COUNCIL OF CAMDEN

CAMDEN
STRUCTURE PLAN

Prepared by the Governance and Outcomes Division

Camden Council
37 John Street
CAMDEN NSW 2750

Adopted by Council 24 July, 2000
Amended 14 April, 2003
## Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Foreword</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Background to Structure Plan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Need for a structure plan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Engagement of Consultants</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Preparation of the Camden Structure Plan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Relationship to the Strategic Plan – Camden 2025</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Public Exhibition / Consultation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Camden Structure Plan</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) A Containment Strategy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Boundaries to Urban Development</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Urban Form</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Accessibility</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Agriculture</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Environmental Systems</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) Rural-Residential Development</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Employment Lands</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j) Trade Offs</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k) Population Limits</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Further Work Required</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Rural Lands Study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Vegetation Management Plan</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A Dynamic Plan</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Amendments to Structure Plan</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Central Hills Lands (adopted by Council 14 April 2003)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Structure Plan Map (as amended)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Foreword

The local government area of Camden has experienced dramatic increases in population over recent years. Between 1991 and 1996 Camden's population increased by 29%. Such growth has been generally confined to the new urban release areas of Narellan Vale, Mount Annan, Currans Hill and Harrington Park.

Fortunately for Camden the predominant natural environmental qualities, rural character and heritage charm have remained. Of utmost concern now to Council is the nature and extent of future urban growth and the likely impact of such growth on the preceding qualities.

With no definitive state government planning strategy for the area beyond essentially the current Metropolitan Urban Release Program, Camden Council has chosen a proactive approach in determining a development strategy that will reflect the area’s unique circumstances.

In mid 1998 Council commissioned planning consultants, Don Fox Planning Pty. Ltd., to prepare an area wide Structure Plan which would provide the basis for Camden’s growth over the next 25 years. The Camden Structure Plan Report was completed in late 1999 and was placed on public exhibition by Council. Included in the Plan were recommendations on which Council could base its development strategy.

During the formal exhibition of the Camden Structure Plan Report a total of 38 submissions were received from both government agencies and individuals. These were subsequently reviewed and a report together with recommendations was presented to Council for its determination at the meeting of 8 May 2000.

Council, in considering the report, felt that the proposed changes were of such a nature that the Amended Plan reflecting the recommendations should be re-exhibited.

An exhibition of the Amended Plan and supporting Council Report was held for 28 days commencing Friday 26 May and extending to Friday 23 June 2000. A total of 18 submissions were received.

Council considered the matter at it’s meeting held on the 24 July 2000 where it resolved to adopt the exhibited plan, subject to some minor amendments. This document represents the Structure Plan as finally amended.

It is also recognised that this Plan will be further revised in the short term as the Rural Lands Strategy and Vegetation Management Plans are finalised.
2. Background to Structure Plan

(a) Need for a Structure Plan

Council in commissioning the Camden Structure Plan exercise sought expressly to develop a local government area wide landuse strategy for the future, based on local circumstances, but having regard to the broader regional context generally.

The Structure Plan sought “to provide a planning framework to the year 2025 which preserves Camden’s unique characteristics while accommodating urban growth”.

Importantly, the Structure Plan was seen as a means of professionally articulating the limits to Camden’s sustainable urban development and providing a template for a sustainable local government area generally. Such a plan was considered to provide the central plank for future planning negotiations with state instrumentalities.

(b) Engagement of Consultants

Council engaged planning consultants, Don Fox Planning Pty. Ltd. to prepare the Camden Structure Report on its behalf and in response to a Council issued brief.

(c) Preparation of the Camden Structure Plan

The consultants (with the assistance of a series of specialist sub consultants), after extensive research and broad ranging community and specific issue consultations, submitted a Draft Structure Plan Report to Council. Such Report represented their professional response to the previously referred to Council brief.

(d) Relationship to the Strategic Plan – Camden 2025

Council during 1999 prepared a comprehensive Strategic Plan which sought to articulate a vision of Camden in the year 2025 and a series of strategies and actions to realise a number of principal underlying objectives and as such realise the 2025 vision.

Final deliberations in respect of the Camden Structure Plan Report occurred at a time when the Strategic Plan was being finalised. As such, the Camden Structure Plan Report was calibrated to advance a landuse strategy for “delivering” the Strategic Plan generally.

