



23 February 2009

Mr Peter Gesling, General Manager,  
Port Stephens Council,  
P.O. Box 42,  
Raymond Terrace 2324.

**Re: Proposed Working Group to clarify population Projections and Sustainability Criteria  
for Port Stephens Futures Project**

Dear Mr Gesling,

In my covering letter for our Association's submission on the Futures Project dated 21 January 2009, I advised of Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association's strong support for this initiative and our willingness to assist in the further work required to develop the Futures Strategy for our LGA.

TRRA was very pleased to be offered an opportunity to discuss its submission with representatives of Council's Sustainable Planning staff on 16 February. In the course of this meeting, TRRA members were able to elaborate on their visions for the future of the LGA and in particular, for the Tomaree Peninsula.

Further, it was agreed that the fundamental issues that must be addressed are the projections for future population to be accommodated in the Tomaree Peninsula and the related impact on sustainability when planning for any expected increases. The discussions on 16 February indicated that there are quite significant inconsistencies in the various population projections that, in some degree, arise from differing interpretations of geographical boundaries. Another matter raised was the capacity of the locality to accommodate projected populations having regard to available land, sustainability criteria, infrastructure and service requirements.

A consensus emerged that these issues needed more detailed work to assess the basis for the various projections and to address the issue of sustainability. To this end, it was proposed that a small working group involving Council's Sustainable Planning staff and representatives of TRRA should be formed to research these matters and to address any current inconsistencies. It was also suggested that other interests such as EcoNetwork could be involved. We have contacted Mr Darrell Dawson, Secretary of EcoNetwork, who indicated that they are also very interested in these matters and would welcome an opportunity to participate in a working group.

TRRA supports this proposal as a means of clarifying issues that are at the very foundation of any Futures Strategy.

Should you wish to proceed with the establishment of this working group, TRRA has members with the appropriate expertise who are able and willing to participate. We appreciate that the timelines are tight and would respond quickly.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Young,  
Chairman,  
Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association  
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CC. David Broyd, Group Manager Sustainable Planning