



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

15 December 2020

Ms Sarah Lees
Director, Southern Region
Local and Regional Planning
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
PO Box 5475
WOLLONGONG NSW 2520

Dear Ms Lees

UOW Submission on the Draft Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan

The University of Wollongong welcomes the public release of the draft Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan (the Regional Plan) and wishes to express its appreciation in being invited to participate in several workshops earlier this year as part of the process informing its drafting.

Further, I wish to extend my appreciation to you and your staff in agreeing to meet with senior UOW representatives on 11 December to clarify and discuss elements of the draft Regional Plan and to hear from the University about our initial thinking towards reviewing and refreshing the Innovation Campus Master Plan. I have been advised that this was a very useful and productive extended discussion.

UOW broadly supports the intent, themes, objectives and strategies as outlined in the document. We note that the draft Regional Plan builds upon an extensive body of regional strategic planning stretching back more than thirty years which has proven to be of significant benefit to the region as a whole and its constituent communities and major stakeholders, including UOW. We also acknowledge the stronger connection being enabled in better linking local planning (Local Strategic Planning Statements) and regional strategic planning.

In our review of the draft, and touching on some specific matters as discussed extensively in the aforementioned meeting, the University offers the following more specific comments:

Objective 1: Strengthen Metro Wollongong as a connected, innovative, and progressive city

Page 21

The reference to the no longer existing 'School of Medicine, Nursing and Midwifery' should be changed to 'Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health'. In relation to the proposed Health Precinct Strategy, the plan recognises UOW as a stakeholder. Apart from our clinical and research collaboration with hospitals within the precinct at West Crown Street, the proposed Health and Wellbeing Precinct on our Innovation Campus has an important interrelationship.

Damien Israel
Chief Operating Officer

Page 23

UOW supports the intent of this section (Grow Metro Wollongong's education, innovation and research capabilities) and much of its content. The University does, however, believe that a more fulsome and descriptive reference to the Innovation Campus should be considered for inclusion along the lines of the text provided to DPIE at the recent meeting. Importantly this explicitly acknowledges its existence as the largest masterplanned education, research and related enterprise precinct in regional NSW and, by extension, its role as a focus for the growing ecosystem of innovative enterprises emerging across the region.

In relation to the draft Strategy 1.5, the university notes and supports the intent of the first dot point (encouraging collaboration between education and research institutions to foster knowledge sharing and innovation). However, the current draft infers that Wollongong City Council is in some way a lead for this effort. The institutions within Wollongong, including UOW, have long collaborated in this way and will continue to do so. There may be merit in rewording this to focus on engagement between institutions, business and the community – which UOW and others also have long been active.

At the recent meeting, DPIE outlined the rationale in relation to the Regionally Significant Employment Lands, Regionally Significant Growth Areas and Regionally Significant Centres as per Page 14. UOW acknowledges the advice that the Innovation Campus is considered to be a major precinct under the 'Metro Wollongong' Regionally Significant Centre. It was noted that while DPIE continues to consider the Innovation Campus as being an important employment land within the region, the Regionally Significant Employment Lands listed require specific intervention by state agencies, Councils and others to further unlock their potential.

Objective 2: Grow the Region's Regional Cities

The University notes the focus on the further development of Nowra as a major commercial, employment, and services hub as well as the location of major new housing areas. DPIE notes the proximity of the Shoalhaven Campus at Mundamia (Pages 27-28) as well as the new Industry 4.0 hub at the campus. This is an example of development of facilities in recent years (such as MIND the GaP and co-location of NOAH's Shoalhaven) that focus on community services and industry outreach and which are broadening the role of the campus beyond traditional education and research to address the needs of this growing area.

Please do not hesitate to contact our Senior Manager, Strategic Projects; Mark Roberts (on 0408 411 484 or via marrob@uow.edu.au) should you require any further information or clarifications with regard to the matters contained within this submission. The University looks forward to the finalisation and release of the completed Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan.

Yours sincerely



Damien Israel
Chief Operating Officer