

Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2041

This document answers frequently asked questions about the South East and Tablelands Regional Plan

What is a regional plan?

In 2017, the Department of Planning and Environment finalised regional plans. These will guide planning for the existing and future community across the 9 regions of NSW.

These plans set a clear vision and direction for how each region can build on future opportunities to ensure their communities grow to become even more vibrant, dynamic and prosperous. This is balanced with the need for housing, jobs, infrastructure, a healthy environment, connected communities and access to green spaces.

Structured around defined goals, objectives and actions, the regional plans set out the requirements for clear and coordinated planning across all levels of government and within the community.

The department reviews and updates the regional plans every 5 years to reset priorities, goals and direction so we can continue to achieve the best outcomes for the community.

What is the draft *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2041*?

The draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2041 (the draft Regional Plan 2041) outlines the planning priorities for the region over the next 20 years. The plan explains what needs to be considered when making decisions that affect land use.

It applies to the 9 local government areas of Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Goulburn–Mulwaree, Hilltops, Queanbeyan–Palerang, Snowy–Monaro, Upper Lachlan, Wingecarribee and Yass Valley.

While not considered under the remit of the plan, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) also sits within the regional boundary because of the important role Canberra plays in the region.

Why is the department reviewing and updating the regional plan?

The *South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2036* was the first plan for the region. It was released in 2017 and set out the 20-year strategic planning framework.

Since its release in 2017, the NSW Government has worked closely with councils, other stakeholders and the community to deliver on the plan's key priority actions.

The government reviews and updates all regional plans every 5 years to reset priorities and directions to ensure they are fit for purpose. This will allow us to achieve the best outcomes for communities for the next 20 years.

We have been reviewing the first plan throughout 2022, consulting councils and many other stakeholders. As a result, we have developed a draft Regional Plan 2041. This builds on the momentum and key priority actions delivered from the 2036 plan.

What informed the review of the regional plan?

We have conducted research and consulted with councils, state agencies, industry, representatives of the Aboriginal community and other stakeholders to review and update the regional plan. The review process included a public exhibition from 8 August to 23 September 2022 where the community had an opportunity to have its say on the draft Regional Plan 2041. We will reset the direction and priorities for the region based on this information.

In the review process, we have discovered:

What the Regional Plan is doing well:

- Protecting the region's diverse and natural environment
- Promoting a borderless and connected region
- Protecting the rural character (living and lifestyle).

Where more effort is needed:

- Supporting the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities
- Enhancing the regional economy
- Improving resilience and sustainability
- Improving regional connectivity.

The draft Regional Plan 2041 includes a full explanation of how we reviewed the plan, starting on page 7.

Why was the draft Regional Plan 2041 placed back on public exhibition from 9 December 2022 to 31 January 2023?

We received a range of feedback on the draft plan during our initial, extensive consultation. This has been incorporated into an updated version of the draft plan that has multiple changes from the initial draft regional plan that was exhibited. Consequently, we decided it was best to give the community more time to consider and give feedback on the updated draft Regional Plan 2041 before it is finalised in 2023.

How does the regional plan harness opportunities in the region?

The next 20 years will be an exciting period of change for the South East and Tablelands, promoting:

- a year-round tourism destination, from the Australian Alps to the scenic far south coast
- environmentally conscious communities that are resilient to climate change
- liveable and connected communities, with access to affordable housing and diverse employment options.

The region is strengthened by its connections to the nation's capital, which is home to a diverse mix of places and communities.

The draft Regional Plan 2041 highlights the influence of the ACT on the growth of jobs and housing. It emphasises the importance of collaboration between state and local governments.

A key focus of the draft Regional Plan 2041 is responding to the region's affordable housing needs. Planning for the region must consider the role of its strategic centres in supporting future growth and in improving access to services.

At its core, we recognise through the draft Regional Plan 2041 that working closely with First Nations peoples is essential in achieving all aspects of the vision and to provide a greater connection to Country.

What are the goals of the draft plan?

The themes in the draft South East and Tablelands Plan 2041 have 5 main goals:

1. Recognising Country, people and place

- Sets the framing to ensure Aboriginal culture and engagement is embedded in strategic land use planning, and its outcomes are reflected through heritage interpretation and provision of community services and social infrastructure.

2. Enhancing sustainable and resilient environments

- Focuses on the natural environment, responding to climate change and building resilience in communities to improve resource management and preparedness to natural hazards.

