

Department of Planning and Environment

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# Implementation Plan 2022-2026

North Coast Regional Plan 2041

December 2022





# Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Legislative Context.....	4
Purpose of the Implementation Plan .....	4
<b>Implementation</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Actions .....	5
<b>Governance</b> .....	<b>7</b>
North Coast Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee .....	7
Supporting Groups.....	7
Existing governance framework .....	8
Links to other strategies .....	8
Review mechanisms .....	8
<b>Actions for implementation</b> .....	<b>10</b>

# Introduction

The North Coast Regional Plan 2041 (Regional Plan) is the NSW Government's strategy for guiding land use planning decisions for the North Coast region for the next 20 years.

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## Legislative Context

The Regional Plan has been prepared in accordance with Division 3.3 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and applies to the local government areas of Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond Valley, Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Bellingen, Nambucca, Kempsey and Port Macquarie-Hastings.

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## Purpose of the Implementation Plan

The purpose of this implementation plan is to:

- explain linkages between the vision, themes, objectives, actions, strategies and collaboration activities in the Regional Plan;
- assign accountabilities and timeframes for the implementation of actions;
- guide the North Coast Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee in its role of overseeing delivery of the Regional Plan; and
- inform monitoring of the Regional Plan.

# Implementation

The Regional Plan comprises three key themes and 20 objectives. The objectives are supported by six actions, 36 strategies and six collaboration activities that will help to deliver the vision for the North Coast Region.

## Actions

Actions describe initiatives that will be led by the Department of Planning and Environment in the next five years. These actions each have an outcome that will be delivered by 2026, and implementation will be monitored and reported on by the North Coast Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee. Other relevant stakeholders will be involved in the delivery of the actions as appropriate.

## Strategies

Strategies identify policy positions or directions implemented through council local strategic planning (including local strategic planning statements), local plans (including local environmental plans and development control plans) or State agency planning. They are there to guide decisions that affect land use. Strategies will be implemented through council's Local Strategic Planning Statements, local housing strategies, and other state government strategies and plans. Strategies will also be used to guide and inform decisions relating to land use planning. While the North Coast Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee will monitor the effectiveness of strategies in setting guidance and supporting strategic planning across the region, the Committee will not have a formal role in reporting against the strategies.

## Collaboration activities

Collaboration activities include important initiatives led by State agencies, local councils or other bodies. These are key activities that will help the region achieve the objectives of the Plan, and that the Department's Local and Regional Planning team will actively participate in.

This Implementation Plan applies to the Actions for which the Department is responsible.

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## Actions

Priorities for the North Coast are economic and jobs growth, housing delivery to meet demand and environmental protection. The North Coast Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee will take ownership for implementing this Regional Plan by prioritising the actions needed to be delivered over the next five years.

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment will be responsible for implementing the six actions throughout 2022-2026. These actions align with initiatives across Government, councils and industry and will require a collaborative effort involving multiple agencies, councils and stakeholders. The six actions are to:

Action 1: Establish the North Coast Urban housing monitoring program.

Action 2: Provide guidance to help councils plan for and manage accommodation options for seasonal and itinerant workers.

Action 3: Establish Housing Affordability Roundtables for the Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers subregions with councils, community housing providers, State agencies and the housing development industry to collaborate, build knowledge and identify measures to improve affordability and increase housing diversity.

Action 4: Work with councils to continue to provide guidance and tools for councils to use for evidence-based risk-management approaches to build resilience to shocks and stresses, plan for natural hazards and transition to net zero emissions.

Action 5: Work with LALCs, Native Title holders and councils by:

- meaningfully engaging with LALCs and Native Title holders in the development and review of strategic plans to ensure aspirations are reflected in plans;
- building capacity for Aboriginal communities, LALCs and Native Title holders to utilise the planning system;
- incorporating Aboriginal knowledge of the region into planning considerations and decisions.