(e) Public Exhibition / Consultation

The Camden Structure Plan Report and Strategic Plan were exhibited concurrently for a period extending from 5 October 1999 until 26 November 1999. The concurrent exhibition was pursued as it was considered that the plans were inherently linked and that simultaneous exhibition would assist in reducing any confusion, which may have resulted from independent exhibitions.
The Strategic Plan – Camden 2025 was reported to Council on 13 December 1999 where it was adopted subject to minor amendments.

The Camden Structure Plan was considered by Council on 8 May 2000. Given the proposed nature of amendments emerging from Council’s deliberations of 8 May 2000, it was resolved that the resultant Amended Structure Plan be further publicly exhibited. This took place in May/June 2000 with Council adopting the Plan, subject to some minor amendments on 24 July 2000.

3. The Camden Structure Plan

(a) Introduction

The Camden Structure Plan Report, prepared by consultants, Don Fox Planning Pty. Ltd., provides a solid platform for articulating a Structure Plan for Camden’s future growth, a plan which is consistent with Council’s Strategic Plan – 2025. The salient elements of the Structure Plan are summarised below.

(b) A Containment Strategy

The principal tenet of the Plan is that of urban containment. The basis for such position is founded upon the limitations to the sustainable growth of the Camden LGA.

The Camden Structure Plan Report suggests limited opportunities for residential development, beyond the current designated Urban Development Program (UDP), and low density residential areas. It should be noted that the two UDP areas of Elderslie and Spring Farm are both subject to the resolution of environmental and planning issues. Importantly the emergent Structure Plan is more than an isolated urban containment strategy, it having a strong environmental underpinning.

(c) Boundaries to Urban Development

The proposed boundaries to urban development are reflected in the plan attached as Annexure “A”. Important observations in respect of the proposed boundaries are;

- A strong northern boundary based on the scenic hills is a fundamental underpinning.

- Within the preceding context the following extensions to existing designated urban growth areas are proposed:

  - an extension of the Spring Hill Village having regard to natural landscape sensitivity and clearly founded upon “state of the art” ecologically sustainable development principles.

  - an extension of Harrington Park (known as Harrington Park II) so as to provide limited urban and low density residential opportunities.
Likewise the Orielton site provides limited development opportunities. In both instances development should be pursued in concert with natural corridor and other environmental outcomes. Notionally the areas of possible development are highlighted in the map marked as “Annexure A”.

-urban development of the Marist Brothers land is not proposed. An opportunity may, however, exist for a clustered rural-residential development, which blends with the vegetated areas, is accessed from Turner Road and includes similar development of lands on the northern side of Turner Road. Careful consideration would need to be given as to how the clusters would be serviced.

- A southern boundary needs to be reinforced.

- The Cawdor Valley is not considered to be appropriate for urban development and low density residential development. Limited rural-residential opportunities potentially exist and should be explored as part of the Rural Lands Strategy process. It is also recognised that there is significant remnant vegetation in this area.

- Urbanisation of the Northern Road/South Creek Corridor is not proposed. The future of this area is seen to rest with agriculture and related innovation, the detail of which is to be developed in the yet to be completed Rural Lands Strategy.

(d) Urban Form

- **Existing residential areas**

  Significant consideration underpinned Council’s adopted Residential Strategy in an endeavour to provide for a diversity of dwelling types and to strive to realise State Government inspired density targets. The Strategy is still considered relevant and fundamental to the containment strategy advanced in the Plan. A key element is the sensitive pursuit of diverse forms of alternative accommodation focussed upon the Narellan and Camden Town Centres and the Mount Annan District Centre.

- **Mixed use residential development**:

  The mixed use model is advanced, however given the market responses and existing capital investment, within some areas, it is likely to be a long term prospect. It should also be noted that the mixed use concept is seen as integral to development of the Mount Annan District Centre and the fringes of the Narellan Town Centre. Further, opportunities exist in Spring Farm, but perhaps not adjacent to the Camden By-pass.

- **Urban Design Generally**

  Increased accessibility in future residential developments should be a high priority, as well as the promotion of public transport and alternative transport forms such as cycling and walking.
The range of lot sizes and housing forms should be optimised.

Development of medium density housing and mixed use residential development should recognise Camden’s historical context by emphasising verticality, scale, pedestrian movement and proportions. Housing in the extensions to the existing release areas should be designed in response to the focal spaces, topographic landforms and natural systems and be sympathetic to the established nature of the development.

(e) Accessibility

Future development strategies should aim at making Camden more self-contained, whilst urban design principles should support the relationship with land uses.

