

FAQs for Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precincts

This document answers frequently asked questions about the draft master plan for the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct.

What are Special Activation Precincts?

Special Activation Precincts are existing or proposed employment precincts in regional NSW that the NSW Government has identified as having potential for growth. 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 and will be delivered in part through the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund.

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

- State Environmental Planning Policy (Activation Precincts) 2020 (the Activation Precincts SEPP)
- Special Activation Precinct master plans
- Special Activation Precinct delivery plans (for the Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation to prepare following rezoning).

The objective is to plan and do environmental assessment up-front. This allows for most employment uses to be undertaken as complying or exempt development and reduces the cost and time of obtaining development consent for suitable businesses in those precincts.

On 12 June 2020, the Activation Precincts SEPP was made. All documentation, including the consultation reports, is available on the [Planning Portal](#).

What is the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct?

In January 2019, the NSW Government announced Wagga Wagga as the second Special Activation Precinct, which the government expects to provide approximately 6,000 new jobs.

The Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct is approximately 8 kilometres north of Wagga Wagga city centre, expanding out from Bomen Business Park.

The department has developed a draft master plan and a draft proposed amendment to the Activation Precincts SEPP to create the new planning framework for the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct.

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

The Activation Precincts SEPP will be amended to include precinct-specific provisions for the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct. Among these provisions are:

- The industrial core of the Special Activation Precinct will be zoned Regional Enterprise to permit a range of industrial, infrastructure and other employment uses.
- The new Rural Activity zone will surround the Regional Enterprise zone to provide a transition between the industrial core and the surrounding rural and residential uses.
- Certain low-impact uses are identified as exempt development.
- Most of the permissible uses can be done as complying development.
- Environmentally sensitive areas (comprising high-value vegetation and areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage) are mapped; exempt and complying development provisions will not apply to these areas.

Refer to the discussion paper and the draft master plan at www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/WaggaWaggaSAP for the full list of proposed amendments.

How was the structure plan developed?

The Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct Structure Plans was developed using a collaborative, multistage 'Enquiry by Design' workshop approach. This involved a series of workshops with technical specialists, government agencies and community members, to test three scenario options. The design and planning process culminated in the final Enquiry by Design workshop, which resulted in an agreed, preferred structure plan for the future development of precinct. The preferred Structure Plan was subject to further testing and refinement. The testing and findings from this work are captured in the technical studies.

The Department then developed the draft Master Plan and planning framework for the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct, based on the outcomes of the Structure Plan and technical studies.

In some instances, the proposed planning controls are a progression from the recommendations in the Structure Plan. For example, where the Structure Plan shows indicative staging, the planning framework does not identify specific development stages, and instead sets out the process for how staging will be identified through the delivery plan, which will go on public exhibition at a later stage. Similarly, the draft Master Plan does not identify the same sub-precincts as in the Structure Plan, and instead uses detailed, site-specific noise, odour and air quality controls to create a similar planning outcome.

What are the main proposed changes to the current zoning?

A new Regional Enterprise zone of 1,335 hectares is proposed for the core industrial area that replaces the 1,776 hectares of land currently zoned General Industrial. The Regional Enterprise

zone is similar in area to the General Industrial zone; 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 3,170 hectares will create a landscaped setting for the precinct, with no new residential uses allowed. The proposed changes also prohibit some industrial uses in these areas.

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

What are the planned industries for the Regional Enterprise zone?

The focus of the Regional Enterprise zone is to provide for uses that will create a high-performing enterprise precinct. These uses will take advantage of the region's strengths in agriculture, its strategic location and its access to existing and planned freight infrastructure, including Inland Rail.

Key permitted uses in this zone include industrial, manufacturing, freight and logistics, and rural industries. Hazardous and offensive industries are prohibited land uses.

Potentially hazardous development and potentially offensive industries are uses where appropriate conditions and mitigation measures can be identified and complied with to appropriately manage any risks. These uses are proposed to be allowed in the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct.