3. Leveraging diverse economic identities

- Promotes innovation, sustainability and connectivity in the regional economy, where industries can complement one another to improve greater productivity and inter-regional collaboration.

4. Planning for fit-for-purpose housing and services

- Sets a plan for a pipeline of housing, pulling together resources and expertise to ensure planning for growth is tailored to its local and regional context, while supporting community access to essential services.

5. Supporting a connected and active region

- Focuses on improving the connectivity and adaptability of infrastructure across the region, where services and planning is coordinated in a cross-border context and enables walkable and well-connected centres.

The draft Regional Plan 2041 has a series of objectives, actions and strategies within these themes that we encourage you to read, consider and comment on.

How was the plan reviewed?

From December 2021 to July 2022, the Department of Planning and Environment consulted with councils and other stakeholders to thoroughly review the previous *South East Tablelands Regional Plan 2036*. The aim was to develop an updated version that resets priorities to ensure continued benefits for the region for the next 20 years.

That consultation has helped shape the preparation of the draft Regional Plan 2041, which was placed on public exhibition from 8 August to 23 September 2022 and 9 December 2022 to 31 January 2023, for the community to have their say.

Is there any investment coming to the region?

The draft Regional Plan 2041 capitalises on the milestone projects that are already underway to help transform and enhance the region's economic and social wellbeing, and drive job creation. Significant investment in the region that will drive job creation includes:

- Bega Circular Valley Initiative
- Regional Housing Fund
- Eurobodalla Regional Hospital
- Port of Eden
- Snowy Mountains Strategic Activation Precinct
- South Jerrabomberra Regional Job Precinct.

We are investigating various additional opportunities and structures to deliver actions and initiatives identified in the draft Regional Plan 2041. For example:

- investigations into the Southern Highlands Innovation Park
- investment in Moruya with a new hospital and planned bypass
- water security and ongoing resource management for communities around the ACT
- environmental conservation and strategic planning to protect threatened and endangered plant and animal species
- supporting the Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW.

What's in it for my council?

Priorities for each council are set out Part 1 of the draft Regional Plan 2041, which will guide further investigations and implementation. The priorities set the frame for the draft Regional Plan 2041 and build upon local strategic planning statements, prepared by each council in the region.

Regional planning encourages infrastructure delivery that targets the needs of its communities. It also encourages efficiencies in the allocation of resources and investment to improve the liveability and sustainability of the region. The NSW Government will help councils to translate these priorities into local plans.

How does the draft plan fit in with councils' local strategic planning statements?

All councils in NSW have prepared a local strategic planning statement (LSPS) setting out:

- the 20-year vision for land use in the local area
- the special character and values that are to be preserved
- how change will be managed into the future.

An LSPS allows a council to ensure that priorities identified in the regional plan are placed within a clear local context and consider an area's unique economic, social and environmental characteristics.

Importantly, the LSPS also allows councils to translate their own strategic planning work into local priorities and actions, which in turn supports the review of the regional plan. This feedback cycle from local to regional planning ensures that there is a two-way 'line of-sight' between the different levels of strategic land use planning.

The LSPSs prepared by all councils in the region, in consultation with their communities, were a key input into the draft Regional Plan 2041.

What have been the key achievements of the previous Regional Plan 2036?

The draft Regional Plan 2041 builds on the following key achievements of the 2036 plan:

- Planning for 6,500 new homes in new communities on the border of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory
- Improved data on regional biodiversity corridors and land with high environmental values
- South Coast Marine Tourism Strategy
- Preparation of regional water strategies
- An urban design guide for regional NSW
- The Local Housing Strategy guideline and template

For more information on these achievements, [please visit our website](#).

Why does the plan reference a Regional Transport Plan for the region?

Transport for NSW is developing a Regional Transport Plan for the South East and Tablelands. The Regional Transport Plan includes the transport vision for the region and support Department of Planning and Environment's draft Regional Plan 2041. The 20-year vision provides a transport response to population and land use changes, improve connectivity and safety, and promote sustainable transport modes and technologies.

The *Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Transport Plan* was placed on exhibition from 16 December 2022 to 24 February 2023.

The *Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Transport Plan* has being developed in collaboration with the Draft Regional Plan 2041.

[How can I have my say?](#)

The exhibition is now closed for the draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2041.

[Read the draft Regional Plan 2041.](#)

[Register to receive updates](#) on the finalisation of the regional plan.