Opportunities for mixed-use development shall be promoted. Providing zones and housing forms which will allow for more activities to be conducted within the LGA eg. mixed use zones, housing with studios or close to/built in conjunction with light industrial or commercial floor space. Higher densities are essential to achieving viable public transport.

A rapid bus transit way should initially be provided along Narellan Road connecting Camden and Campbelltown.

Ultimately, a rapid bus transit way should be provided along the F5 connecting with the bus interchange at Liverpool City Station. (Direct connection is available to Parramatta via the planned Liverpool to Parramatta Bus Transit Way).

Connection to Badgally Road as an alternative east-west link is considered inappropriate. The reservation of a corridor in Spring Farm for a possible road connection to the Freeway and beyond to Menangle Road and the Macarthur Centre is promoted. Additionally, the corridor opportunities focussing upon Narellan Road and the Spring Farm link road, currently being examined by the Rail Access Corporation and the Department of Transport should be preserved.

Improvements to accessibility – in Camden shall initially focus on the following:

- The Northern Road realignment/Narellan Road extension.

- The provision of North and South bound ramps to Richardson Road from the Camden Bypass.

- Extension of the Camden Bypass to Camden Valley Way.

- Upgrading of Narellan Road in both directions

- Provision of direct access to the By-pass from the Narellan CBD

- Provision of more direct links to Smeaton Grange.
• Provision of more direct access to Harrington Park.

• Upgrading of Camden Valley Way.

• A healthy synergy between more intensive residential and social activities and the provision of efficient, convenient public transport shall be promoted. Also includes community facilities such as childcare and early childhood centre, senior citizens meeting rooms, libraries etc. as well as to the provision of walking and cycling paths.

**f) Agriculture:**

Agriculture contributes to Camden’s unique landscape and character and the local and regional economies and should be fostered as complementing the urban containment strategy. Council should establish a policy platform outlining the importance of the maintenance and fostering of sustainable agricultural activities in Camden. Strategic effect to agricultural policy shall be provided through the Rural Lands Strategy process.

**g) Environmental Systems:**

The importance of environmental systems as an underpinning of the strategy shall be promoted and shall include:

• Integration of significant areas of remnant vegetation into the recommended local open space/vegetation network linking the Mount Annan Botanic Gardens/Nepean River corridor/remnant Cumberland Woodland on the Mater Dei and Harrington Park II properties/Central Hills (subject to consistency with the Vegetation Management Plan).

• Integration of other significant areas of remnant vegetation into local (and possibly regional) open space networks. The development of a regional vegetation network incorporating remnant vegetation in the Catherine Field/Leppington/Bringelly area shall await completion of the Cumberland Plain Endangered Ecological Communities Recovery Plan currently being prepared by NPWS/DUAP/Department of Housing/UDIA.

• Implementation of measures for the conservation, rehabilitation, restoration and on-going management of flora and fauna as part of local planning controls and other areas of Council’s responsibility.

• Establishment of open space/vegetation corridors along the banks of the Nepean River, (including but not limited to riparian areas) and other creeks and watercourses such as South Creek shall be undertaken. Appropriate zoning protection and planning controls for these corridors in conjunction with the recommendations of the Vegetation Management Plan shall be implemented.

• Elements of ecological conservation value such as native species and mature hollow-bearing trees shall be incorporated in subdivision designs and landscaping programs.
• The concept of “trade-offs” should only be supported where clearly demonstrated community benefits accrue and where such cannot be achieved in any other fashion and are valued highly by the community.

• Planning standards and development controls to promote ecologically sustainable development practices to control the potential adverse environmental impacts of agriculture, rural-residential development and residential release areas shall be implemented.

• Issues relating to salinity will need to be fully addressed in any future development proposals within the Camden LGA.

(h) Rural-Residential Development:

Rural residential and low density residential development shall be promoted as an alternative lifestyle opportunity where there are community and/or environmental benefits and controls are applied to avoid possible conflicts with noise and odour impacts from waste management centres, sewerage treatment plants and extractive industries in the area as well as agricultural activities.

It is therefore proposed to only permit rural-residential development under the following circumstances and in the following order of priority:

• As clustered development on rural heritage properties, in return for preservation of heritage item(s) and curtilage, e.g. Raby Estate, Orielton, Maryland, Mater Dei, Oran Park homestead, Denbigh etc. Council will require that Clause 25C in LEP No. 48, relating to Conservation incentives, be applied prior to any consideration being given to rural residential development. It should also be noted that a conservation plan will be required;

• As clustered development in return for non-development of environmentally sensitive areas (prominent hills and ridges, remnant vegetation) and securing of embellishment/management outcomes. Suitable areas include Grasmere, Cawdor, Harrington Park II and Cut Hill;

• In return for land for vegetation corridors, e.g. Harrington Park II;

• Where wholly compatible with specialist forms of agricultural activity, e.g. Olive groves.

