

FAQs for Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct

This document answers questions about the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct Master Plan and Activation Precincts SEPP.

What are Special Activation Precincts?

Special Activation Precincts are dedicated areas in regional locations identified by the NSW Government to become thriving business and employment hubs. The government will prioritise planning and investment for these precincts.

The Special Activation Precincts program is an important part of the NSW Government's 20-year Economic Vision for Regional NSW – Refresh, led by the Department of Regional NSW and funded by the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund.

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment is responsible for preparing the streamlined planning framework for the Precincts, which includes three key parts:

1. *State Environmental Planning Policy (Activation Precincts) 2020* (Activation Precincts SEPP)
2. Precinct master plans
3. Precinct delivery plans (prepared by Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation following completion of the first two parts of the framework).

The aim is to develop a master plan and environmental assessment up-front to reduce the cost and time for investors and businesses to set-up in the precincts.

The Activation Precincts SEPP was made in June 2020. All documentation and plans can be viewed on the [Planning Portal](#).

What is the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct?

Wagga Wagga was announced as the state's second Special Activation Precinct and will expand on the existing Bomen Business Park north of the city centre, creating around 6,000 new jobs for the region.

The [Master Plan](#) provides the blueprint for growth over the next 40 years, and an amendment to the Activation Precincts SEPP was also finalised.

The Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation, responsible for delivery of the precinct, are working on the Delivery Plan, expected to be completed in late 2021.

While the Delivery Plan is being finalised, development in the area can continue under the Wagga Wagga Local Environment Plan. Any future development applications within the Special Activation Precinct will need to be consistent with the final Master Plan.

What are the new planning controls for the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct?

The Activation Precincts SEPP has been amended to include precinct-specific provisions for the Wagga Special Activation Precinct including:

- The industrial core is zoned Regional Enterprise to permit a range of industrial, infrastructure and other employment uses.
- The new Rural Activity zone surrounds the Regional Enterprise Zone to provide a transition between the industrial core and the surrounding rural and residential uses.
- What is considered exempt development.
- What is considered complying development.
- Outlines environmentally sensitive areas where exempt and complying development will not be allowed.

The Master Plan also contains guiding principles, aims and criteria for air, noise, odour, landscape and visual impacts; flooding and stormwater; built form; transport and infrastructure; and requirements for development as part of the Delivery Plan.

Refer to the Master Plan and Activation Precincts SEPP at our [Planning Portal](#) for more information.

What are the main changes to zoning?

A new Regional Enterprise Zone of around 1,314 hectares has been established at the industrial core of the Precinct, replacing the 1,776 hectares of land previously zoned General and Light Industrial.

The Regional Enterprise Zone is similar in area to the previously Industrial zoned land; however, the boundary has been reshaped so that it sits in the valley between Olympic Highway and Byrnes Road.

A new Rural Activity Zone of 2,987 hectares will create a landscaped setting for the precinct, with no new residential uses allowed. The changes also prohibit industrial uses in these areas.

Minor changes have been made to the SP2 zoning in the Precinct to better reflect the current operations and infrastructure at certain sites.

The existing zoning to protect the Bomen Axe Quarry will remain the same.

Why has industrial land shifted from east of Byrnes Road to north of Trahairs Road, between Olympic Highway and Byrnes Road?

Following exhibition of the draft Master Plan, the need to rezone this land was reviewed. Economic analysis found that land zoned Regional Enterprise beyond Trahairs Road was required to accommodate the long-term land required under the Precinct's Master Plan (40+ years).

This change has been driven by the findings of the technical studies. Key factors include:

- To protect groundwater recharge areas in the east of the Precinct.
- To leverage suitable land adjacent to the Inland Rail, a critical piece of infrastructure.
- Better access to transport infrastructure including the Olympic Highway and Inland Rail.
- To avoid using unsuitable land for industrial development.
- To ensure service of shared infrastructure including sewer, potable water and stormwater.
- To consolidate the industrial precinct between the Olympic Highway and Byrnes Road, maximising separation between industry and rural landscape.

The Master Plan outlines a natural break at Trahairs Road, to be preserved as an environmental corridor.

What industries will be established in the industrial core of the Precinct?

Key permitted uses in the Regional Enterprise Zone include industrial, manufacturing, freight and logistics, and rural industries. Business, commercial and retail uses, educational establishments and training facilities are also permitted.

