

11. RECEPTION OF MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES HELD SINCE PREVIOUS MEETING OF COUNCIL

Nil

12. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Planning and Sustainability

12.1 Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 Million and Draft Strategic Conservation Plan

File Ref: 5315
Previous Items: Nil
Applicant: Department of Premier and Cabinet/Environmental Protection Agency
Author and Title: Brett Flugge, Executive Manager Strategic and Economic Development

Appendix 1

Purpose

The Western Australian Government is seeking public comment on the draft Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million documents including the Strategic Conservation Plan, Action Plans and State/Commonwealth Impact Assessment Reports that have been released for public advertising from 15 December 2015 until 8 April 2016.

Council is requested to consider this suite of documents and support a submission that can help inform the final South Metropolitan and Peel Sub-regional Structure Plan and preferably result in refinement of the final urban footprint consistent with Council's submission on Perth and Peel @ 3.5m and promote the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

Background

In July 2011 the Western Australian Ministers for Planning and Environment and the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment agreed to undertake a Strategic Assessment of the Perth and Peel Regions under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

The Strategic Assessment addresses the impact on matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) and State environmental values from the future development of the Perth and Peel regions. In addition to addressing Commonwealth requirements for a Strategic assessment under Part 10 of the EPBC Act, the Strategic assessment also responds to the interim section 16 (e) strategic advice prepared by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) that was released in July 2015.

Some of the more notable recommendations contained in the Interim EPA advice that impacts upon growth in the South Metropolitan and Peel sub-region sector include:

- Implementing a strategy for the management of regionally significant natural areas;
- Developing a new Government endorsed policy position on protection of the Peel Harvey system;
- Developing estuarine health indicators for the Peel-Harvey system;
- Expanding the Perth air quality Management Plan to cover the Peel region;
- Developing a Green Network;
- Managing basic raw material extraction; and

- Planning for key infrastructure corridors taking due regard to avoid and minimise environmental impacts and develop appropriate mechanisms for acquisition of strategic conservation areas.

The Strategic assessment focuses on the potential impacts on MNES and State environmental values associated with the following Classes of Action:

- Urban and Industrial
- Rural Residential
- Infrastructure
- Basic Raw Materials
- Harvesting of Pines (Commonwealth assessment only)

The key objectives of the process are to provide greater certainty as to which areas of the Perth and Peel regions can be developed and significantly reduce the need for project by project assessment under the Environmental Protection Act and the EPBC Act in the Perth and Peel regions. Importantly the assessment is meant to deliver an effective long term and strategic response to key environmental issues associated with supporting an expanded population growth of Perth and Peel to 3.5 million people as outlined in draft Planning Framework suite of documents.

The Strategic Conservation Plan and Action Plans A-E detail how each Class of Action will be implemented. Action Plans F, G and H provide a comprehensive conservation framework that are intended to deliver significant improvements to the protection and management of both State environmental values and MNES.

Shire officers have attended public forum briefings and workshop sessions arranged by Department of Premier and Cabinet, Western Australian Local Government Association and the Peel Harvey Catchment Council to assist in formulating a submission on the various documents and gain a clearer understanding of the major issues of concern to local government with this Strategic Assessment.

A summary document of the Strategic assessment is included as **Appendix 1** A copy of all the documents including the state and federal Impact Assessment reports have been made available for Councillors' viewing in the Shire President's office.

Proposal

In its review of all the various Strategic Assessment report documents, Shire officers have identified the following key issues and recommended actions to form part of Council's written submission and further dialogue with State and Commonwealth Government prior to final documents being considered by Government.

Ecologically Sustainable Development Principles

The Strategic Assessment for the Perth and Peel regions is the largest undertaking of its kind in Australia and is described in the Executive Summary as delivering unprecedented integration of land use planning and environmental protection and management. The Commonwealth's EPBC Act emphasizes the importance of the principles of ecologically sustainable development as derived from the 1992 Inter Governmental Agreement on the Environment as follows:

- a) Decision making processes should effectively integrate both long term and short term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations;

- b) If there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation;
- c) The present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations;
- d) The conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in decision-making; and
- e) Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms should be promoted.

