

August 2021

Port Macquarie Regional City Action Plan

The New South Wales Government, in collaboration with Port Macquarie-Hastings City Council, has developed the Port Macquarie Regional City Action Plan for land use and infrastructure planning that will guide the growth of the city.

What is the purpose of the plan?

The Port Macquarie Regional City Action Plan establishes a vision, objectives and actions to guide the growth of Port Macquarie city.

The plan will set a delivery framework that:

- articulates a clear 20-year vision for the city
- ensures planning provisions to maximise employment opportunities and ensure future housing needs are met to cater for a variety of lifestyle choices and needs
- deliver a vibrant, innovative city with a lively waterfront and green corridors and integrated transport systems
- creates new jobs from the development of a health and education precinct and airport business park
- delivers infrastructure according to an agreed staging and sequencing of development
- includes measures to help Port Macquarie's large koala population thrive.

What are the goals and objectives in the plan?

The Regional City Action Plan identifies 17 objectives under five goals to make the city a better place to 'Live', 'Work' 'Meet', 'Play' and 'Move'. Each objective has a number of actions:

- **Live Goal:** *Port Macquarie is a blue and green compact city that sits in harmony with its environment and supports diverse communities with a range of housing choices:*
 - Objective 1 Deliver a compact city which provides housing diversity
 - Objective 2 Create a green and sustainable city
 - Objective 3 Deliver increased opportunities for affordable housing
 - Objective 4 Strengthen the city's resilience to natural hazards and climate change
- **Work Goal:** *Port Macquarie is a regional economic leader with diverse and thriving business, industry and service hubs:*
 - Objective 5 Maximise Port Macquarie's regional specialisations in health and education
 - Objective 6 Grow Port Macquarie as the centre of a thriving and sustainable visitor economy
 - Objective 7 Deliver local jobs through the city's employment lands and industry sectors
- **Move Goal:** *Port Macquarie is a connected city that is easy and safe to traverse and explore:*
 - Objective 8: Develop a transport network that delivers a connected Port Macquarie

Frequently asked questions

- Objective 9 Optimise Port Macquarie's regional gateway infrastructure
- Objective 10 Embrace advances in transport technology to increase community connectivity
- **Meet Goal:** *Port Macquarie is an inclusive and welcoming city, with a network of local destinations, each with their own strong identity:*
 - Objective 11 Grow a creative, exciting and vibrant city heart
 - Objective 12 Respect, protect, embrace and celebrate the distinctive culture, character and heritage of Port Macquarie
 - Objective 13 Create a network of versatile, engaging and inclusive local hubs across the city
 - Objective 14 Promote Aboriginal cultural awareness, inclusion and place across Port Macquarie
- **Play Goal:** *Port Macquarie is a lively city with an abundance of recreational opportunities supporting health and well-being for all:*
 - Objective 15 Maximise Port Macquarie's waterfront playground to attract residents and visitors
 - Objective 16 Create places that encourage healthy activities throughout the city
 - Objective 17 Create a youth-friendly city which engages young people and values their contribution.

What are the collaboration opportunities that have been identified in the Regional City Action Plan?

Five key areas for future collaboration have been identified to help deliver the 20-year strategic vision for Port Macquarie:

- 1. On-ground verification of Koala corridors to support Council's Koala Recovery Strategy (Objective 1)
- 2. Coordinating state and local government approaches to meet affordable housing needs (Objective 3)
- 3. Development of a policy framework to achieve a sustainable future for Port Macquarie (Objective 4)
- 4. Development of an integrated transport network (Objective 8).
- 5. Development of local place and design guidelines (Objective 13)

What consultation has been done?

The draft Regional City Action Plan was on public exhibition from **9am Tuesday 9 March 2021 until Friday 30 April 2021** to give the community an opportunity to have its say on the plan.

The exhibition period was extended to allow the community and stakeholders more time to provide feedback on the plan following the significant floods in March that severely impacted Port Macquarie and surrounds.

During exhibition the Department conducted a number of workshops, including two that were open to members of the community, one for Council and one for government agencies, plus one-on-one sessions with a variety of stakeholders.

Prior to exhibition the Department consulted widely with council, government agencies and other stakeholders, such as the Chamber of Commerce, universities and Regional Development Australia, to inform the development of the draft plan.

Thank you to everyone who took time out to respond to the RCAP. The feedback will be invaluable to inform the development of the final Regional City Action Plan.

Why have we developed a Regional City Action Plan?

Development of the Regional City Action Plan is a priority action of the *North Coast Regional Plan 2036*, which was released in March 2017 by the NSW Minister for Planning.

The North Coast Regional Plan outlines an ambitious vision for the North Coast to be the best region in Australia to live, work and play, thanks to its spectacular natural environment and vibrant communities. The plan sets out four specific goals to guide work to achieve that vision.

A key finding of the North Coast Regional Plan under 'Goal 2 - A thriving, inter-connected economy' is that more than three-quarters of population growth and the majority of housing developed across the North Coast over the next 20 years will occur in Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour, Lismore and Tweed.

The draft Regional City Action Plan will be an important tool to plan for the changes we expect to see in Port Macquarie towards 2036. The success of Port Macquarie will help achieve the vision and goals of the North Coast Regional Plan.

Why are we releasing this Regional City Action Plan now?

In this time of COVID-19 our planning system has a vital role to play to keep the economy moving, now and in the months ahead.

It is more important than ever we continue with plans to support strategic planning at a local level. This will ensure we create and maintain strong communities for people to live and work in.

COVID-19 means we need to find new ways of communicating with people and ensuring communities have their say on our plans.

How is the Regional City Action Plan different from the Local Strategic Planning Statement for the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council area?

The Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) identifies the planning priorities for Port Macquarie-Hastings local government area and explains how these are to be delivered.

The LSPS also shows how the council will monitor and report on how the priorities will be implemented.

The Regional City Action Plan has been prepared by the NSW Government and relates only to the Port Macquarie city area where a significant amount of the future growth in the local government area is anticipated.

The Regional City Action Plan links land use and infrastructure planning across State agencies and levels of government to help guide and deliver the key land use outcomes that will support future growth in Port Macquarie.

The plans complement and support each other.

What other planning actions are underway in my area?

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment is working with stakeholders to implement the priority actions of the *North Coast Regional Plan 2036*. More information on the work the Department is doing is available on www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-Plans/North-Coast/Delivering-the-plan

How does the plan support koala habitat?

Port Macquarie has one of the largest koala populations in NSW and this plan aims to help them survive and thrive. The most significant threat to the koala population is habitat loss.

One of the plan's first actions will be to work with the council to map out existing koala corridors to develop its Koala Recovery Strategy and Port Macquarie's Green Grid. This will help direct growth away from koala habitats and ease pressure on the natural environment.

How does the plan address the impacts of recent bushfires and floods?

The plan aims to avoid new development in high-risk areas which are prone to bushfires and flooding. The NSW Government is also working on a *Strategic Guide to Planning for Natural Hazards* which will assist Councils in evacuation processes.

What happens now?

The Department will work closely with council, other government agencies and stakeholders to implement the objectives to realise the vision of the Port Macquarie Regional City Action Plan.