

NSW Planning and Environment – DRAFT South East and Tablelands Regional Plan – Submission from Upper Lachlan Shire Council

Covers five regional landscapes:

- Alpine – Snowy Monaro Regional Council
- Far South Coast – Eurobodalla Shire Council and Bega Valley Shire Council
- Greater Capital – Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council and Yass Valley Council
- Hilltops – Hilltops Council
- Southern Highlands and Tablelands – Wingecarribee Shire Council, Upper Lachlan Shire Council and Goulburn Mulwaree Council

Vision – To build resilient and sustainable communities by balancing growth opportunities with protecting the region’s diverse environment and lifestyles

Goal	Direction	Action	Upper Lachlan Shire Council Response
Goal 1 – Sustainably manage growth opportunities from the ACT	1.1 Provide well-located and serviced land for housing in the Greater Capital to meet demand	1.1.1 Coordinate infrastructure delivery to support release areas in the Greater Capital	Council supports the need for local government to undertake local strategic planning to create appropriate housing development release areas in the entire South East and Tablelands Regional landscape notwithstanding the need as well, to protect and grow the agricultural supply chain.
		1.1.2 Develop principles to guide the development of a cross-border infrastructure funding model to support cross border development	Coordination of funding and the delivery of infrastructure in a cross border environment will need a considered consistent approach and a suitable model will need to be developed.
		1.1.3 Develop a cross-border land monitoring program	A cross border land and housing monitoring tracking system and forecasting model would improve knowledge around infrastructure and service requirements in the Greater Capital landscape.
		1.1.4 Support the development of local housing strategies in the Greater Capital	Identification of housing needs and infrastructure requirements are a necessary requirement to meeting changing demand for local communities in the entire South East and Tablelands Region.
	1.2 Improve cross-border transport connectivity	1.2.1 Work with the ACT Government to make travelling to and from Canberra easier and more convenient	Many local communities in the South East and Tablelands Region access employment, specialist health, secondary school and tertiary level education, airline travel and sporting competitions within the ACT – NBN rollout and development of “Smart Work Hubs” in rural townships could lessen travel requirements.
		1.2.2 Improve sharing of transport data between the ACT and NSW, including the development of a cross-border transport model	Establishment of a cross border transport model for every local government area within the South East and Tablelands Region enhancing data sharing regarding cross border freight movements, especially the “Shoalhaven Highway” from Nowra to Nerriga to Tarago to Collector to Gunning would be advantageous.

