

CM14.1. Draft Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 – AlburyCity Submission

DATE	14 September 2022	FIL REFERENCE	FIL22/00151
CONFIDENTIAL	No		
FURTHER ENQUIRIES	David Christy City Development	PHONE	6023 8111
AUTHOR	Chris Graham		

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief overview of the draft Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 and a copy of the AlburyCity submission to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).

Background

In 2017, the DPE finalised a suite of regional plans across NSW, including for the Riverina Murray Region. The regional plans set a 20-year framework, vision and direction for strategic planning and land use.

More recently, the DPE released the draft Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 (DRAFT Plan) (attachment 1) being the first five year review to reset priorities and to extend the Plans' reach from 2036 to 2041.

The Riverina Murray region consists of 20 local government areas being Albury, Berrigan, Bland, Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Edward River, Federation, Greater Hume, Griffith, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murray River, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Snowy Valleys, Temora and Wagga Wagga.

The NSW Government's vision for the Riverina Murray is *a diversified economy founded on Australia's food bowl, iconic waterways and a network of vibrant connected communities*.

Following review, AlburyCity has prepared a submission (attachment 2) to the DPE identifying key issues for further consideration prior to finalising and implementing the DRAFT Plan.

Issues

Attachment 2 provides a copy of the AlburyCity submission to the DPE on the DRAFT Plan that identifies key issues for further consideration. This section provides an overview of the key issues raised in our submission.

- The DRAFT Plan has morphed from a NSW Government high-level document (detailing NSW Government commitments) in the former 2036 Plan, to a mostly Council Action Plan relating to our Local Strategic Planning Statement [LSPS]. Within the AlburyCity submission (attachment

2) is a comparison of relevant Council Activities from the DRAFT Plan against the Albury LSPS Actions. While there is a general alignment, there are some timeframe variances which are generally more onerous and are highlighted in the submission. An additional Council Activity identified in the DRAFT Plan, but not included within the Albury LSPS, is to develop an employment lands strategy. While noting the benefits of preparing an employment lands strategy following the NEXUS Regional Jobs Precinct (RJP) and NSW-wide Employment Zones Reform, reconsideration of this Council Activity timeframe is needed in recognising the extensive LSPS work program already established.

- Noting the change of focus toward Council activities and shorter-term actions, the DRAFT Plan has less emphasis on long-term (20-year) directions and strategies for the region and suggests it could be more ambitious in this regard.
- Greater clarity on the framework, commitments and State Government funding available is needed to assist understanding on how the DRAFT Plan will be implemented.
- Greater emphasis should be given to the NEXUS RJP within the DRAFT Plan. Relevant directions and actions for the Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct (SAP) should also include commensurate considerations for the NEXUS RJP, to help ensure appropriate development outcomes for this significant precinct and the surrounding region.

Risk

- **Business Risk** – State government-led changes, as incorporated into the draft Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041, may impact on Council's leverage in seeking State Government funding for various projects associated with implementation of the DRAFT Plan recommendations and activities.
- **Corporate Risk** – there is a public risk that the State-prepared plan could be perceived as local government-led, particularly given that numerous activities/commitments cited are identified as Council activities to investigate, document and implement.
- **WHS and Public Risk** – no risks identified.
- **Environmental Risk** – no risks identified in recognition that the DRAFT Plan and recommended actions remain high-level. It is anticipated that individual activities and projects that seek to deliver DRAFT Plan recommendations and activities will undertake all necessary environmental assessments as required.
- **Delivery Program Risk** – as noted earlier in this report, timeframes cited for Council activities are considered too onerous (especially when considering the number of projects, timeframes typically required for strategic planning activities, limited resources and other Council commitments).

Community Engagement

As this is NSW Government planning policy, there is no community engagement component required to be undertaken by AlburyCity.

Public exhibition has been undertaken by the DPE (via its website and the NSW Planning Portal) from 28 July 2022 to 12 September 2022. The DPE convened some meetings with relevant Councils and two online community sessions. The DPE has also promoted exhibition of the DRAFT Plan via advertisement in the Border Mail newspaper, stakeholder emails and social media posts. To assist, AlburyCity has also shared information via our planning and development industry email newsletter and social media.

Conclusion

This report provides an overview of key issues identified in the draft Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 proposed by the NSW Government. Whilst AlburyCity supports the overall intent of the DRAFT Plan to provide a 20-year land-use plan that seeks to assist and facilitate ongoing prosperity for the Riverina Murray, a submission to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment has been prepared, identifying keys issues for further consideration prior to finalising and implementing the DRAFT Plan.

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the report on the draft Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 and submission to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

Attachments

1. DRAFT Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 (DOC22/180365).
2. DRAFT Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041 – Submission from AlburyCity (DOC22/180203).