The Western Australian Government was a signatory to the Inter-Governmental Agreement for a National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development which is defined as; “using, conserving and enhancing the community’s resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased”. The Terms of Reference for the Strategic Assessment for the protection of MNES included the need to outline socio-economic costs and benefits of the MNES Plan and describe how environmental and cultural heritage has been treated through assessment and selection of alternative scenarios to align and maximize environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Interim strategic advice of the Environmental Protection Authority issued in July 2015 outlining environmental impacts, risks and remedies for the Perth and Peel@3.5million, highlighted the importance of these ecologically sustainable development principles and the appropriate weight that must be placed on environmental values in decision making. The EPA considered that the ‘best whole of environment’ outcome will be achieved by considering the Authority’s broader range of environmental factors and objectives alongside the Commonwealth matters. The EPA environmental factors are listed under five themes of Land; Water; Air; People and Sea.

It appears however from reviewing the Green Growth plan that the suite of documents are strong on protecting the flora and vegetation aspects of the Strategic Assessment, however integration of the ecologically sustainable development principles and consideration of EPA other environmental factors are substantially missing particularly in relation to water quality, air quality protection measures, human health and amenity and marine environmental quality. Of particular concern is that the potential cumulative impacts of substantial urban and industrial development proposed around the Peel Harvey system for a future population of 164,000 people have not been adequately addressed as the environmental values of this system underpins the social, recreational and economic future of the region. The Alliance Group of Councils have lodged a submission on the Perth and Peel@3.5m Framework plan that indicates an alternative development growth strategy that achieves a better balance of ESD principles and far greater compliance with a Connected City growth pattern.

Recommendations:

Council questions why Ecologically Sustainable Development principles as emphasized in the EPBC Act and the Terms of Reference for the Protection of Matters of National Environmental Significance are not embedded into the Strategic Assessment framework as these are considered essential items to be incorporated into the decision-making process for the achievement of integrated economic, environmental, social and equitable outcomes.

Council questions where in the MNES Plan report does it outline the socio-economic costs and benefits of the MNES Plan derived during the period of its implementation and the principle assumptions for promotion of ecologically sustainable development principles as described in section 3A of the EPBC Act?

EPA Interim strategic advice and preliminary list of key environmental factors relevant to the Strategic Assessment such as inland waters environmental quality, air quality, human health and amenity and marine environmental quality have not been sufficiently addressed in the Strategic Assessment linked to the cumulative impacts of a substantial population increase as proposed in the South Metropolitan and Peel Sub Regional Planning Framework.

Avoidance of Environmental Impacts

Planning at the scale of the Environmental Assessment has enabled consideration of measures to avoid impacts to the environment. Two key approaches to avoidance of environmental impacts that have been built into the Strategic Conservation Plan are upfront avoidance through the planning phase and ongoing or further avoidance over the life of the plan.

Of particular note here is reduction of the area of proposed urban expansion in the draft Outer Metropolitan Perth and Peel sub regional strategy by more than half and increasing the proportion of urban infill; and prioritising potential urban expansion areas on mostly cleared land and in areas that require less fill (i.e. avoiding low lying areas such as East Keralup).

The Shire of Murray has been allocated the largest new extent of urban expansion areas across the entire Perth and Peel region in the North Ravenswood and West Pinjarra precincts yet these areas are still low lying and located within environmentally sensitive hydrological catchments containing high nutrient leaching soils.

The sub catchments in which the Ravenswood and West Pinjarra urban expansion areas are identified are already experiencing very high nutrient flows into the rivers and Estuary. This is particularly significant for the Nambelup Brook sub catchment which has very poor phosphorous retention and already discharges high loads of phosphorous to the Serpentine River, the lower reaches of which are under considerable ecological stress and experience regular algal blooms and fish kills (EPA 2015).

