



Ordinary Council

LATE REPORTS

Business Paper

date of meeting: Wednesday 21 July 2021

location: Council Chambers
17 Burrawan Street
Port Macquarie

time: 5:30pm

Community Vision

A sustainable high quality of life for all

Community Mission

Building the future together
People Place Health Education Technology

Council's Corporate Values

- ★ Sustainability
- ★ Excellence in Service Delivery
- ★ Consultation and Communication
- ★ Openness and Accountability
- ★ Community Advocacy

Community Themes

- ★ Leadership and Governance
- ★ Your Community Life
- ★ Your Business and Industry
- ★ Your Natural and Built Environment

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Items of Business

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4 Your Natural and Built Environment

What we are trying to achieve

A connected, sustainable, accessible community and environment that is protected now and into the future.

What the result will be

We will have:

- Effective management and maintenance of essential water, waste and sewer infrastructure
- A community that is prepared for natural events and climate change
- Sustainable and environmentally sensitive development outcomes that consider the impact on the natural environment
- Accessible transport network for our communities
- Infrastructure provision and maintenance that meets community expectations and needs
- Well planned communities that are linked to encourage and manage growth
- Accessible and protected waterways, foreshores, beaches and bushlands
- An environment that is protected and conserved for future generations
- Renewable energy options that are understood and accessible by the community

How we will get there

- 4.1 Provide (appropriate) infrastructure and services including water cycle management, waste management, and sewer management
- 4.2 Aim to minimise the impact of natural events and climate change, for example, floods, bushfires and coastal erosion
- 4.3 Facilitate development that is compatible with the natural and built environment
- 4.4 Plan for integrated transport systems that help people get around and link our communities
- 4.5 Plan for integrated and connected communities across the Port Macquarie-Hastings area
- 4.6 Restore and protect natural areas
- 4.7 Provide leadership in the development of renewable energy opportunities
- 4.8 Increase awareness of issues affecting our environment, including the preservation of flora and fauna



Item: 12.08

Subject: INTEGRATED STRATEGIC TRANSPORT NETWORK PLAN UPDATE

Presented by: Infrastructure, Dan Bylsma

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. In relation to roads infrastructure projects, allocate the highest priority to:
 - a) Short Term
 - i) Oxley Highway Upgrades - Wrights Road to Lake Road
 - ii) Duplication of Lake Road West - Ocean Drive to Chestnut Road
 - iii) Boundary Street Duplications and Upgrade
 - iv) King Creek Road / Oxley Highway intersection upgrade
 - v) Houston Mitchell Drive / Pacific Highway intersection initial safety upgrades
 - b) Short to Medium Term
 - i) Upgrade and sealing Lorne Road - Tipperary Road to Playfords Road
 - ii) Duplication of John Oxley Drive - Kingfisher Drive to The Ruins Way
 - iii) Duplication of Hastings River Drive - Hughes Place to Boundary Street
 - iv) Upgrade of Lighthouse Road, including pedestrian and cyclist upgrades
 - v) Alternative access to the Health and Education precinct, including additional access to the Hospital car park
 - vi) Oxley Highway / Pacific Highway intersection upgrades
 - vii) Boundary Street / Hastings River Drive intersection upgrade
 - c) Medium Term
 - i) Oxley Highway Upgrades - east facing ramps at Carlie Jane Drive and off ramp at John Oxley Drive
 - ii) Ocean Drive / Hastings River Drive corridor upgrades - in line with Corridor Strategy recommendations, including upgrades through Lake Cathie and Bonny Hills
 - iii) Houston Mitchell Drive / Pacific Highway intersection grade separation upgrade
 - iv) Alternative flood free access to the Airport
 - v) Upgrade and sealing of Stoney Creek Road, including upgrades to the Pembroke Road / Stoney Creek Road intersection
 - d) Long Term
 - i) Oxley Highway / Sovereign Drive / John Oxley Drive intersection upgrade
 - ii) Upgrades to Beechwood Road, including raising the Yippin Creek Bridge