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Goal 2 – Protect and enhance the region’s natural environment	2.1 Protect the region’s diverse environmental values	2.1.1 Avoid, minimise and offset the impact of development on significant environmental assets	Collating the mapping that is already in existence across the various NSW Government Departments to ascertain validated areas of high environmental value would be advantageous in establishing appropriate mitigation measures in circumstances where there are unavoidable impacts with crucial and essential development.
		2.1.2 Protect the region’s biodiversity corridors in local planning controls	Validation of the principles behind and mapping of regional biodiversity corridors with suitable methodology to support the objective of protection and enhancement of the functionality of such corridors is required. The NSW Government can also support the initiative by providing appropriate funding for Council’s to “validate” regional biodiversity corridors.
		2.1.3 Prepare a comprehensive koala plan of management for the Cooma-Monaro Local Government area	A comprehensive Koala Plan of Management developed in conjunction with the Snowy Monaro Regional Council in conjunction with monitoring of the koala population across the relevant areas of South East and Tablelands Region would be appropriate.
	2.2 Manage development to protect the Far South Coast environment	2.2.1 Focus urban growth on the Far South Coast in existing urban growth areas	Mapping of growth areas utilising already developed local government housing strategies to develop urban growth area maps should be the guiding force for Far South Coast sustainable growth.
		2.2.2 Protect sensitive estuaries on the Far South Coast	In sensitive estuary areas of high environmental value where there is the possibility of water quality or ecological function being diminished, appropriate protection measures will need to be implemented.
		2.2.3 Review and update coastal management plans	Ongoing review of coastal zone management plans is necessary to ensure that new urban land release areas are not affected by coastal hazards, such as high flood, erosion and inundation risk hazard areas.
		2.2.4 Create a consistent approach to protecting important riparian areas in planning and development controls	Consistent application of planning and development controls to riparian lands is required and as such, a review of riparian management processes would be right and proper.
		2.2.5 Investigate opportunities to integrate the marine estate and adjacent coast land uses	Preparation of a Marine Estate Strategy for NSW and a Local Environment Planning Practice Note, as well as development of regional boating plans should result in the improved coordination of marine and coastal (land based) practices.
	2.3 Build the region’s resilience to natural hazards and climate change	2.3.1 Apply contemporary risk management to flooding and other hazards	Council holds the view that the current prevalence of increased floods and snow events (with substantially greater intensity), along with the elevated frequency of bushfires, storms and landslips indicates that the ongoing development of floodplain risk management plans, bushfire risk management plans, emergency services risk management plans and mapping of future urban growth into possible flood prone areas will all be essential for the South East and Tablelands Region.
		2.3.2 Build on regional understanding of projected climate impacts and implement opportunities to respond	Identification of projected climate change impacts in the South East and Tablelands Region will allow the incorporation of climate change into planning which should enhance State Government natural disaster service delivery and minimise natural disaster impacts on local communities.
	2.4 Protect and secure the region’s water resources	2.4.1 Finalise water sharing plans for rivers and groundwater systems in the region	As Upper Lachlan Shire Council has water security issues in many villages brought about by climate change, suitable water sharing plans should appropriately balance the needs of water users and the requirements of the environment.
		2.4.2 Prepare integrated water cycle management strategies	Integrated water cycle management strategies have been successfully developed for the four town water supplies within the Upper Lachlan Shire Council local government area (Crookwell, Gunning, Taralga and Dalton townships).
	2.5 Protect the region’s cultural heritage	2.5.1 Conserve heritage sites when preparing local planning controls	Upper Lachlan Shire Council is very cognizant regarding the conservation of heritage sites and continues to ensure that the Local Environmental Plan aligns with heritage legislative processes.

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Goal 3 Strengthen the economic opportunities of the region	3.1 Support and promote the growth of the tourism industry	3.1.1 Improve tourism related transport services	The ongoing development of an efficient transport system is crucial to the entire South East and Tablelands Region and initiatives such as branding, travel brochures, bus services and park and ride services are to be commended. The reconstruction and sealing of the unsealed 15.4km of Main Road 258 Wombeyan Caves Road (average of 30,000 visitors per annum to the Wombeyan Caves) is crucial to the ongoing development of tourism within Upper Lachlan Shire Council LGA.
		3.1.2 Develop a stronger marine-based tourism industry capitalising on the region's numerous small ports	The advancement of a marine based tourism strategy to incorporate Far South Coast ports and harbours should provide increased opportunities for local tourism operators.
	3.2 Enhance the productivity of primary industries	3.2.1 Identify regionally important agricultural lands and reflect the outcomes in local planning controls	Provision of mapping regarding existing agricultural production in the South East and Tablelands Region will inform and guide potential investment decisions by suitable industries on lands that are fit for agricultural production and associated agri-tourism activities.
		3.2.2 Manage biosecurity risks to protect current and future industries	Appropriate management of Biosecurity risks, including noxious weeds control and eradication, will necessitate reviewing the zones in LEP's and the implementation of suitable buffer zones around potential new developments.
	3.3 Support the productivity and capacity of the region's mineral and energy resource lands	3.3.1 Implement the NSW Renewable Energy Action Plan to increase renewable energy generation	The operation of the NSW Renewable Energy Action Plan to attract renewable energy investment and projects may possibly launch opportunities for the establishment of localised renewable energy options. Consideration needs to be given to the potential accumulation of renewable energy projects in particular areas and the potential land use conflicts from their accumulation.
		3.3.2 Identify energy and mineral resource lands to support sustainable growth of mining industries and diversification of NSW energy supplies	The support of sustainable growth of the mining industry and the potential diversification of NSW energy supplies must be tempered with the divisive nature of such industries on local communities.
		3.3.3 Protect valuable mineral and extractive resources in the region	There is an inherent conflict between protecting agricultural lands opposed to mining resources. Potentially competing land uses may well influence the growth of rural and resource industries and accordingly, the identification of such land use proposals would require the development of suitable strategies to lessen any impacts.
		3.3.4 Plan for the ongoing productive use of mineral and energy resource lands	Preparation of staged land use plans for all current and emerging mining activities within the South East and Tablelands Region that accommodate the entire lifecycle of the mineral resource would provide greater certainty for investors.
		3.3.5 Implement a robust assessment process to consider social, economic and environmental implications of mining activities and manage these throughout the life of the project	Implementation of a best practice Integrated Mining Policy with suitable rehabilitation procedures, economic assessment guidelines, a cumulative impact assessment on agricultural lands and water resources and a guideline for the impacts on human health from dust generated by mining are all positive directions.
	3.4 Grow regional strategic assets to support economic growth across the region	3.4.1 Deliver the breakwater wharf extension at the Port of Eden	Enhancements such as the breakwater wharf extension at the Port of Eden would provide for extensive cruise ships visitation which in turn could lead to substantially increased tourism incursions into the ACT and surrounding local government areas for those tourists seeking a rural or agricultural experience.
		3.4.2 Protect the role of the Canberra Airport to service the south east through relevant local planning controls	The recent announcements that Canberra Airport is now providing international services to certain areas of Asia will result in increased tourism for the South East and Tablelands Region as well as the potential to export time sensitive agricultural produce to Asia and possible import options as well.
	3.5 Strengthen the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities	3.5.1 Conduct a strategic assessment of land held by the region's Local Aboriginal Land Councils to identify their landholdings and map the level of constraint for each site	A strategic audit and appropriate mapping of the landholdings of the South East and Tablelands region's Local Aboriginal Land Councils could provide economic benefit and increased opportunities for economic dependence to local Aboriginal people.