Development that is identified as hazardous or offensive will not be permitted in the precinct.

What planning pathways are available for hydrogen-energy-generating facilities in the Wagga Wagga precinct?

Hydrogen is an emerging technology in Australia with the Australian Government already investing in it following the release of the National Hydrogen Strategy.

The new planning framework will allow certain types of hydrogen development that have been determined to have a lower risk to proceed through a complying development pathway in the precinct. Hydrogen development that has been determined to have a higher risk will need to go through a development application process.

How will the government monitor potentially hazardous industries to ensure they don't breach their licence?

Potentially hazardous development and potentially offensive industries must show how potential impacts and risks can be identified and managed under *State Environmental Planning Policy No 33 – Hazardous and Offensive Development* to be approved for the precinct.

The Master Plan includes a new control that sets out requirements for the early establishment of monitoring facilities across the Precinct in line with the recommendations of the air, noise and odour report.

Due to the sensitive nature of potentially hazardous and offensive developments, a specific process has been established for these uses in the Master Plan and Activation Precincts SEPP to mitigate risks.

Wagga Wagga City Council and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) will manage enforcement to ensure businesses in the precinct do not breach their licences or conditions of consent.

The Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation will also conduct ongoing monitoring of noise and air in the precinct to support the EPA and Council in their enforcement.

Where will solar energy farms be permitted?

The current zoning of the land for the vast majority of the Precinct permits solar energy farms at any scale. Under the new planning framework, a more considered approach has been taken to solar development. The Master Plan and Activation Precincts SEPP recognise that solar energy generating facilities will be an important part of the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct's green energy strategy while also recognising the need to ensure that any potential new solar energy generating farms are appropriately located and developed. This is supported by controls in the Master Plan and provisions in the Activation Precincts SEPP including:

- Limiting areas where solar energy farms are permitted in the Rural Activity Zone, with no further solar farms permitted in the eastern and northern parts of the Rural Activity Zone.
- A maximum size limit of 35 hectares for solar energy farms in the Rural Activity Zone.
- A requirement that solar energy farms must not be developed on land with a slope greater than 10%.
- Requirements for landscape buffer treatments on site.
- Requirements for early tree planting in key locations.

Site constraints such as topography, waterway corridors and the presence of significant biodiversity will also restrict where solar energy farms can be located.

How will amenity be protected?

The Master Plan provides Precinct wide controls for managing and mitigating amenity impacts including those related to visual, noise, odour and air quality. These include:

- A requirement for air, noise and odour monitoring facilities to be established early in the precincts development to ensure that activities within the Precinct are consistent with provisions developed during the master planning process.
- Identification of areas for new planting including road reserves, the ridge line and in riparian corridors (waterways).
- Requirements for development to ensure that on-site landscaping and high-quality building design makes a positive contribution on the views into the Precinct.
- Requirements for planting on private lots, where possible, to improve the Precinct's landscape character.
- Guidance around the location of buildings to minimise visible impact.
- Restrictions around scale and location of solar development and requirements for landscape buffer zones for solar developments.

Will government acquire properties in the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct?

Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation has begun discussions with landowners about key sites that support delivery of the Precinct. For further information, visit: www.rgdc.nsw.gov.au.

What role will Council continue to have?

Wagga Wagga City Council will continue to approve Development Applications in the Precinct in line with the Master Plan, until the Delivery Plan is approved towards the end of 2021.

The Wagga Wagga LEP will no longer apply in the Precinct once the Delivery Plan has been finalised.

Following this, the Development Corporation will continue to work closely with Council on development approvals as required and Council will remain the enforcement authority along with the Environment Protection Authority for issues such as noise and odour.

What are the next steps?

As the Master Plan and Activation Precincts SEPP are now finalised, the Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation will prepare for construction and development within the Precinct. This includes:

- Preparing and publishing the Delivery Plan, outlining the stages and requirements for development (the Delivery Plan will go on public exhibition).
- Preparing a detailed design and consulting with impacted stakeholders.
- A tender process to select contractors to design and build supporting infrastructure.
- Beginning construction of supporting infrastructure (roads, sewer, water).

Where can I get more information?

For more information:

- Online: [Department of Planning, Industry and Environment](#) or [Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation](#)
- Phone: 1300 73 44 66
- Email: activationprecincts@regional.nsw.gov.au

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