- iii) Improved east-west connections from Ocean Drive to Oxley Highway
 - iv) Improved connections in the Thrumster - Fernbank Creek and Sancrox area in line with predicted development
 - e) Continuous
 - i) Improvements to public transport services
 - ii) Improvements to cycling and shared path infrastructure
 - iii) Improvements to footpath and pedestrian infrastructure
- 2. Note planning and investigation projects for finalising transport upgrade priorities and indicative timeframes are still ongoing and there may be small changes to the above list.
- 3. Acknowledge that the above list is very ambitious and that if other significant projects are to be added as priorities, currently listed projects would have to be deferred.
- 4. Note that other significant transport asset renewal projects will also need to be delivered in line with asset management principles, such as road resurfacing and bridge replacement/upgrade projects.
- 5. Note that several of the listed priorities are on the State road network and works cannot be undertaken by Council.
- 6. Request the Chief Executive Officer continue to work closely with Transport for NSW to ensure delivery of priorities on the State road network.
- 7. Request the Chief Executive Officer provide a report to the March 2022 Council Meeting with the final draft Joint Integrated Transport Network Plan for public consultation.
- 8. Continue to engage with the State and Federal Government via local Members of Parliament to keep them informed with respect to transport network priorities and likely funding pressure points.

Executive Summary

Council is taking steps towards the development of a Joint Integrated Strategic Transport Network Plan. Council is working closely with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to analyse and assess the road network to gain an understanding of the relative priority of the key upgrades required. It is acknowledged that State roads will need to be included to ensure the relative priorities for the whole transport network are aligned and works implemented accordingly for the benefit of the community.

A comprehensive high level understanding of road network priorities through other traffic studies and assessments will provide the framework for a Joint Integrated Strategic Transport Network Plan.

The Plan will set out the short, medium and long term priorities as well as highlighting continued focus on transport mode shift to ensure all aspects of transport planning and ultimately the required funding priorities are aligned across all levels of Government. It should be noted that while the analysis of priorities is finalised in the coming months there may be minor changes and a number of small projects added, particularly around intersection upgrades to support growth and to respond to safety concerns.

Indicative timeframes for the planning horizons are:

- Short term: 0 - 5 years

- Short to Medium term: 5 to 10 years
- Medium term: 10 to 20 years
- Long term: 20+ years

Discussion

Demand on the road network changes as an area grows, seeing increases in the volume of road users as well as the pattern of travel and user types. Constructing new roads and upgrading existing roads ensures that the efficiency, capacity and safety of the network is maintained and where required improved.

Port Macquarie is identified as a Regional City in the NSW Governments North Coast Regional Plan and is one of the fastest growing regional centres in NSW. Continued growth is expected to see our population reach an estimated 112,000 by the year 2040, an increase of approximately 30% over the next 20 years.

The Port Macquarie road network has limited capacity to continue to facilitate and respond to a fast rate of growth. Critical elements of the network are already experiencing reduced levels of service, as identified in a range of previous studies and traffic assessments. This limited capacity is centred on the Oxley Highway, Ocean Drive, Lake Road and Hastings River Drive areas and the need to facilitate effective east-west and north-south movements and improved access to key areas. This will have impacts on the region's economic development and the level of service provided to the community as Port Macquarie continues to grow. Currently funded network upgrades are only likely to provide minimal additional capacity in the short term.

Development of a Joint Integrated Strategic Transport Network Plan will provide the community with an aligned approach across all levels of Government to support the strategic prioritisation and timing of road upgrades.

Several key planning projects are currently underway to analyse and investigate the road network to understand the relative priorities and identify any other upgrades that may be required that are not currently planned.

The three key planning projects currently underway are:

- Oxley Highway Stage 2 Corridor Investigations - Undertaken by TfNSW investigating the Oxley Highway from just west of the Pacific Highway interchange into Port Macquarie
- Hastings River Drive, Ocean Drive and Kendall Road (MR538 and MR600) Corridor investigations and strategy development
- Port Macquarie Transport Network Improvements Planning Project - Detailed analysis of the Port Macquarie road network

These projects all build on the work previously done as part of the 2018 Local Government Area Wide Traffic Study.

The outcome of these investigation and planning projects will assist in developing a detailed Joint Integrated Strategic Transport Network Plan to cover the whole road network, both Local and State Roads.