Integration of sub-regional water management strategies and the principles which should apply to future development need to be developed and released for public comment to be taken into account via planning processes particularly at District Structure plan level.

Recommendations:

That the Strategic Assessment and Action Plan H should specify at what stage of the planning process should water quality issues be addressed.

A draft Regional Water Management Strategy for the South Metropolitan and Peel sub regional Structure Plan was prepared in November 2014 but was never released for public comment. Integration of sub-regional water management strategies, supporting principles and objectives which should apply to future development in these growth areas need to be developed and released for public consultation to be taken into account through the land use planning process.

Spatial Area for Urban Development

The Strategic Assessment has been undertaken in collaboration with the preparation of the Perth and Peel@3.5 million suite of documents including the sub regional Planning Framework reports and taken into consideration Directions 2031 vision for the future growth of greater Perth and Peel. Development needs and environmental impacts have according to the Green Growth report been considered at a 'whole of city' scale enabling extensive land use optimization, however the Shire and other Alliance Group of Councils have previously raised concerns that the South Metropolitan and Peel Sub Regional Planning Framework plans have been prepared by Department of Planning in complete isolation from local

government involvement and has not properly considered the preferred integrated urban form structure that could be delivered within the Rockingham–Mandurah–Pinjarra urban growth corridor. The Shire of Murray submission on the sub regional Planning Framework proposals highlighted that the Government plans do not actually meet any of the key principles in Directions 2031 but continue to support an urban sprawl based model that is likely to have adverse environmental consequences on the Peel Harvey Estuarine and waterway systems.

Council should raise concern that the spatial area of the urban class of action is an inappropriate and inefficient urban form to meet the needs of sustainable managed growth for the South Metropolitan and Peel sub region and the final Structure Plan should be modified to produce a more consolidated urban form plan based around high capacity public transit facilities and with much less reliance and reduction in private vehicle use. The alternate growth strategy submission put forward by the Alliance Group of Councils (comprising Rockingham, Mandurah, Murray and Waroona) has the potential to produce higher environmental benefits from reduced greenhouse gas and nutrient export outputs, less energy consumption, reduced reliance on basic raw materials, reduced heat island effect with a more consolidated urban form, and deliver more ecologically sustainable outcomes with less capital costs in not having to expand substantial road infrastructure into new urban growth areas.

The Shire has already prepared a simple cost benefit analysis and a list of environmental benefits of converting land in the Barragup-Furnissdale rural residential locality into higher density urban infill serviced by high frequency public transit facilities versus the additional construction costs of major new road and bridge infrastructure in the North Ravenswood urban greenfield growth area.

The Shire of Murray and other Alliance group of Councils believe there is a compelling case to change the urban growth footprint in the South Metropolitan and Peel sub-region, and aligning this with the Green Growth Plan to achieve greater ecologically sustainable development principles.

Recommendations:

Council raises concern that the current spatial area for urban development as shown in Action Plan A (Figure 3-1 Location of Urban class of action) that the Strategic Assessment has based its environmental impact assessment on is a flawed inappropriate urban framework that should be reconsidered in conjunction with the final EPA strategic advice and Federal Government impact assessment report for Matters of National Environmental Significance.

The alternate growth strategy scenario as prepared by the South Metro and Peel Alliance Group of Councils represents a far more ecologically and environmentally sustainable outcome that the Strategic Assessment should give serious consideration to and subsequently seek a modified urban footprint in the final Sub Regional Structure Plan.

Net environmental benefits of converting land in the Barragup-Furnissdale locality for higher density urban infill versus costs of constructing additional road and drainage infrastructure services in North Ravenswood should be factored into the Strategic Assessment and the final urban footprint reassessed in the South Metropolitan and Peel Sub Regional Structure Plan.

If there is a case to change the urban land use footprint arising from the public submission review process, the Shire queries what is the process for the sub regional framework plans to align with the Green Growth plan outcomes.

