Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
PO Box 84
Port Macquarie
NSW Australia 2444
e council@pmhc.nsw.gov.au
ABN 11 236 901 601

PORT MACQUARIE
HASTINGS COUNCIL

1 September 2026

Our Ref: DD032.2024.00000012.002
DD160.2025.00000002.001
Your Ref: PP-2026-1942

Craig Diss
Director, Hunter and Northern Region
Local Planning and Council Support
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

cc: Georgia Weallans, Planning Officer

Dear Mr Craig,

Water and Sewer Servicing Capacity Statement PP-2026-1942 - Mixed Use Health & Education Precinct Development - 8 Highfields Circuit, 3 & 5 Kulai Place and 9 & 11 Kingfisher Road, Port Macquarie

Council refers to the Department's correspondence of 28 August 2026 requesting further information regarding water and sewer servicing capacity in connection with the above-referenced Planning Proposal and provides the following updated statement for the Department's consideration.

Council is satisfied that the subject site can be serviced and adequate arrangements have been proposed for infrastructure provision.

Council acknowledges that wastewater treatment servicing capacity has been identified as a key consideration for the proposal. While the ultimate wastewater servicing solution for the precinct is dependent on delivery of the Thrumster Wastewater Treatment Plant and associated regional infrastructure upgrades, Council notes that the proponent has submitted an updated offer to enter into a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) that directly addresses this issue.

Importantly, the proposed VPA includes a mechanism that links the operation of the student accommodation and health and education components of the development to the delivery of the Thrumster Wastewater Treatment Plant. Under the proposed arrangement, these components cannot become operational until Council is satisfied that the wastewater infrastructure project has progressed to a stage that will provide the required servicing capacity. Council considers this commitment to be a positive and practical response to the identified servicing constraints and one that substantially mitigates servicing risk.

In addition to addressing wastewater servicing concerns, the proposed VPA secures significant public benefits including delivery of the north-south road connection, active transport infrastructure and public open space identified in the Health and Education Precinct Masterplan. Council considers these outcomes will make a meaningful contribution to the long-term development and functionality of the precinct.

PORT MACQUARIE OFFICE
17 Burrawan Street, Port Macquarie NSW 2444
t 02 6581 8111

WAUCHOPE OFFICE
49 High Street, Wauchope NSW 2446
t 02 6581 8111

LAURIETON OFFICE
9 Laurie Street, Laurieton NSW 2443
t 02 6581 8111

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Having regard to the proposed VPA, Council is supportive of the Planning Proposal proceeding to Gateway determination. Council considers that the proposal is supported by an appropriate framework to manage infrastructure delivery risks while enabling consideration of a strategically important development opportunity within the Health and Education Precinct.

Council also takes this opportunity to make a broader observation regarding the scope and purpose of the adequacy assessment process. The Department's LEP Making Guideline describes adequacy assessment as a high-level review intended to confirm that a planning proposal package meets the minimum administrative requirements necessary to enable consideration of a Gateway determination.

In Council's view, matters relating to infrastructure servicing, infrastructure delivery, development staging and other planning merit considerations are more appropriately addressed through the Gateway assessment process and subsequent assessment processes. These matters frequently require further investigation and refinement and would not ordinarily be expected to be fully resolved prior to a proposal proceeding to Gateway determination.

Council's position is that the adequacy review process should remain focused on whether sufficient information has been provided to support informed Gateway consideration, rather than requiring resolution of merit-based assessment matters that are properly addressed through the statutory planning proposal process following Gateway determination.

Yours sincerely,

Duncan Coulton
A/g Director
Community, Planning and Environment