At the 17 March 2021 Ordinary Council Meeting, it was resolved:

13.01 NOTICE OF MOTION - TRAFFIC NETWORK

RESOLVED: *Hawkins/Pinson*

That Council:

1. *Note the rapid growth in population of the Port Macquarie Hastings (PMH) Local Government Area (LGA), with the growth likely to continue at an accelerating rate into the future.*
2. *Note the impact this is having on many aspects of the liveability of the PMH LGA, but especially on the region's road network.*
3. *Note that the Pacific Highway and Oxley Highway are critically important major thoroughfares for our local community (key components of our local traffic network), but fall outside Council's area of responsibility for strategic planning and funding.*
4. *Urgently seek alignment and support from the State Government to adopt an Integrated Strategic Network "Masterplan" approach to upgrading the road network for the community focusing on priority projects as below (for example), irrespective as to whether they are Local or State roads, notwithstanding the fact that almost all these projects will likely require significant funding contributions from State and / or Federal Governments.*
 - *Oxley Highway Upgrade - Wrights Road to Lake Road*
 - *Lake Road duplication and upgrade - Ocean Drive to Oxley Highway*
 - *John Oxley Drive duplication and upgrade - Wrights Road to The Ruins Way*
 - *Pacific Highway intersection upgrades*
 - *Boundary Street duplication and upgrade*
 - *Alternative access into the Health and Education Precinct*
 - *Alternative access to the Airport*
 - *Improved east/west connections from Ocean Drive to Oxley Highway*
 - *King Creek Road / Oxley Highway intersection*
 - *Ocean Drive duplication (through Lake Cathie)*
 - *Revisit the Bonny Hills bypass route selection*
5. *Request the Chief Executive Officer to prioritise a Councillor / staff workshop to develop the network planning further, confirm the individual projects within a staged/phased framework and develop a community engagement plan with Local, State and Federal Government representatives to seek their input and support.*
6. *Develop a Joint Local Government / State Government "Integrated Strategic Road Network Masterplan" outlining the strategic priority projects and indicative timeframes, with a report back to Council in July 2021 to outline the Plan.*
7. *Engage with the Federal Government so that (principally via local members) they are at all times well informed and current with respect to Council's priorities and likely funding pressure points.*

CARRIED: 6/0

FOR: *Alley, Griffiths, Hawkins, Intemann, Pinson and Turner*

AGAINST: Nil

This report specifically addresses point 6 in the above resolution.

While planning analysis is not fully complete, a comprehensive high level understanding of the priorities has been gained, providing the framework for a Joint Integrated Strategic Transport Network Plan. As the respective investigation and planning projects are finalised, a detailed Joint Integrated Strategic Transport Network Plan can be produced.

The key priorities, as currently identified are:

- Short term priorities
 1. Oxley Highway Upgrades - Wrights Road to Lake Road
 2. Duplication of Lake Road West - Ocean Drive to Chestnut Road
 3. Boundary Street Duplications and upgrade
 4. King Creek Road / Oxley Highway intersection upgrade
 5. Houston Mitchell Drive / Pacific Highway intersection initial safety upgrades
- Short to Medium term priorities
 1. Upgrade and sealing Lorne Road - Tipperary Road to Playfords Road
 2. Duplication of John Oxley Drive - Kingfisher Drive to The Ruins Way
 3. Duplication of Hastings River Drive - Hughes Place to Boundary Street
 4. Upgrade of Lighthouse Road, including pedestrian and cyclist upgrades
 5. Alternative access to the Health and Education precinct, including additional access to the Hospital car park
 6. Oxley Highway / Pacific Highway intersection upgrades
 7. Boundary Street / Hastings River Drive intersection upgrade
- Medium term priorities
 1. Oxley Highway Upgrades - east facing ramps at Carlie Jane Drive
 2. Ocean Drive / Hastings River Drive corridor upgrades - in line with Corridor Strategy recommendations, including upgrades through Lake Cathie and Bonny Hills
 3. Houston Mitchell Drive / Pacific Highway intersection grade separation upgrade

4. Alternative flood free access to the Airport
 5. Upgrade and sealing of Stoney Creek Road, including upgrades to the Pembroke Road / Stoney Creek Road intersection
 6. Upgrades to Beechwood Road, including raising the Yippen Creek Bridge
- Long term priorities
 1. Oxley Highway / Sovereign Drive / John Oxley Drive intersection upgrade
 2. Improved east-west connections from Ocean Drive to Oxley Highway
 3. Improved connections in the Thrumster - Fernbank Creek and Sancrox area in line with predicted development
 - Continuous priorities
 1. Improvements to public transport services
 2. Improvements to cycling and shared path infrastructure
 3. Improvements to footpath and pedestrian infrastructure

A Joint State Government / Local Government Integrated Strategic Transport Network Plan is critical to ensuring all aspects of transport planning and ultimately the required funding priorities are aligned.