The State Environmental Planning Policy No 33—Hazardous and Offensive Development continues to apply to potentially hazardous development within Special Activation Precincts. Together with the Activation Precincts SEPP and the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct draft master plan, this policy provides the processes for identifying and managing risk.

Business, commercial and retail uses; educational establishments; and training facilities are proposed to be permitted.

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

Hydrogen is an emerging technology in Australia, and the Australian Government is already making significant investment in it following the release of the National Hydrogen Strategy. It is a renewable energy source that is useful in a range of applications. When used as a fuel, hydrogen produces no carbon emissions – only water.

Hydrogen is currently a permissible land use in the General Industrial zone. It proposed that this use continue to be permissible in the new Regional Enterprise Zone, which is to apply to the industrial core of the Special Activation Precinct.

The department is doing additional essential work to ensure that it fully understands the impact and risks of this emerging technology and that the planning framework for the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct protects against such risks. Any proposed development for a hydrogen facility would need to demonstrate the ability to mitigate all risks and negative impact.

This work will then determine the planning pathway – whether it is as complying development for certain types of hydrogen facilities or through a development application process.

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

The department is working with Wagga Wagga City Council to develop specific conditions for consent for potentially hazardous development. These conditions will provide the framework for ongoing monitoring and enforcement.

The government will also continue to assess potentially hazardous industry under State Environmental Planning Policy No 33—Hazardous and Offensive Development.

Council and the Environment Protection Authority will continue to have an ongoing enforcement role to ensure industry operates in accordance with their licences and conditions of consent.

The Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation will also conduct ongoing monitoring of noise and air in the precinct to support the Environment Protection Authority and council in their enforcement.

What are the amenity impacts, and how will surrounding communities be protected?

The proposed Rural Activity zone, along with controls for noise, odour and air quality, will provide protection for surrounding communities.

A visual-impact analysis is currently underway that will inform controls in the master plan to preserve the Brucedale community's rural outlook. The department will share and discuss this work with community members during the exhibition period.

The draft master plan seeks to limit development of solar farms in the Rural Activity zone, which aims to separate industry and residential areas and protect amenity.

There will be no additional large-scale solar farms in the eastern part of the Rural Activity zone (in the Eunony Valley). In the west, some small-scale, 35-hectare solar farms are permitted only in the parts of the Rural Activity zone where the land is not in a sensitive view area.

Provisions also address concentrating higher impact development at the centre of the precinct and to the south of Trahairs Road.

Planting trees in creek lines, along roads and on private lots will provide additional screening and create a greener outlook.

What will happen to the residential clusters to the south of the precinct?

The technical reports that support the draft master plan identified some land-use conflicts between industrial uses and existing residential areas south of the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct.

The draft master plan does not include any planning provisions for this land. Council may want to review planning controls for this area in the future to better manage existing issues. Further

investigation is necessary to determine whether any steps need to be put in place to limit additional residential uses in these areas.

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

The Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation has begun discussions with landowners about the purchase of key sites that might support the first stages of the delivery of the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct. These discussions are happening in advance of the finalisation of the master plan.

The corporation is beginning negotiations early, on a case by case basis, to allow as much time as possible to reach positive outcomes.

For further information, please go to www.rgdc.nsw.gov.au

What are the next steps?

The draft master plan, discussion paper and associated technical documents are on exhibition from 21 July–15 September 2020.

After the exhibition period ends, the department will assess and analyse the submissions and consider all feedback in finalising the master plan.

This will take some months, depending on the feedback.

Once the government has endorsed the final master plan, the Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation will develop the delivery plan to provide details on the staging and infrastructure works.

We expect construction to start mid-2021, once the precinct's design has been finalised.

Where can I get more information?

For more information, please visit our [website](#) or contact:

Website: www.planning.nsw.gov.au/WaggaWaggaSAP

Phone: 1300 73 44 66

Email: activationprecincts@dpc.nsw.gov.au

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