



<p>SLEP Review Group          Alan Burrows          Convenor          02) 4441 8855</p>
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## **Letter to SLEP Review Group Members**

We are appealing to all SLEP Review Group members to take immediate action to achieve Council agreement for important changes to the Draft Shoalhaven LEP.

Please contact your Ward Councillors to arrange to meet to discuss the issues and seek their support for the changes the community is seeking for the entire Shoalhaven Region and for local communities.

The Review Group steering committee has gained the support of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and his Department for several changes considered to be of State and Regional strategic significance. However we have not been successful so far from our meeting with the Mayor, Councillor Gash on 19 October 2012 and our presentation to Council Development Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2013 in gaining a recognition that the existing Draft SLEP2013 does not represent the best interests of the whole Shoalhaven community.

Council has is yet to consider issues that we raised with the Minister/Department, which they have determined are matters for Council to decide on merit after discussion with the community.

Therefore it is important that we explain to new Councillors why we consider that the changes we seek are so important. The Shoalhaven Local Environment Plan will shape the future of the Shoalhaven for decades as has the current SLEP1985. It is a document that specifies for the next 20 years, where particular land uses should be located and the broad standards for development.

We consider it should be about maintaining the character of our towns and villages, rural landscapes and prime agricultural lands and food security, protecting our natural and cultural environment, whilst sustaining tourism, the mainstay of our economy and our biggest employer and facilitating sustainable urban growth and economic diversity. It is a strategic document serving the entire community, not a plan dictated by the interests of developers.

### **Why is it important for member groups to act now?**

- The draft Shoalhaven LEP will go on exhibition in April 2013, for a very short time, possibly 4 weeks, leaving little time to put your case to individual Councillors and to prepare submissions. This will be the final consultation period.
- It is better to discuss the issues ASAP. Councillors should be prepared to consider your concerns before they firm up their views in discussion with other Councillors.
- Council staff will be conducting a meeting for all Councillors towards the end of March to brief them on the issues that the SLEP Review Group has raised.
- Council has also agreed to hold a forum meeting for Councillors, SLEP Review Group members, CCB representatives and Council staff to discuss the SLEP Review Group issues. This gathering will be held early in the Exhibition period eg April.

**Please note the Council/CCB meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March is a separate meeting, not specifically focused on the Draft SLEP2013, albeit it will be an opportunity to raise issues of meaningful consultation, transparent decision making and decisions to be made on merit.**

- Staff will provide Councillors with a package of background information to assist, with these meetings. This material will include Staff recommendations made to the 2012 Special Development Committee meetings, which the previous Councillors rejected.

Huskisson and Woollamia Community Voice have successfully engaged with the community and gain greater feedback about their concerns on significant issues; (Note: Groups may need a Council permit or shop keepers agreement, to conduct a street stall.)

- There is still a significant portion of the community that have little or no knowledge of the way the Draft SLEP2013 will impact their lives
- The most effective way to communicate / engage our communities is to hold a Display at a cross road or corner in the centre of the village / town on a Saturday morning when people are relaxed and simply enjoying the opportunity to wander and shop.
- Simple display .. on a Board or a number of tables with one or two informed people attending each display available to answer questions.
- There is no need to “sell” an issue, simply provide factual information and allow people to come to their own realisation of the probable impact of the Draft SLEP2013 unless it is changed.
- Then encourage informed people to ... make direct approaches to their local Councillors ... sign a petition ... make a submission during the Exhibition period ... write a letter to the editor of SCR ... attend and support their local CCB
- BUT do it NOW ... the attached papers provide sufficient detail .... Plus a little thought on how these Shoalhaven wide issues will impact your local area
- An additional approach is to organise a public meeting as a means of raising issues of concern.

The Steering Committee has prepared the attached summary sheets to assist you with each of the major issues. These are in effect a Template of Shoalhaven wide issues and include;

#### **Requested changes to**

- 1. Aims.**
- 2. Land Use**
- 3. HOB**
- 4. Environmental safeguards**
- 5. Due Process**

**Each paper will also canvass ....Reasons for changes. .. and .... Background.**

**We encourage you to add your own local concerns and examples.**

**You could provide these summaries to the individual Councillors.**

The issues of concern that the SLEP Review Group has been pursuing over the part 4 years are;

- Increasing Height of Building Limits from 2 storeys to 11m for Residential zones R 1, R 3 and R 5 (applied inconsistently) and Rural and Environment Zones.

- Land uses in Rural and Environment zones, incompatible with the zone objectives.
- Reductions in environment protections compared to the current SLEP and strategic plans.
- SLEP Aims that will enhance the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Shoalhaven, especially given the natural, cultural and scenic qualities of our coastal and rural areas, the unique small scale character of our towns and villages and our reliance on tourism as the region's major industry.
- Council decision making to be transparent, subsequent to appropriate consultation and based on merit that is defensible.

It is important that we continue to request that all these changes are made to benefit the entire region.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Burrows  
Convenor

For and on behalf of  
Steering Committee  
SLEP Review Group