Strategic Conservation Plan – Conservation Reserve Expansion:

The Conservation Program commits to establishing 170,000 hectares of additional conservation reserves including a minimum of 116,000 hectares of reserves containing Carnaby's cockatoo habitat. Two areas have been identified within Murray Shire as Priority Areas for acquisition in the Phase 2 program in the Nambeelup and West Coolup localities. These areas contain vegetation and wetlands already classified under Swan Bioplan as regionally significant natural areas but the exact boundaries of affected properties are difficult to ascertain because of the large scale of mapping to decipher any specific detail. According to Department of Premier and Cabinet more detailed GIS mapping is being released in early March to better define these conservation reserve areas and it is considered vitally important that the Shire and affected landowners are given more time to clearly assess the impacts. WALGA already provides its local government members with a GIS database; Environmental Protection tool designed specifically to support the consideration of environmental issues during all phases of land use planning. Department of Premier and Cabinet should be requested to work with WALGA and explore the application of this tool as the best means for making spatial information available to Local Government.

The Shire also questions what resources and assistance will be made available to Local Government where management of an unvested Crown reserves is transferred across to Council.

The 170,000 hectares of new conservation reserves includes establishing secure tenure and management arrangements for Bush Forever sites and establishing the Peel Regional Park which has been a long standing commitment of previous strategic plans dating back to the early 1990s. The Metropolitan Region Improvement Fund has played an important role in acquiring Bush Forever and other sites of strategic importance in the Perth metropolitan area. However, the absence of a similar mechanism in the Peel region has hampered efforts to undertake long term strategic land use planning and secure important conservation areas.

At a recent WALGA workshop on the Green Growth Plan it was mentioned that 320,000 hectares of land still need to be factored into the Conservation Reserve expansion for the South West Native Title claim. Mapping of the extent of these reserves will be progressed through the separate Native Title agreement and further negotiations with Native Title claimants. Council should question how this additional land is to be integrated into the Conservation Reserve expansion hierarchy and what land tenure arrangements may apply.

Recommendations:

Council requests additional time to properly review and comment on more detailed GIS mapping of additional Conservation reserves in Phase 2 Priority areas for future acquisition that weren't made available with release of the Green Growth Plan for public comment in December 2015.

Clarification is sought on what resources, guidance and assistance will be made available to Local Government where management of conservation reserve expansion is handed over for Council control.

Council supports establishment of the Peel Regional Park system but queries how land still in private ownership for inclusion in the Park is to be acquired by Government and over what time period.

State Government should develop an appropriate funding mechanism within its Funding options paper for the acquisition of strategic conservation areas in the Peel Region.

Governance arrangements for management of the Peel Regional Park and implementation measures that may affect Local Government operations should be clarified within the Strategic Conservation Plan or Assurance Plan framework.

Council questions how the South West Native Title claim encompassing 320,000 ha of land across the South West may affect expansion of the Conservation Reserve system and what type of land tenure arrangements may be applied.

Department of Premier and Cabinet be requested to work with WALGA and explore the application of the Environmental Protection database tool as the best means for making spatial information available to Local Government.

Protecting River and Wetland Systems

Wetlands are a critical component of the environment within the Perth and Peel regions and the Green Growth Plan is proposing a substantial package of measures to be implemented to reduce nutrient inflows and improve water quality in the Peel Harvey estuary and broader Peel-Yalgorup wetland system. A new wetland buffer policy will be developed and implemented through the land planning process but there is little detail on what impact this may have on existing wetland mapped areas and why the current draft wetland policy should not continue to be used.

Targeted mandatory soil testing, reporting and independent agronomic advice for 800 rural properties in the Peel Harvey catchment greater than 40 hectares in size is proposed in the Peel Harvey coastal plain catchment under the Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945. This soil testing program is to run for three years but there is no indication as to how this program is to be resourced and funded by the Department of Agriculture and Food or what additional funding may be required once the initial three year period expires.

A long term drainage intervention pilot program is proposed to be implemented in the Peel Harvey catchment however it is not clear if this will target restoration work on Water Corporation controlled drains or Shire drainage networks.

