



Settlement character and design

BACKGROUND

The Region's towns and villages have developed in response to its unique natural and cultural environment. The design and character of these settlements, which provide for housing, employment and recreational opportunities and a range of associated services and facilities, influence how individuals and communities interact and contribute to the places' identity.

Providing guidelines to maintain this character while ensuring appropriate design standards are applied will result in high quality development that is responsive to the Region's climate, natural features, landscape and character.

As the Region continues to grow, it will be necessary for the character of the area to evolve to reflect other demands such as the need for jobs, better services and the need to provide a range of housing types appropriate to the location.

This evolution should not be at the expense of the underlying coastal values of the Region, and should help to define and enhance those values by offering greater opportunities to preserve and protect important environmental and scenic landscapes. Increased densities within key centres and towns will help to achieve these goals.

With a careful design approach there is the potential for councils to consider higher densities and review their height limits in the major regional centres. Some key advantages of having a taller building precinct in the main business area of a major regional centre are:

- reinforcing public perception of where the main business centre is relative to other neighbourhood business centres
- reinforcing investor perception of a centre's status relative

to other settlement in the Region, thereby attracting further investment. This in turn increases the level of services and consolidates the centre's regional status

- the potential for residential accommodation above commercial space, which can bring a higher level of vibrancy to the centre
- a greater number of people and business in the most active parts of a centre without consuming additional land
- achievement of significant economies-of-scale in the provision of basic services such as roads, drainage, water supply and sewerage.

OUTCOMES

New development will include a range of well designed housing, within easy access to services and facilities, preferably in walking

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distance. This will result in better places to live and attractive, adaptable and self-reliant settlements that foster a strong sense of community.

The built form of new development will reflect the existing positive design and character, streetscape and landscape setting of the settlement and be based on Neighbourhood Planning Principles. Building heights, which will be established to reflect the future form and function of the settlement, will manage visual impacts in urban and coastal areas.

A network of open space within and between settlements will cater for recreation, nature conservation and social interaction.

Conservation of the environmental heritage of the Region will be promoted, including historic townscapes and places of heritage significance.

ACTIONS

- Councils should prepare desired character statements for their localities that include provisions (through a development control plan) to ensure that new development enhances the desired character.
- New buildings should be designed to maximise adaptability to meet changing demographic needs and alternative future uses.
- New development should be designed to respond to the subtropical climate of the Region through best practice in water and energy efficient design, and use of landscaping and building materials.
- New development should be designed to reflect and enhance the natural, cultural, visual and built character and values of the local and regional landscape.
- New and changing urban areas should provide access to natural features such as coastal foreshore and riparian land in a manner that is consistent with the maintenance of their ecological values.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PRINCIPLES

- A range of land uses to provide the right mix of houses, jobs, open space, recreational space and green space.
- Easy access (including public transport where viable) to major town centres with a full range of shops, recreational facilities and services along with smaller village centres and neighbourhood shops.
- Jobs available locally and regionally, reducing the demand for transport services.
- Streets and suburbs planned so that residents can walk to shops for their daily needs.
- A wide range of housing choices to provide for different needs and different incomes. Traditional houses on their own block will be available along with smaller, lower maintenance homes, units and terraces for older people and young singles or couples.
- Conservation lands in and around the development sites, to help protect biodiversity and provide open space for recreation.



- New and changing settlement areas should incorporate open space that is accessible to the public, which provides opportunities for recreation, nature conservation, social interaction, and for visual enhancement and amenity.
- Village centres are to be multi-functional, mixed-use (including residential) areas catering for diverse community needs.
- Local environmental plans will set building heights in urban areas that reflect the landscape character, function and hierarchy of the future settlement and visual and cultural amenity of its location.
- Local environmental plans for areas subject to the NSW Coastal Policy (NSW Government 1997) will incorporate provisions to achieve the outcomes of the Coastal Policy in respect to overshadowing. Generally, development on urban land in

Tweed Heads, Kingscliff, Byron Bay and Ballina will not result in the beach or adjoining open space being overshadowed before 3.00 p.m. midwinter (standard time) or 6.30 p.m. midsummer (daylight savings time). For other beaches or waterfront open space in the Region, development will not result in overshadowing before 4.00 p.m. midwinter or 7.00 p.m. midsummer (daylight saving time).

- Local environmental plans and development control plans (and subsequent land release development) will be consistent with the Settlement Planning Guidelines, and the Government's *Coastal Design Guidelines for NSW (2003)* as applicable.



EMPLOYMENT LAND MAP



- Major Regional Centre
- Developing Major Regional Centre
- Major Town
- Town
- Village - Inland
- Village - Coastal

- Region Boundary
- State Boundary
- Highway
- Main Roads
- Rail Line
- Rivers and Creeks

- Employment Lands
- Existing Urban Footprint