetation along drainage lines.
- Settlement and development in the Clarence Valley should be consistent with the water quality and river flow objectives developed by the NSW Government Water Reform process.

Soil and Vegetation Management

- Rezoning investigations for all new areas should include identification of past land-uses which may have resulted in contamination, such as dipsites, horticultural lands and intensive livestock sites. If contamination is found to be a possibility, measures should be put in place to ensure that the potential for contamination, the suitability of the land for the proposed use, and the feasibility of remediation are assessed properly before the rezoning proceeds.
- Any new urban, village and rural residential areas should avoid land which is substantially timbered. Flora and fauna assessments should be carried out in all areas planned for urban and rural residential development prior to rezoning or any alteration in planning provisions. During the subdivision process, any native vegetation should be retained where possible and incorporated into the residential plan. Measures to mitigate against impacts on native vegetation should also be incorporated. Remnant vegetation should be retained, particularly along waterways, and expanded where possible to link in with larger natural areas. Areas of environmental significance need to be protected by appropriate zones and buffers.

Cultural heritage

- Aboriginal cultural heritage values should be assessed in detail prior to any rezoning, including identification of sites, relics and places of significance. Consultation with local aboriginal land councils/aboriginal communities and NPWS should occur as part of the rezoning process. Aboriginal land councils could also be approached to suggest suitable names for places, streets or reserves to reflect the Clarence Valley’s history.

Social planning

- Social impact assessment should be carried out as part of the rezoning process for any expansion of residential areas and new areas. Any issues identified in a Social Plan need to be addressed at all levels of the settlement hierarchy.

Residential quality

- Opportunities should be provided for easy access to public natural vegetation areas and waterways. For example, areas of community-managed native vegetation with foot and bicycle paths could link clusters of houses and form a local greenbelt. Community Titles subdivision could be encouraged to enable management of such areas.
- Settlements should aim to provide a high level of residential quality based on community identity, protection of landscape biodiversity and scenic values, and provision of good access to local and sub-regional services.
- Settlements should aim to encourage energy and water conservation, promote energy-efficient housing, and encourage self-sufficiency in water and power provision.
- Settlements should aim for landscaping, sign posting and the like to give a distinct sense of place, aiming to foster a sense of belonging and community pride.
- Urban and village settlements should encourage a range of uses in suitable locations through local planning controls.
- Settlements should aim to foster community identity by maintaining and strengthening community facilities such as halls, community gardens, heritage resources and public open space.

Regional greenbelt-open space

- A local/sub-regional greenbelt network should be maintained within and between settlements, for the purposes of:
 - supporting biodiversity;
 - protecting wildlife corridors;
 - maintaining scenic values;
 - providing recreational opportunities; and
 - defining and separating settlements
 and should link in with any regional greenbelt network.

Contributions

- All urban and rural residential development should be subject to plans requiring a contribution to the true costs of service provision and maintenance.

Density

The North Coast Urban Planning Strategy seeks to optimise residential densities in order to minimise urban sprawl, thus improving accessibility and infrastructure provision. In the city and towns, land use density in core urban CBD locations should be maximised to contribute to this aim. Similarly, village density should be higher near the 'heart' area and lower towards the periphery. A mix of lot sizes should be provided in all urban areas, and neighbourhood dwelling densities should generally increase overall. Specific density targets may not be appropriate in

many circumstances. Specific site conditions and urban design matters are important in identifying desired densities. Minimisation of urban sprawl and creation of a compact settlement pattern are inherent features of the adopted settlement scenario (section 4.2).

5 **SPECIFIC AREA STRATEGIES**

This section of the strategy details the specific implications of the settlement strategy on an individual area basis

5.3 SOUTH GRAFTON

1996 population 6,460

2016 population about 7,250

Future residential development will comprise urban infill and small peripheral extensions.

Sensitive revitalisation of the South Grafton CBD, including provision of a quality, competitive supermarket would reduce pressure on the bridge and provide a more efficient service to valley residents living south of the river. The population data at Figure A.11 of the Appendices indicates a substantial population south of the river which may represent a catchment for more retail services in South Grafton. This will also enhance South Grafton's role, further defining its own history and sense of identity. Any further commercial development should only be in the area bounded by Ryan Street, Bent Street, Cowan Street and the Clarence River

END