Recommendations:

Development of a new wetland buffer policy is proposed however there is little detail on what impact this may have on existing wetland mapped areas and the Shire queries why the current draft wetland policy should not continue to be used.

Department of Premier and Cabinet provide further details on the proposed soil testing program in the Peel Harvey catchment and clarify how this information is to be collected and monitored given the ultimate decision regarding fertilizer management will reside with the landholder. Ongoing funding and resourcing of this soil testing program beyond the three year period is questioned and what role local government is meant to play with any monitoring work.

Further clarification is required on the drainage intervention pilot program in terms of its coverage and whether this will target large scale drainage restoration works and who will be responsible for administering the program.

Strategic Conservation Plan

The Strategic Conservation Plan seeks to provide certainty around a number of 'classes of Action' required to support the growing population:

- Urban and Industrial
- Rural Residential
- Infrastructure

- Basic Raw Material extraction
- Harvesting of pines in Gnangara, Yanchep and Pinjar pine plantations

Supporting Action Plans (A-E) detail how each Class of Action will be implemented and Action Plans F, G and H provide a comprehensive conservation framework that is intended to deliver significant improvements to the protection and management of both MNES and State environmental values. Action Plan I sets out an Assurance Plan framework including monitoring, reporting and compliance assurance.

A significant aspect of the Shire's submission on Perth and Peel@3.5m suite of documents was the promotion of the rural hinterland of the South Metropolitan and Peel sub region to become a strategic Agri-Food production precinct with incorporation of hamlets and diversified farming pursuits to support it. This concept is embraced in the Peel Regional Investment Blueprint 2050 prepared by the Peel Development Commission under the Agriculture and Food Innovation theme and focus areas and includes the creation of a Peri-urban food zone.

The Strategic Assessment should give greater consideration to the future protection and designation of Agricultural land in the peri-urban environment as having strategic and economic importance and enhancement in eco-system services and the need to strengthen protection of its biodiversity. Agricultural production is an important industry in the Peel region and the rural hinterland is coming under increasing pressure from a range of different land uses including mineral sands mining, rural residential development and intensive agricultural pursuits. The Strategic Assessment and the sub regional Planning framework should provide clearer direction and guidance on how this area can be better managed to address water quality, ground and surface water protection and reuse capabilities, vegetation retention and biodiversity protection as part of the Conservation Program.

In this regard the Shire questions whether the Strategic Conservation Plan has adequately taken into account the recommendations contained in the Shire's Local Biodiversity Strategy across the palusplain precinct and the recommendations contained in the Peel Regional Investment Blueprint that focuses on innovative and sustainable agricultural and food practices.

Water is currently constraining development in the Peel, with economic, social and environmental consequences. Large parts of the Peel peri-urban area are subject to flooding in winter months. Traditionally this extra water is unable to contribute to economic development as it is drained to the Peel-Harvey Estuary, putting pressure on capacity of existing drainage systems, causing downstream flood risks and transporting nutrient rich waters that would not otherwise reach the estuary. If left unchanged this will result in suboptimal environmental and economic outcomes as well as further impacting the amenity of residents to enjoy the Peel Harvey Estuary.

The Peel Integrated Water Initiative being pursued by the Peel Development Commission is intended to support development of the Peel Food zone through the development of seasonally independent and non-climate dependent water resources whilst simultaneously contributing to the reduction of nutrient loading (estimated total phosphorous reduction across the food zone by 30%) to be in water flows across the palusplain.

Recommendations:

The Shire questions whether the Strategic Conservation Plan has adequately taken into account findings contained in the Shire's Local Biodiversity Strategy across the palusplain precinct for vegetation retention and biodiversity protection targets.

The Strategic Assessment scope of Actions should be expanded to include the environmental impact of future development on the Agricultural hinterland and take

into account recommendations contained in the Peel Regional Investment Blueprint 2050 that focuses on innovative and sustainable agricultural and food practices and integrated water initiatives within the peri-urban environment that can lead to significant reduction of nutrient loadings into the Peel Harvey waterways system.

