

D19/62912

18 October 2019

Executive Director
Compliance, Industry and Key Sites
Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Executive Director

STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING POLICY ACTIVATION PRECINCTS

Orange City Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft State Environmental Planning Policy Activation Precincts (SEPP). Council supports NSW Government policies that encourage economic development opportunities in regional NSW.

In reference to the specific circumstances in Orange there is a significant opportunity for a Special Activation Precinct (SAP) around the Orange Health Service in South Orange. Council has teamed with NSW Planning and Environment to develop the Orange Health and Innovation Precinct Masterplan. The draft document will be exhibited prior to the end of the year.

While the Orange Health and Innovation Precinct Masterplan is a significant step towards meeting the standards of a Special Activation Precinct, the government led studies element of the proposed SAP core components will be a critical next step.

While Council gives in principal support for the SEPP a number of issues are flagged including the following points:

1. How to deal with opposition/support to special activation precincts
2. When does the community get involved
3. The resourcing needed to prepare the special activation precinct framework
4. Purpose of a DA within the SAP framework

While the Community Consultation (section 7) of the Parkes SAP provides some guidance on community involvement there needs to be a clearer process for the establishment of a SAP that provides opportunity for input from the community. Such a process would give the SAP a stronger public mandate.

Council also assumes that Regional Growth NSW will undertake some form of community consultation during the Master Plan and Delivery Plan stages.

On the second point the process seems to be setting out a body of work to be undertaken prior to any development application being received so there may need to be some work done to ensure the process is streamlined.

While the intention is to facilitate important development that will deliver significant benefits for the communities involved, the process needs to ensure the development is consistent with the aims of the local community.

On the third point, it is likely that the resources required in the master planning/delivery planning process maybe beyond the capabilities of a Council. In the case of the Orange Health and Innovation Precinct it will deliver benefits well beyond the local government area boundaries.

Finally the “Proposal Certificate” that is to be issued by Regional Growth NSW would seem to be for all intents and purposes a development application assessment. This may constrain the subsequent DA assessment limiting consideration of possible inconsistencies with the proposal.

Orange City Council is particularly eager to work with the NSW Government on the Orange Health and Innovation Precinct.

The Orange Health and Innovation Precinct Master Plan sets out a future vision and high level strategy for Orange as a major regional health cluster to support the regional catchment and support economic growth.

Its primary purpose is to coordinate land use, transport, building design, public space and infrastructure to create a built environment and urban landscape that supports a thriving, innovative, connected and inclusive Precinct. Aligning to the NSW Premier’s Priorities, this master plan will have access to grant funding opportunities to better contribute to each of regional NSW’s objectives and priorities.

Currently, the City of Orange is enjoying the benefits of a renewed interest in New South Wales regional growth centres, which has generated a sustained period of investment, revitalisation and diversification, driving rises in living standards with sophisticated health, education and cultural service offering, equally enabling more vibrant communities.

This growth has the potential to contribute to Local and State economic growth and prosperity, but will also place added pressure on infrastructure, transport networks and human capital.

Accordingly, integrated planning of infrastructure and capacity building projects are essential to ensure that growth is not constrained by existing infrastructure and capacity.

Yours sincerely



David Waddell
CEO