

Appendix D:
TRRA Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association (TRRA) calls on the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP) to reject this proposal because it will create a poor quality town centre, at great environmental cost

This proposal will lead to a poor quality commercial centre which will exacerbate existing problems rather than reduce them. The centre already comprises a collection of stand alone retail and other service sub-centres with minimal pedestrian connectivity. This DA simply adds another ring of isolated retail and service precincts with their own separate car parks. This will further encourage clients to drive between the various precincts. The result will be a sea of car parks with poor aesthetics, poor pedestrian access and no public place and open spaces. This is far from best practice, town centre planning.

The DA fails to acknowledge that the Salamander shopping centre and its immediate surrounds has already attracted many town centre functions such as the library, community meeting rooms, child minding, church and school facilities. It is the major public transport interchange for the Tomaree Peninsula. It will continue to evolve as the social, commercial, shopping and community service hub of the Peninsula. **This DA without a comprehensive Masterplan does not make provision for these broader urban functions or for the essential integration of the proposed development sites.** It does not meet some of the key objectives of the LEP Zoning or of the DCP. It will not create a vibrant town centre and commercial district. The scope for inclusion of some residential development within the precinct has not been given the a priority it should have to achieve a real mixed use town centre.

The Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) has understated the environmental values of the site (as set out in our submissions) and grossly understated the impacts. The applicant is seeking to avoid compliance with both the objectives and the specific requirements of the SEPPs (14, 44 and 71), the Threatened Species Conservation Act, and Part 5A of the EPA Act.

The justifications provided by the applicant for why the significant environmental destruction is necessary do not stand up to any sensible scrutiny.

No legitimate attempt has been made to avoid or minimise environmental impacts. In fact ALL the environmental values of the site will be destroyed and the very inadequate proposed mitigation measure will either **increase** the environmental impacts in the surrounding area, and/or are unlikely to achieve their objectives into the long term.

The community is in favour of development in this area, but is strongly opposed to this configuration of lots and the destruction of ALL the environmental values on the site. Over 100 people attended a public meeting in July 2010 and they unanimously opposed this proposal. A copy of the resolution is contained in the appendix of this submission.

Council has not been forthcoming with the community about this proposal. We submit that there are still significant gaps in the information provided to both you and to the community.

We believe a better alternative can be easily achieved, which can meet the needs of the community and the commercial objectives of future business, and also bring a financial

return to Ratepayers, while protecting the environmental values of the site and creating a vibrant town with active streets and good public spaces and pedestrian flows.

We call on the assessor and the JRP Panel to closely scrutinise this proposal and question the Applicant's assertions. We believe that if you do this you will REJECT this proposal and recommend that Council prepare a professional Masterplan for this town centre precinct, involving extensive community consultation.

1. We totally reject the need to clear, drain and fill ALL the vegetated areas on the site, and believe this approach will be enormously costly to the environment and to Ratepayers.
2. We reject the need for the ring road to go all the way along the western boundary – it could easily go along a less destructive route, and alternative loop roads created.
3. We ask that lots 4 and 5 be excluded from the subdivision, and the Stormwater Reserve be relocated away from the environmentally significant vegetation.
4. We reject the assertion that the principle and preferred option of the *2001 Draft Salamander Planning Guidelines* cannot be achieved. We believe they only require minor modification and improvements.
5. We call for a large and meaningful area to be set aside in an appropriate location for public open space, which could accommodate a versatile area with a playground, a space for markets or performances, and rest areas; which will not be possible in the 'reserve' which is in fact only a storm water retention basin.
6. We reject the assertion that there are grounds for a waiver of the Port Stephens Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (PSCKPoM) requirements. This proposal fails to meet the objectives or specific criteria of the PSCKPoM.
7. We believe that planting koala feed trees along the roads will INCREASE koala mortality, by luring koalas into contact with increased traffic and dogs.
8. We reject the assertion that SEPP 14 does not apply and that the ring road will act as a buffer and asset protection zone to the SEPP14 wetland. A 50meter buffer to the SEPP14 wetland can and should be achieved.
9. We assert that the environmental impact of this proposal will be significant, and does increase *the risk* of localised extinction, on the wetland, koalas, EEC and other species, especially when the long-term (sea level rise) impacts are considered. An SIS should be prepared.
10. SEPP 71 has not been adequately considered and this development fails to meet the criteria.

11. We believe that the proposed environmental offset will not be effective or secure in perpetuity, and it is an untested approach to offsetting, not endorsed by DECCW. It should be totally disregarded as a mitigation or compensation measure.
12. The traffic study is inadequate as it does not address peak season visitation, when the population of the area more than doubles. It fails to address the dramatic increase in truck and semi-trailer movements. It does not address the potential for a significant increase in movement between carparks within the expanded commercial area.
13. A full and detailed costing of the infrastructure and the ongoing maintenance should be provided as this is to be funded by ratepayers.
14. A detailed geotechnical report should be provided that addresses issues of subsidence and sub-surface movements, water table levels, localised flooding.