(i) Employment Lands

The Structure Plan Report identifies some limited employment opportunities and strongly promotes mixed use zones and home businesses. Such philosophy is generally supported particularly where such uses fulfil a transitional role. It is considered appropriate that additional sites be identified for “large land-take” industrial activities subject to appropriate environmental assessment. The opportunity within proximity of the Jacks
Gully Waste Facility and Glenlee should be explored and flagged for their employment opportunities.

Rural employment opportunities should also be exhaustively pursued through finalisation of the Rural Lands Strategy.

(j) Trade Offs

The Structure Plan Report suggests that “trade-offs” for developers could be used to secure desirable environmental and infrastructure outcomes. Whilst this approach may appear to have some merit it should only be implemented where it can be clearly demonstrated that the community will benefit and desired outcomes cannot be achieved only by more traditional alternative courses of action.

Any proposal involving “trade-offs” will be considered by Council on its merits and as suggested above should be a last resort approach.

(k) Population Limits

It is considered appropriate to support the population limits inherent in the containment strategy. A population limit is based on the premise of sustainability. In addition, the community, during the consultation period, made it clear that there was a fundamental need to foster “a sense of community”, such being largely achievable by controlling the rate of growth, the total amount and the style.

Having regard to the foregoing it is considered that a sustainable population for the Camden LGA is in the order of 70,000 people.

4. Further Work Required

It is clear that further work is required to “flesh out” the Structure Plan. This is particularly so in the context of:

- Finalising the development opportunities in respect of the northern boundary.
- Articulating a strategy for the southern boundary.
- Developing a rural strategy for the Northern Road/South Creek corridor.
- Finalising the Vegetation Management Plan.

(a) Rural Lands Study

A Rural Lands Strategy is seen as fundamentally important in complimenting the “containment strategy”. The Rural Lands Study undertaken by Council provides a solid platform for developing the abovementioned rural lands strategy.
(b) Vegetation Management Plan

The finalisation of the Vegetation Management Plan currently being prepared by Council is essential to advancing the philosophy of underpinning multifunctional vegetation corridors.

5. A Dynamic Plan

As previously documented, the Camden Structure Plan provides a series of strategies and actions in support of the vision established in Council’s Strategic Plan – Camden 2025.

However, as with any strategy, it is critical that it retains its relevance having regard to changing circumstances. While it is not intended to undertake any major amendments to the Structure Plan, especially in the short term, there needs to be an opportunity to constantly review the document to ensure that it retains currency.

It is therefore proposed to undertake a review of the Structure Plan on a regular basis.

6. Amendments to Structure Plan

(a) Central Hills Lands (adopted by Council 14 April, 2003)

The Central Hills Lands are those lands located north of Turner Road, east of Camden Valley Way, west of the Local Government boundary with Campbelltown and northwest of Manooka Valley.

Council has adopted the following planning principles for the Central Hills Lands:

- Preservation of the integrity of the Central Hills Lands as a significant buffer between Camden and Campbelltown local government areas.

- The scenic qualities of the subject lands as a generally open landscape shall be promoted with any built environment elements largely “subservient” to such landscape.

- Conservation and embellishment of prevailing biodiversity inclusive of promotion of vegetation corridors.

- Conservation of heritage qualities inclusive of sensitivity in respect of curtilages, cultural landscapes and views and vistas.

- Future comprehensive urbanisation of the lands be restricted by the development of significant recreational, cultural and natural assets in conjunction with limited residential opportunities.

- Appropriate management of access and impacts upon Camden Valley Way generally.
Encouragement of development proposals which sensitively add an extra dimension to the LGA, particularly in terms of non-industrial economic development/tourism.

Limited residential clusters of development are possible within the Central Hills Lands only when:

- linked to the non-development and embellishment and maintenance of environmentally and ecologically sensitive areas including vegetated corridors and the re-establishment of such corridors;
- the scenic qualities of the Central Hills lands are maintained as a generally open landscape, with any built environments largely “subservient” to such landscape and;
- with the exception of Turner Road North, development is of a nature that sensitively adds an extra dimension to the Camden LGA particularly in terms of non-industrial economic development, leisure, tourism or social outcomes;
- are compatible and facilitate specialist sustainable forms of agricultural activity.