Draft Action Plan C: Infrastructure

The Infrastructure Class of Action incorporates major transport and public utility services that will be constructed or upgraded within the Strategic Assessment area, however, it does not include natural gas and telecommunications infrastructure on the basis of these operators being non-government agencies. Given that co-location of infrastructure forms a key component of the Strategic Assessment, leaving engagement with these service operators to be dealt with outside of the assessment process does not make sense as future Industrial development relies heavily on access to these services.

The Shire's rural community has been particularly vocal about impacts of gas, power and water supply easements adversely affecting farming activity through creation of separate service corridors running through the district with limited ability to tap into these lines and usually with extensive clearing of natural vegetation in its path and buffer exclusion areas for development.

The Assessment should examine and incorporate the environmental impacts of all utility providers as this has a significant bearing on the development capacity of affected landholdings and accessibility to future major employment generating sites.

Recommendation:

Action Plan C Infrastructure should examine and incorporate the environmental impacts of all utility providers as this has a significant bearing on the development capacity of affected landholdings and accessibility of services to future major employment generating sites.

Alternatives to Basic Raw Material Use

Development of the Strategic Conservation Plan has provided an opportunity to review improving the integration of Basic Raw Material extraction with land use planning and to consider reducing demand on use of these resources. It is noted that Department of Environmental Regulation is examining a regulatory framework that encourages use of waste derived materials as substitute products. The Shire considers there is merit in further investigations into using residue sand from the Alcoa Pinjarra Refinery residue storage area for road and building base material subject to further pilot trial testing.

Alcoa have been undertaking trials and assessments over an extended period to assess potential reuse applications of 'red sand' (an end product of a technology which involves the washing and neutralisation of bauxite residue). This process has involved working with DER, Department of Health and other relevant agencies to ensure any material produced from bauxite residue can be safely utilised, trialled and marketed. These include radiological, health and environmental risk assessments which have indicated that the risk for the use of the sand is very low and that the product has properties equal to or superior to traditional sand materials for top dressing, golf course bunkers, industrial fill and in road construction.

The Interim EPA strategic advice to the Minister for the Environment notes that the Perth and Peel regions need a change of approach to development if basic raw material use is to be reduced. The EPA considers that major reform initiatives are required with alternative development practices to reduce reliance on basic raw materials such as using pole housing instead of cement slab, prefabricated housing and development that is more sympathetic the surrounding landscape rather than fill and bench techniques. The establishment of

demonstration sites showcasing what can be achieved with these alternate innovative building techniques is regarded as a desirable action.

The Shire is also keen to explore innovation in alternate house building design and development in groundwater constrained landscapes and is currently working in partnership with other Local Government authorities and industry players to determine suitable design criteria standards and performance measures for separation distances from groundwater.

Recommendations:

The Strategic Conservation Plan should consider other potential sources of landfill and road construction material such as material produced from bauxite residue and reuse of 'red sand' from Alcoa refinery operations where it is found to not pose an unacceptable risk to public health or the environment through pilot trial testing.

That the Government in consult with the Housing Industry Association should explore opportunities for trialing more innovative alternate house building designs and construction methods that are not heavily reliant on use of basic raw materials.

Murray 2025 Strategic Community Plan

Objective 5:	A healthy and sustainable natural environment
Outcome 5.1:	Biodiversity of our natural ecosystems are protected and enhanced
Strategy 5.1.1:	Protect and restore natural bushland areas

Objective 5:	A healthy and sustainable natural environment
Outcome 5.2:	Waterways and water resources are protected, conserved and enhanced
Strategy 5.2.1:	Protect, maintain and enhance the health of our waterways and wetlands

Other Strategic Links

The other important documents that have been prepared in collaboration with the Strategic Assessment process are the Towards Perth and Peel@3.5m and particularly the South Metropolitan and Peel Sub Regional Planning Framework. Council lodged a separate detailed submission on this Framework report in August 2015 and Department of Planning has indicated on its website that a review of submissions received has been completed with a report due to be prepared for consideration by the WAPC.

