



Plans to establish a council head office in Biripi Way, Taree are progressing.

In this next stage of the process* to centralise our administrative functions, we have developed a draft financing strategy to fund a fit-for-purpose office design and fitout. Read on to find out more about the benefits and impacts of operating from a head office at the former Masters site, the proposal for how it will be funded, where you can learn more, and how you can provide your feedback.

Operating and maintaining a single head office location is significantly more cost-effective than continuing to operate across multiple sites.

An extensive study completed by independent consultants has looked at a number of different models, determining that we can deliver greater efficiencies and better value for money to our customers by consolidating our administration into a single site. Like any well-run and managed business operating from a head office location, centralising our administrative functions will mean:

- Consistency in processes and delivery of improved services to customers
- Reduced overheads, including costs associated with security, insurance, maintenance, and utilities like water and electricity
- Reduced travel between offices, saving on fuel and vehicle maintenance costs, staff travel time, and fleet
- Cost efficiencies delivered through sharing of resources, and minimising duplication of functions across multiple sites
- Collaboration across teams to streamline and improve community outcomes



The head office will be home to staff who work across a diverse range of administrative roles including engineering, technology, finance, governance, town planning, waste management, and environment.

For the MidCoast community, a centralised head office means:

- Increased efficiencies resulting in the delivery of around \$2.3 million more in services to our customers every year
- Up front savings of \$1.3 million on technology equipment required to service multiple office locations, and ongoing savings in maintenance and renewal of this equipment
- A property asset that will serve the community into the future, versus an expense of \$12.9 million to establish a campus model where current buildings are retained and refurbished to bring work teams together. With an average age of 37 years, the current administration buildings also come with inherent issues and ongoing maintenance costs.

A full business case prepared by independent consultants in January 2018 provides a detailed analysis of operational efficiencies that can be achieved in both the head office and the campus models.

* Visit www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/headoffice to view a range of information on the project, including the business case report.



Customer service will remain in all locations

We currently serve hundreds of customers over the counter every week, so retaining an on-the-ground presence across the entire region is a priority.

While our administrative functions will move to the head office location, our customer service points will be maintained. This means you can still visit in person to pay your rates, register your pets, lodge a development application, or drop in to make an enquiry - just as you always have.

In Forster, the customer service centre will relocate to the new Civic Precinct in Lake Street once it's completed. Until that time, customer service will continue to operate from its current location in Breese Parade.

In Taree, the customer service centre will relocate to Biripi Way, a short distance across the Martin Bridge.

There will be no change to our customer service centres located at:

- Gloucester, 89 King Street
- Stroud, 6 Church Lane
- Tea Gardens, Myall Street

This project has no impact on our libraries, Visitor Information Centres, MidCoast Assist, our depots and public facilities such as our waste management facilities. All these services will operate as they do now, in their existing locations.

Find out more by coming along to an information session (see over), or by viewing frequently asked questions on our website:

www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/headoffice



MIDCOAST
council

FOCUS ON FINANCE



A draft financing strategy to fund the \$20 million head office relocation has been prepared for consultation.

The draft strategy has been designed so it does not impact on funding for our day-to-day operations, or your rates. It identifies funding from three sources:

- Cash reserves (savings realised through the merger) - \$7.2 million
- Sale of property assets - \$4.8 million
- Borrowings - \$8 million, with repayments funded through rental income on property assets

The draft financing strategy makes it clear there will be no special rate variation required for this project, and we will not be touching any operational funds such as the \$100 million road program and capital works and maintenance programs for Council assets, which will continue to be delivered to our community as planned.

We will also work with both Federal and State Government bodies to identify opportunities for financial contributions to the project. Any funding received would reduce the level of loan funds required.

The cost to establish a head office for up to 350 staff (and one that accommodates future growth) compares favourably to similar consolidation projects undertaken or in progress by other large organisations and councils such as the City of Greater Geelong.

The proposed funding model is currently being reviewed by independent consultants, RSM Australia, a division of RSM Global.

RSM is a world leading provider of audit, tax and consulting services.

With offices in 120 countries, it is the fifth largest audit network globally.



Artist's impression only

Community information sessions

Come along to learn more about the head office project and the draft financing strategy at:

Taree - proposed head office site, Biripi Way
10am, Thursday 22 November

Gloucester - Council Chambers
6pm, Thursday 22 November

Taree - Council Chambers
6pm, Monday 26 November

Forster - Council Chambers
10am, Monday 26 November
6pm, Tuesday 27 November

Residents from areas surrounding the venues are encouraged to attend their closest session.

A limited number of sessions are available to community groups in smaller villages and areas outside the listed locations. For information and to complete an Expression of Interest, visit www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/headoffice

Requests for community group sessions must be made using the EOI form, and close at 6pm on Friday 30 November.

Provide feedback

Take the online survey at www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/headoffice

or complete the form below and return it to one of our Customer Service Centres, or mail it to us, free of charge to: MidCoast Council, Reply Paid 482, Taree NSW 2430

Name: _____

Home suburb: _____

Email address: _____

☐ Please email me updates on this project and other council news

Have you read the information flyer about the head office relocation project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What do you see as the key impacts and benefits?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost efficiencies and savings | <input type="checkbox"/> Consistency of services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer service near me | <input type="checkbox"/> A community asset |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Streamlined services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Does the information make it clear that financing the head office will:

- ☐ Not involve a special rate increase
- ☐ Not impact on our roads program

Do you have any other comments, or ideas about how the head office might benefit or impact you or the local community?

Please limit your response to one survey per person, and provide your feedback before it closes on Friday 14 December.
Visit www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/headoffice for more information and to complete the survey online.