In line with point 4 of the above resolution, a letter was sent to TfNSW (attached for reference) on 1 June 2021 inviting them to work with Council to develop a Joint Integrated Strategic Road Network Masterplan. Council is currently awaiting a response from TfNSW. In the interim, Council is continuing with a number of actions in response to the above resolution.

A meeting was held with representatives from TfNSW on 25 June 2021 as part of recurring meetings for the Joint Transport Planning Advisory Group (JTPAG), which was convened in late 2020. This group replaced the former Regional Transport Infrastructure Steering Group (RTISG), which was originally convened in 2017 to convert the Ocean Drive Duplication Steering Group to a broader focus on the strategic infrastructure projects within the Local Government Area.

The intent for the JTPAG was to enable strategic discussion of transport issues for the wider Port Macquarie-Hastings region. Discussion in the recent JTPAG meeting covered various strategic transport initiatives, including:

- Oxley Highway Corridor (Pacific Highway to Gordon Street), including;
 - Wrights Road to Lake Road intersections
 - John Oxley Drive Upgrade
- Port Macquarie Transport Network Planning Project (PMTNPP)
- Ocean Drive Duplication

- Highway Service Centre development
- Houston Mitchell Drive/Pacific Highway intersection safety improvements
- Alternative Access to the Health and Education Precinct (HEP)
- King Creek Road/Oxley Highway Intersection

The intent of the discussions was for an integrated approach to transport planning to ensure that these projects are coordinated and prioritised so they achieve the greatest benefit for the community, regardless of road ownership and hierarchy.

Council are awaiting the outcomes of recent community consultation undertaken by TfNSW regarding the Oxley Highway, and in particular, options for the Wrights Road roundabout and Lake Road intersections.

Council is continuing with development of the PMTNPP, with an initial analysis of scenarios for 2030 and 2040 including committed and likely works, currently being refined. The PMTNPP will be vital for the development of a Joint Integrated Strategic Transport Network Plan. A key deliverable of the PMTNPP Phase 1, will be a Network Plan of both Council and TfNSW road projects, with prioritisation based on the greatest benefit to the community.

The initial analysis of alternate access into the HEP has also been undertaken as part of the PMTNPP, and presented to TfNSW.

In relation to the idea of a Bonny Hills Bypass, as outlined as an example strategic project in the March 2021 resolution, this new road link was analysed in the Area Wide Traffic Study. The analysis showed that while around two thirds of the traffic is likely to use the bypass, the travel time saving is marginal at around 50 seconds. It is therefore recommended that investment be prioritised towards upgrading the existing Ocean Drive corridor through Bonny Hills in line with the recommendations that will come from the Ocean Drive / Hastings River Drive Corridor Strategy.

Options

Council have the option to resolve in line with the recommendation or in some other manner.

Community Engagement and Internal Consultation

No public engagement or consultation was specifically undertaken in relation to this report.

A planning workshop and discussion was held with the Port Macquarie Transport Network Community Consultative Committee on 8 June 2021 in relation to the priorities for upgrades across the transport network.

A Councillor workshop, in line with point 5 of the 17 March Ordinary Council Meeting, was held with all Councillors and Mayor on 9 June 2021 confirming the priority projects and the respective timeframe horizons. This workshop followed a Councillor briefing on the Transport Forward Works Program held with all Councillors and Mayor on 05 May 2021.

Internal consultation has been undertaken with:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Director Infrastructure
- Group Manager Infrastructure Planning
- Transport and Stormwater Engineering Planning Manager

Planning and Policy Implications

There are no policy implications in relation to this report.

If the recommendation is adopted, there are a number of planning implications in relation to this report. The development of Council's Long Term Financial Plan will have to consider the listed priority Council projects to determine the appropriate funding sources.

When future Operational Plans are developed they will need to include the relevant planning and design projects to progress the listed priority projects so they are 'shovel ready' in order to allow grant funding applications to be developed and submitted as required.

Financial and Economic Implications

There are significant financial and economic implications in relation to this report. As stated above significant external funding support from the both the State and Federal Governments will be required to deliver the priority projects.

Council may also have to reprioritise other projects in order to deliver the listed priority transport infrastructure projects. Reviewing other sources of funding will also have to be undertaken, including the sale of unused/underutilised assets and further borrowings.

In terms of economic implications, there will significant and sustained positive economic implications for the local and regional economy with the delivery of the listed projects.

Attachments

1.  Letter to Transport for NSW