Statutory Environment

The EPBC Act) is the Commonwealth Government's key piece of environmental legislation which aims to protect Matters of National Environmental Significance which include:

- National heritage places
- Wetlands of international importance (Ramsar)
- Nationally threatened species and ecological communities
- Migratory species

The Strategic Assessment also responds to the interim section 16 (e) advice under the Environment Protection Act 1986 with key environmental factors of Land, Water, Air, People and Sea being considered.

The final Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5m will take effect following endorsement of the Strategic Conservation Plan and approval of the 'classes of action' by the

Commonwealth Minister for the Environment. In determining whether or not to endorse the program, the Minister will have regard to the extent to which the program meets the objectives of the EPBC Act.

Once endorsed by the Federal Environment Minister the Strategic Conservation Plan cannot be amended, however there is scope for modifications to be made to the Action Plans.

Policy Implications

A review of the State Planning Policy 2.1 for the Peel Harvey Coastal Plain Catchment and Environmental Protection Policy for Peel Harvey coastal catchment are recommended in the Green Growth Plan, along with introduction of mechanisms under the Planning and Development Act 2005 to prevent high nutrient export activities on soils with a low phosphorous retention capacity in the coastal plain catchment.

The Interim EPA advice includes a recommendation for the State Government to develop an offset policy framework for future development in the Perth and Peel regions that places greater emphasis on rehabilitation and revegetation of degraded areas to achieve a net improvement in habitat and other environmental values.

Sustainability and Risk Considerations

Economic - (Financial impact to the community)

The economic impacts of implementation of the Strategic Conservation Plan and corresponding Actions Plans have not yet been fully costed. A Funding options paper is being prepared by Department of Premier and Cabinet for implementation of the Strategic Conservation Plan and Action Plans that will be released for public comment later this year. An estimate of costs involved in funding the Conservation program over a 30 year timeframe has been put at \$1Billion. Local Government authorities will be eagerly awaiting the Funding options paper to comment further on delivery mechanisms and roles proposed of Councils in implementation measures.

Social - (Quality of life to community and/or affected landowners)

The future development of the Perth and Peel regions will have an influence on the overall health and amenity of the community. Planning and designing cities to improve contact with nature is important in order to attain the various health, amenity, community connectedness and quality of life benefits. A proposed Green Network can provide shading, connection to nature, evapotranspiration, improving neighbourhood walkability, as well as social and health related benefits, protecting regional landscape values, reducing the heat island effect and contributing to the region's sense of place.

Environment – (Impact on environment's sustainability)

A key challenge in delivering a city of 3.5 million people will be to ensure the ongoing protection of environmental systems while integrating inevitable changes associated with development into existing environmental and landscape features.

Governance – (Policy implications)

A critical component of the overall Strategic Assessment will be the Implementation program under the Assurance Plan framework (Action Plan I) and the need for ongoing monitoring and management of both the impacts of proposed development and delivery of conservation and environmental actions. A Governance framework has been developed that is to be coordinated by an overarching Executive body reporting to a select group of State Government Ministers. This body will have responsibility for the implementation, review and revision of the Action Plans under the Strategic Conservation Plan.

Overall Risk Management Consideration

There are significant risks associated with this Green Growth Plan and its ultimate successful implementation of environmental commitments and conservation actions which greatly depends upon coordinated, fully funded, cross government action to be effective. In the absence of a rigorous cost benefit analysis of all the Classes of Actions and presentation of a funding program, it is difficult to ascertain whether the Strategic Conservation Plan and supporting Action Plans have adequately addressed the potential environmental impacts for Perth and Peel regions growing to 3.5 million people.

Consultation

The Green Growth Plan, Strategic Conservation Plan and associated Environmental Impact Assessment reports have been released for public comment for a four month period from 17 December 2015 to 8 April 2016.

Council officers have attended workshops, briefings and public forums presented on these proposals by Government agencies and conferred with WALGA, Peel Harvey Catchment Council and other Local Government representatives in formulating this submission.