Action 6: Undertake housing and employment land reviews for the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast subregions to assess future supply needs and locations.

# Governance

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## North Coast Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee

The North Coast Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee was established during the implementation of the North Coast Regional Plan 2036. The Committee has informed a regional governance framework and participated in the review of the Regional Plan which commenced in 2021.

The NSW Government supports these governance arrangements and will continue to convene the Delivery, Coordination and Monitoring Committee to oversee and coordinate the implementation of this Regional Plan, bringing together agencies and organisations responsible for delivering the Plan's actions.

The role of the Committee is to:

- Oversee and coordinate the implementation of the Regional Plan
- Provide accountability for delivery of the Regional Plan
- Monitor and report periodically on the progress of implementing the Regional Plan
- Collaborate to resolve issues where impediments are identified
- Provide a forum to discuss and resolve implementation issues or action delivery in a changing regional policy environment
- Prioritise delivery of actions and review project plans for each action in the Regional Plan
- Develop a communication strategy to guide communication from Committee members to the wider network of stakeholders
- Provide high level progress updates to the North Coast Regional Leadership Executive
- Sign off completed actions that have been finalised or no longer appropriate, relevant, or possible due to a changing regional policy environment
- Inform and participate in a five-year review of the Regional Plan

Committee membership includes:

- Department of Planning and Environment (Chair)
- A representative from each Local Council Joint Organisations
- Regional NSW
- Transport for NSW

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## Supporting Groups

The Committee will be supported by outcome specific working groups such as Local Aboriginal Land Councils and other groups that bring together appropriate personnel (government, industry or community) on a needs basis to provide advice on particular issues or projects.



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## Existing governance framework

It is important to recognise the existing broader governance framework in operation within the region to ensure the continuation of the Committee complements existing governance structures and does not duplicate current activity.

The North Coast Regional Leadership Executive is a platform that supports closer working relationships between NSW Government agencies and the Joint Organisation of Councils on the North Coast. The network encourages strategic collaboration, consultation, solution brokerage and engagement on regional priorities across government. The Committee benefits from having access to the Regional Leadership Executive and can escalate issues or requirements to collaborate with other agencies.

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## Links to other strategies

The NSW Government has in place, or is developing, several other strategies that will influence the implementation of the Regional Plan, including the:

- State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038
- Future Transport 2056
- A 20-year Economic Vision for Regional NSW
- Regional Economic Development strategies for the Clarence Valley, Coffs Coast, Hastings Macleay, Nambucca, Northern Rivers and Tweed Shire
- North Coast Regional Transport Plan
- Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030
- State-wide Natural Hazards Package
- Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap
- NSW Water Strategy & Regional Water Strategies
- NSW Minerals Strategy

The Regional Plan incorporates and responds to the aspirations and priorities of local communities, as articulated through the councils Local Strategic Planning Statements and Community Strategic Plans. In turn, the Regional Plan also outlines several strategies that are to be considered by councils when undertaking reviews of Local Strategic Planning Statements and Community Strategic Plans. This feedback cycle from local to regional planning ensures that the line of-sight between the different levels of spatial planning works both ways.

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## Review mechanisms

### Monitoring

The Committee will monitor and review progress towards achieving the vision and meeting the objectives. An online dashboard will include indicators for housing, employment, communities and the environment relating to



each theme. An annual Monitoring Report will also be prepared to monitor progress on implementation of the Regional Plan. The Report will outline progress on actions and collaborative activities and reprioritise where needed. A new program of work for each subsequent year will also be identified in the annual Monitoring Report.

## Regional Plan Review

The Plan will be reviewed and adjusted every five years, or as necessary, to realise the vision for 2041. A five-yearly review will revisit regional performance, challenges and opportunities and incorporate the most up to date information provided through the census process and updated Local Strategic Planning Statements and local plans. The review of the Regional Plan will be informed by the Committee as well as monitoring and indicators.

