



BELLINGEN SHIRE

Growth Management Strategy



AUGUST 2007



MANAGEMENT
ENGINEERING
ENVIRONMENT



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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Bellingen Shire is located on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales, halfway between Sydney and Brisbane. The Shire is characterised by some of the finest natural and cultural landscapes in the region and is one of only a few locations on the North Coast to combine river valley and plateau landscapes. It is the combination of these landscapes which gives the Shire such an intrinsic appeal and makes it so attractive to residents and tourists alike.

Bellingen Shire Council has accepted the challenge to initiate long-term strategic planning towards the achievement of ecologically, socially and economically sustainable development in partnership with the community.

The strategy follows the long-term vision adopted by Council in its 2005 - 2008 Management Plan.

“A Shire of outstanding natural beauty, scenic rural landscapes and attractive towns and villages with a distinctive local character.

A prosperous and cohesive community enjoying a variety of satisfying lifestyles, a wide range of employment opportunities, and high quality infrastructure, services and facilities.”

The preparation of a set of specific strategies for the Shire will help to achieve the stated vision of the Council.

This vision can be achieved by the adoption of the growth management philosophy and planning strategies dedicated to providing environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development and prosperity for the Shire whilst maintaining the existing character of the Shire's settlements. This philosophy and accompanying strategies are outlined in this document.

1.2 Purpose of Strategy

The purpose of the Bellingen Shire Growth Management Strategy is to:

- ▶ To provide an integrated framework for Council decisions relating to planning and services for the future development of the Bellingen Shire up to 2026.
- ▶ To provide a mechanism for community input into the vision of the future urban development for the Bellingen Shire and communicate to the local community the outline of expected future urban development in the Shire and how this development will occur up to 2026.
- ▶ To analyse the supply and demand for land for residential, rural-residential and associated urban purposes.
- ▶ To satisfy State Government requirements for residential and rural-residential land release strategies prior to any significant land releases.

1.3 Context

The Bellingen Shire is located on the Mid North Coast of NSW. The surrounding local government areas are Coffs Harbour City Council, Clarence Valley Council (formerly Pristine Waters), Armidale-Dumaresq Council and Nambucca Shire Council.



It has an estimated 2004 population of 12,966 people (Department of Health, 2004) who live in a range of towns and villages as well as rural areas. The Shire's physical attributes and small population make it a desirable place for people to live.

The Shire covers an area of 1,603 km² and consists of three broad topographical areas:

- ▶ the Seaboard around Urunga, Mylestom and Repton,
- ▶ the Valley of the Bellinger and Kalang Rivers; and
- ▶ the Plateau west of Dorrigo

The topography ranges from coastal plains and rolling foothills to steep mountainous terrain including precipitous ridges falling from the edge of the great escarpment. West of the escarpment the landform is primarily tablelands. The highest elevation is 1,562 m at Point Lookout at the western boundary of the Shire, within the New England National Park.

Bellingen is primarily a rural area with large tracts of national park, nature reserve and state forests. It contains a number of towns, villages and small settlements. These include

- ▶ Bellingen
- ▶ Urunga
- ▶ Dorrigo
- ▶ Repton
- ▶ Mylestom
- ▶ Fernmount/ Raleigh

Figure 1-1 illustrates the layout of the Bellingen Shire in relation to surrounding Council areas.