Resource Implications

Financial

The cost of preparing this submission is being sourced from Shire internal workforce resources.

Workforce

Shire officers have raised concerns with the expectation that local planning frameworks (Town Planning Scheme; Planning Strategies; Policy, District and Local Structure Plans) will need to be prepared to achieve specific outcomes in the Strategic Conservation Plan and what assistance may be forthcoming from State Government in providing guidance and resources for local government to perform expanded roles under the Conservation Program. The issue of technical expertise and knowledge required of local government planners/environmental officers to assess development proponent's plans against the complex range of criteria is another concern that warrants attention in the implementation of this Conservation program.

Options

Council has the option of:

1. Lodging a submission on the Green Growth Plan in accordance with comments and recommendations under this report or to address other matters considered appropriate by Council;
- 2 Not lodging a submission.

Conclusion/Justification of Officer Recommendation

The Green Growth Plan and Strategic Conservation Plan released for public comment appears to be strongly focused on a continuation of protecting green space conservation areas yet the plan is substantially lacking in specific detail on how socio-economic factors have been integrated, and how other broader environmental sustainability impacts like climate change can be minimized through more compact urban form and more efficient public and freight transport networks.

There are many aspects of the Strategic Conservation Plan and supporting Action Plans that require further detailed strategies and investigations and the Shire of Murray has queried

along with other affected Councils as to the roles proposed of local government in implementation of the Conservation program.

It is recommended that Council endorse the comments, recommendations and actions raised in this report as the basis of the Shire's formal submission on the Green Growth Plan and draft Strategic Conservation Plan. Both WALGA and the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) have requested that the Shire comments and submission on the Green Growth Plan be forwarded to their agencies so that collective industry responses can be collated.

Voting Requirements

Absolute Majority

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. seeks an extension of the advertising period of eight weeks due to the unavailability of the detailed mapping sufficient to properly consider the plan;
2. endorses comments and recommendations in this report as the basis for the Shire's formal submission to be lodged on the Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million, draft Strategic Conservation Plan and supporting Action Plans;
3. forward a copy of the Shire's submission to the Environmental Protection Authority highlighting concerns of the potential environmental threats of substantial population growth on the Peel Harvey Estuary waterway systems and the need to modify the urban expansion plans in the South Metropolitan and Peel Sub-Region Planning Framework for incorporation in the final strategic advice; and
4. forward a copy of the Shire submission to the State and Federal Ministers for the Environment, Minister for Planning, Chairman, Environmental Protection Authority, City of Rockingham, City of Mandurah, Shire of Waroona, and Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale; WALGA, Planning Institute of Australia, Peel Harvey Catchment Council and Urban Development Institute of Australia.

COUNCIL DECISION:

OCM16/052

Moved: Cr C Thompson

Seconded: Cr C Rose

That Council:

1. **endorses comments and recommendations in this report as the basis for the Shire's formal submission to be lodged on the Perth and Peel Green Growth Plan for 3.5 million, draft Strategic Conservation Plan and supporting Action Plans;**
2. **forward a copy of the Shire's submission to the Environmental Protection Authority highlighting concerns of the potential environmental threats of substantial population growth on the Peel Harvey Estuary waterway systems and the need to modify the urban expansion plans in the South Metropolitan and Peel Sub-Region Planning Framework for incorporation in the final strategic advice;**

- 3. authorises Shire officers to liaise further with Department of Premier and Cabinet over Shire concerns and issues with the Green Growth Plan in order to seek a modified urban foot print consistent with the Alliance Group of Councils submissions on the Perth and Peel @ 3.5 million; and**
- 4. forward a copy of the Shire submission to the State and Federal Ministers for the Environment, Minister for Planning, Chairman, Environmental Protection Authority, City of Rockingham, City of Mandurah, Shire of Waroona, and Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale; WALGA, Planning Institute of Australia, Peel Harvey Catchment Council and Urban Development Institute of Australia.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9:0

Reason for Change

Council changed the Officer Recommendation due to updated information being received from the Department of Premier and Cabinet.