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Goal 4 Build communities that are strong, healthy and well-connected	4.1 Provide sufficient housing to suit the changing demands of the region	4.1.1 Plan for a range of housing types to cater for changing community needs and household choice	Suitable mapping and principles must be developed to ensure that any strategy provides optimal direction for land use planning to cater for aging populations.
		4.1.2 Protect agricultural and environmental land by avoiding the impacts of rural residential development	The adoption of a strategic approach to providing appropriate rural residential housing around current village zones would avoid land use conflicts with local agricultural pursuits.
	4.2 Plan for facilities, including health and education, to service the region's growing and changing population	4.2.1 Identify capacity and provide flexibility for investment to upgrade and deliver health services to the community	Identification of the potential for redevelopment and investment into the Crookwell Hospital facility allowing increased capacity to deliver health services would be advantageous. Specialist medical services are, more often than not, supplied via the ACT in the South East and Tablelands region.
		4.2.2 Undertake school asset planning to better understand where and when additional schools may be required	It is prudent to undertake school asset planning for the South East and Tablelands region working in conjunction with the NSW and ACT Governments.
		4.2.3 Coordinate the planning and delivery of cemeteries and crematoria	The ageing population of the entire South East and Tablelands region demands that the identification of appropriate sites for increasing current or developing additional cemeteries and crematoria is mandatory.
	4.3 Strengthen the commercial function of the region's centres	4.3.1 Focus commercial and retail activities within the region's centre in line with the regional centres hierarchy	The proposed action does not go far enough. The net community benefit must be the ultimate criteria when assessing potential commercial and retail activities in, not only regional centres but also district centres as well as townships.
	4.4 Build socially inclusive, safe and healthy communities	4.4.1 Review and update the Neighbourhood Planning principles	Utilising updated Neighbourhood Planning principles would be advantageous when preparing LEP's and DCP's.
	4.4 Enhance community access to jobs, goods and services by improving connections	4.5.1 Develop a sustainable model for community transport service provision	The ageing population within the South East and Tablelands region, with the ACT located in the middle of the regions and supplying specialist medical services has continued the demand for community transport providers especially to the more remote rural communities.
		4.5.2 Identify and protect future rail corridors	Future rail corridors need to be secured as high speed rail between Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne would immeasurably increase transport options for the majority of the South East and Tablelands region.
		4.5.3 Deliver improved transport connectivity for urban centres and towns	The option to greatly improve bus operations in both urban centres and in the connections with rural and regional communities would be extremely beneficial to the South East and Tablelands region.