



**Regional  
Development  
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The Hon Robert Stokes MP

Minister for Planning

Department of Planning & Environment

P.O Box 5341

Sydney NSW 2001

23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2016

Dear Minister,

**Re: Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan**

As Chair of Regional Development Australia – Far South Coast, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan.

For your information, RDA – Far South Coast (RDA FSC) is part of a national network of RDA committees serving rural, regional, remote and urban communities across Australia.

RDAs in NSW are currently jointly funded by both the Federal and State Governments and our RDA includes the General Managers of our three member Councils on our Committee, ensuring a coordinated regional approach across three levels of government.

RDA FSC works with all sectors of the community, including women, young people, Indigenous Australians and people from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

A key focus of RDA FSC is on the economic, social and environmental issues affecting communities.

RDA FSC is an important contributor to and driver of:

- regional business growth plans and strategies, which support economic development, the creation of new jobs, skills development and business investment;
- social inclusion strategies, which will bring together and support all members of the community;
- environmental solutions, which will support ongoing sustainability and the management of climate change (including the impact of drought, flood or bushfires).

- ✓ Economic development and jobs growth
- ✓ Community development
- ✓ Environmental sustainability



An Australian Government Initiative



A NSW Government Initiative

RDA FSC, in consultation with the community, business, non-profit organisations and all levels of government, articulates local priorities, identifies and aligns resources, engages stakeholders and promotes solutions. In doing this, RDA FSC supports the growth and development of regional communities across the country.

RDA FSC also supports, promotes and disseminates information on government policy initiatives for the benefit of local communities. To this end, the RDA FSC Committee and Chair has a strong understanding of federal, state and local government policies and initiatives, and the ways in which local communities can engage with them.

RDA FSC, as the Far South Coast's peak regional development body, takes a leadership role in bringing together organisations to take advantage of government programs, policies and initiatives.

RDA FSC is an effective conduit between government and our regional community. It enables our entire community to provide input to government about the strengths and weaknesses of regional Australia.

RDA committees have 5 key roles which, collectively, ensure that they achieve the outcomes required by governments:-

- a. Consultation and Engagement with the Community
- b. Informed Regional planning
- c. Whole – of – Government Activities
- d. Promotion of Government Programs
- e. Community & Economic Development

It is concerning to see that RDAs are mentioned minimally in the Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan, given our unique and strategically advantageous position within the region, and when we are mentioned, you cite an out of date version of our Strategic Regional Plan. We note that the Joint Organisation of Councils is cited as part of the Coordination and Monitoring Committee. As we believe the Joint Organisation of Councils is currently not a viable body to assist with co-ordination and monitoring and will not be up and running in a sufficient capacity for this form of coordination for some time, I, on behalf of my Committee, ask that you revise your Coordination and Monitoring Committee model and consider inclusion of RDAs.

Our own RDA FSC Strategic Regional Plans have always strongly supported the work of Planning NSW and we have worked with the Department of Premier and Cabinet in the past to support, coordinate and monitor delivery of Planning NSW's Plans in the Far South Coast region, under their various guises (Regional Action Plans; Strategic Plans; etc.). I would ask that you cite the correct and latest version of the RDA FSC Strategic Regional Plan 2013-2018, rather than the outdated version you have noted on page six (6).

While our funding model will change at the end of 2016, this RDA will continue to work with the three levels of Government to deliver outcomes for our regional communities. With that in mind, I hope you will allow us the opportunity to partner with you for the benefit of our stakeholders, and therefore consider amending your Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan to indicate our support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Pollock', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rob Pollock OAM

Chair

cc. The Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson MP