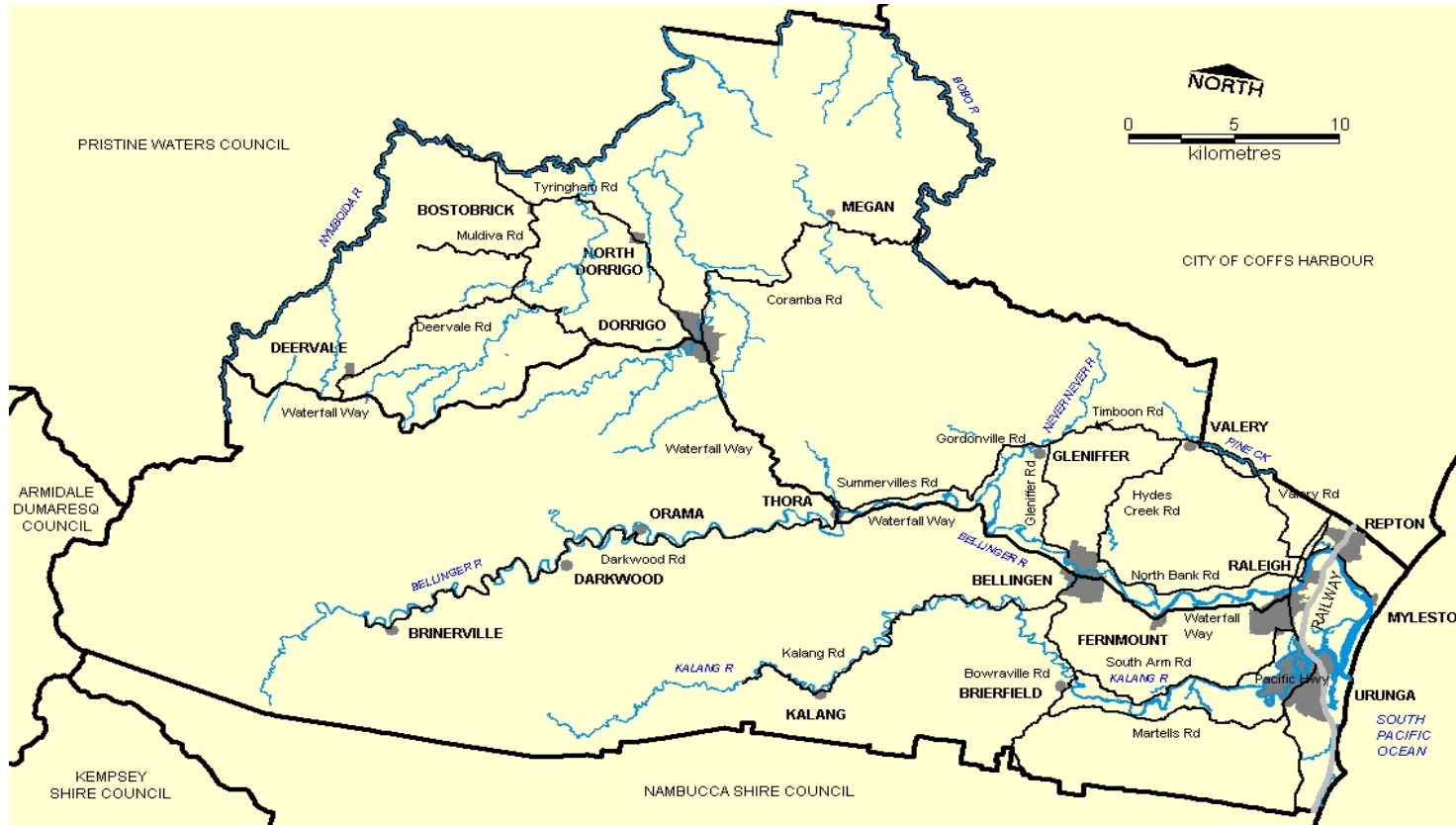


Figure 1-1 Bellinghen Shire



1.4 Methodology

This Growth Management Strategy has been prepared following a review of the Growth Management Study and draft Strategy prepared by Edge Land Planning in 2003. The Study and accompanying draft Strategy considered the following issues relevant to the Bellingen Shire:

- ▶ Physical and environmental characteristics;
- ▶ Social profile;
- ▶ Economic factors;
- ▶ Settlement profile;
- ▶ Planning policy framework;
- ▶ Ecologically sustainable development;
- ▶ Community consultation; and
- ▶ Conservation and development issues.

This Strategy has considered the issues identified by the Growth Management Study and Draft Strategy and has been supplemented with additional community and stakeholder input and updated to reflect current NSW planning reforms.

1.5 Community Involvement

Since the community consultation undertaken as part of the Growth Management Study and draft Strategy in 2003, Council has received over 190 submissions in relation to the Growth Management Strategy.

The review of these submissions together with additional media releases, the distribution of newsletters and public workshops in Bellingen, Urunga and Dorrigo have contributed to the outcomes of this Strategy.

Over 150 additional responses were received during the preparation of this Strategy.

Further details regarding the results of the community consultation are outlined throughout this Strategy and detailed in the Growth Management Strategy Community Consultation Report, dated September 2005, prepared by GHD.