

Summary of the Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) report

Prepared by Dsquared for the Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct

The Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct (Precinct) aims to grow a strong one-season visitor economy into a successful four-season destination by stimulating economic development and investment and increasing year-round jobs in supporting industries.

We are creating a Master Plan that outlines the 40-year vision for the Snowy Mountains, using insights from the community, stakeholders and findings from a range of reports and technical studies.

Prior to public exhibition of the draft Master Plan in mid-2021, a range of reports have been released in advance, including the ESD report, to provide additional time to review these to help inform submissions.

The ESD report outlines a range of factors that have informed the draft Master Plan, however they may not all be reflected in the draft Master Plan, as the draft Master Plan also considers the vision for the Precinct, community and stakeholder feedback, available funding for government infrastructure and protection of environmental values.

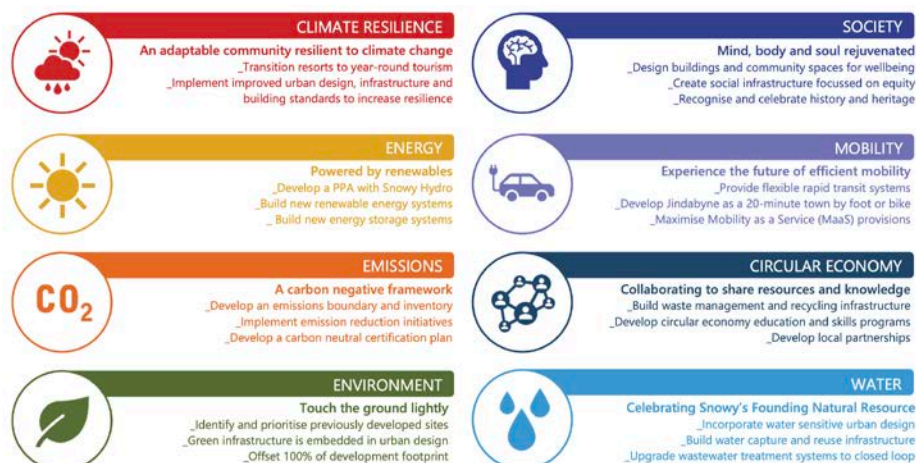
This report summary provides a high-level overview of the ESD report. More details can be found in the full [ESD report](#). If you have any comments in relation to these reports, please address them in your submission when the draft Master Plan goes on exhibition.

Overview of the ESD report

The ESD report was prepared by Dsquared and provides a summary of the ESD opportunities and the ESD vision and key moves for the master plan.

Key themes and strategies from the ESD report

Key ESD themes and strategies have been identified to provide immediate outcomes and to establish the Precinct as an international leader in sustainable development for tourism-based communities. These eight themes/strategies are shown in the table below.



Key findings from the ESD report

- The ESD objectives of the Precinct's vision include:
 - the Snowy Mountains will be a national leader in environmental resilience and sustainability;
 - with investment in renewable energies, green infrastructure, and carbon sequestration;
 - aspirations for a carbon negative future;
 - opportunities to connect with nature; and
 - continued protection of the Kosciuszko National Park.
- Embedding ESD principles into the Master Plan will ensure that the Precinct is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.
- Climate change impacts are outlined with the highest risk ratings given to increased rainfall intensity, more frequent and intense bushfires, and the cumulative impacts of climate change. Alongside the risk assessments, a risk response strategy will be incorporated into the Precinct's planning. It is recommended that climate change datasets are analysed further and a detailed plan developed which considers how the Precinct and resorts can transition in an informed and staged manner.
- There are significant opportunities to transition to low and zero emission energy and transport options while improving resilience and supporting development growth and these are outlined by source. The main sources of emissions within the Precinct are expected to be power plants, transport, waste to landfill, refrigerants, water consumption and procurement of office materials.
- Increased tourism, development and the planned growth of the region will result in increased energy consumption, demand, emissions and costs for the Precinct. Existing renewable energy in the region generates more energy than the Precinct's current demand, however supply is not guaranteed for the Precinct.
- Sustainable communities are a priority for the Precinct and includes community health and wellbeing, social connections, heritage and culture, and connection to place. Wellness tourism, sports and fitness, celebration of Indigenous culture, community wellbeing, improved social infrastructure, building design, consideration of food resources and sustainable events are seen as key ways to improve the social sustainability of the Precinct.
- Current transport systems in the Precinct are heavily reliant on private vehicle ownership for travel to and within the region. It should be a priority to transition from fossil fuel-based transport to efficient and sustainable transport systems. This includes the incorporation of zero-emission transport options, public transport and active transport options.
- Environmental conservation is a critical aspect of the overall vision, where development and conservation must be aligned to allow the successful growth of the area. Kosciuszko National Park is the largest National Park in New South Wales, and there are many known threatened flora and fauna species.
- Water is an especially important resource for the Snowy region. Water has historical and geological importance, and is a huge economic contributor to the region through the Snowy Hydro Scheme. Sustainable water infrastructure, including water capture and reuse and water sensitive urban design should be incorporated into the Precinct.
- Existing sustainability initiatives at Kosciuszko National Park, including at the resorts, provide a foundation for region-wide approaches.
- The development of specific Alpine Precinct carrying capacity models which take into account environmental considerations can help to reduce environmental impact and improve ongoing sustainability.

- Creating a circular economy within the region can provide benefits from an environmental, economic and social perspective, with increased efficiencies providing greater return on investment for the local economy and reduced resource consumption decreasing environmental impact.

Key directions from the ESD report that are considered in the draft Master Plan

- The ESD plan for the Precinct draws on the vision and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The themes identified are: climate resilience, emissions, energy, society, mobility, environment, circular economy, water and leadership.
- The report recommends frameworks and rating tools for the Precinct to achieve an internationally recognised accreditation that can be used to celebrate the Precinct's strong ESD focus, while attracting investment and driving growth.
- Various sections of the community will be required to engage with the Environmental Management System (EMS) framework. This ranges from mandatory organisations, including Government, Council and the larger resorts, to differing scales for businesses, residents and tourists.
- A number of ESD destination opportunities have been identified for consideration to support growth in ecotourism and therefore visitation to the region. These include eco-cabins and glamping, adventure tourism, eco and wellbeing activities, a mini-hydro education centre, zero emissions transport hub, zero carbon scenic flight and establishing Jindabyne as a sustainable design centre.
- To provide a carbon negative community, a proposed pathway to carbon negative operations is outlined and includes emissions reduction initiatives and a carbon sequestration and offset program to bring the Precinct's emissions to below zero prior to 2060.
- The report also contains a table that summarises the ESD aims, performance criteria and provisions to be considered in the development of the Precinct's Master Plan and Delivery Plan.

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