## Implementation Plan Updates

The implementation priorities will be updated on an annual basis as part of the monitoring programme and will form the work program for the following year. This will ensure that implementation of the Regional Plan remains current and responsive to regional conditions.

# Actions for implementation

## Action 1

Establish the North Coast urban housing monitoring program.

Why is this Action needed?

To improve the monitoring of new housing supply and completions to help ensure the delivery of the housing needed to support the region's growing population.

How will the Action be delivered?

The Department's Evidence and Insights team will manage the Regional Housing Supply Monitor. The relevant monitoring information for North Coast can be drawn from this Monitor.

The program may include an audit of residential zoned land to identify other barriers to development to establish a clearer housing supply pipeline in key locations.

## Action 2

Provide guidance to help councils plan for and manage accommodation options for seasonal and itinerant workers.

Why is this Action needed?

The temporary influx of seasonal workers or workers associated with major infrastructure projects can also increase demand for accommodation at different times of the year. An undersupply of accommodation options for these workers can result in upward pressure on rents for all residents.

How will the Action be delivered?

A discussion paper will be prepared by the Department's Housing Supply Policy team. The paper will provide guidance and investigate model LEP clauses and potential amendments to complying development provisions to address this issue.

## Action 3

Establish housing affordability roundtables for the Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers subregions with councils, community housing providers, State agencies and the housing development industry to collaborate, build knowledge and identify measures to improve affordability and increase housing diversity.

Why is this Action needed?

The challenges of housing affordability on the North Coast are well documented. Similar roundtable groups operate in other regions.

How will the Action be delivered?

The roundtables will bring together relevant experts and decision makers and provide an evidence base for informed discussion. The group can make recommendations to alter planning provisions to councils or the Department to improve housing affordability.

## Action 4

Work with councils to continue to provide guidance and tools for councils to use for evidence-based risk-management approaches to build resilience to shocks and stresses, plan for natural hazards and transition to net zero emissions.

Why is this Action needed?

To build resilient places and communities

How will the Action be delivered?

The Department will develop a Resilience Benchmarking Matrix tool that councils can use to assist them to identify how they can become more resilient and progress from baseline level resilience through to best practice.

The benchmarking tool will:

- Assist councils to increase their resilience to shocks and stresses, identifying where they can increase their communities' resilience to shocks and stresses within the land use planning system
- Provide guidance for and support councils to build on projects and programs they may already have underway to increase resilience.

## Action 5

The Department of Planning and Environment will work with LALCs, Native Title holders and councils by:

- meaningfully engaging with LALCs and Native Title holders in the development and review of strategic plans to ensure aspirations are reflected in plans
- building capacity for Aboriginal communities, LALCs and Native Title holders to utilise the planning system
- incorporating Aboriginal knowledge of the region into planning considerations and decisions.

Why is this Action needed?

During the development of the Regional Plan, dedicated First Nations engagement demonstrated that Aboriginal land holders still face barriers in utilising the planning system to achieve land use aspirations. The Department will continue to work with First Nations land holders to ensure strategic planning decisions consider Aboriginal knowledge and aspirations.

#### How will the Action be delivered?

The Department will work with Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Native Title holders and other community recognised Aboriginal organisations. Various programs are currently being scoped by the Department, including a 'planning for non-planners' course for Aboriginal land holders.

## Action 6

Undertake housing and employment land reviews for the Northern Rivers and Mid North Coast subregions to assess future supply needs and locations.

#### Why is this Action needed?

Subregional land supply planning will help in the delivery of housing and employment land to local communities. This action will identify and help coordinate appropriate housing and employment land supply across the region catering for the needs and physical constraints in certain locations.

#### How will the Action be delivered?

The Department will undertake house and employment land audits and work with local councils to identify supply opportunities in appropriate locations that suits their unique needs and constraints working in collaboration across the sub regions with the outcomes considered in the next review of the Regional Plan.