



# Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan (2023)

## Consultation Summary Report

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The Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning connects industries, businesses, communities and government (at all levels) to leverage regions' strengths to generate sustainable and enduring economic growth that supports well-planned, inclusive and resilient communities.

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# 1. Introduction

This report supports the release of the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan (2023) (WBBRP) which was developed having regard to extensive consultation. It has been prepared to summarise the themes and issues raised during public notification on the draft WBBRP, which were then considered in making recommendations to the Planning Minister for consideration of making the WBBRP.

The WBBRP covers the Bundaberg, Cherbourg, Fraser Coast, Gympie, North Burnett, and South Burnett local government areas (LGAs) and is:

- » a statutory instrument under the *Planning Act 2016* (Planning Act) that contextualises and prioritises state interests at the regional level and expresses how planning by state agencies and local governments can best deliver regional outcomes
- » applies under the *Regional Planning Interests Act 2014* (the RPI Act), which provides for the consistent application of land use policies in regional plans to resource activities and other regulated activities that generally occur outside of the Planning Act
- » plays a critical role in identifying and promoting the region's infrastructure priorities and help guide future government funding by improving the coordination and integration of land use and infrastructure planning and delivery, at a regional scale.

The WBBRP was developed in collaboration with regional project working groups and the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Planning Committee (WBBRPC) to reflect current Queensland Government policies, improve efficiencies in decision-making and provide contemporary direction for economic growth and sustainability.

Statutory public notification on the draft WBBRP occurred from 8 November 2022 to 24 February 2023, under section 10 of the Planning Act. During this period, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (the department) received 60 submissions (on behalf of the Planning Minister) from local governments, state agencies, sectorial groups and communities on the draft regional plan.

## 2. Overview of engagement process

The department undertook extensive consultation with state, local government and community stakeholders on the draft WBBRP during the notification period.

### 2.1 Regional Planning Committee

The then Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure was chair of the WBBRPC, which comprises the mayors of the six local governments and government Members of Parliament from the region (Members for Maryborough, Bundaberg and Hervey Bay). The role of the WBBRPC is to advise the Minister about the development and implementation of the WBBRP. The WBBRPC met on four occasions during the preparation and finalisation of the WBBRP to inform the development of the vision, strategic priorities, and key actions.

### 2.2 State Agency Working Group

The department engaged extensively with state agencies during the preparation of the WBBRP through a State Agency Working Group (SAWG) and individual one-on-one meetings with state agency representatives.

SAWG meetings were held on three occasions during the preparation and consultation of the draft WBBRP.

### 2.3 Local Government Working Group

During the public notification period, the department undertook engagement with local governments through the Local Government Working Group (LGWG), and individual one-on-one meetings with local government representatives during the preparation and consultation of the draft WBBRP, and following the public notification period.

LGWG meetings were held on five occasions during the preparation and consultation of the draft WBBRP.

## 2.4 Community Working Group – industry, community and environment and First Nations

Two community groups were established to inform the preparation of the draft WBBRP: the Industry, Community and Environment Working Group (ICEWG) and the First Nations Working Group (FNWG). These working groups assisted in the identification of regional challenges and opportunities and the strategic priorities of the region.

In addition to meetings during preparation of the draft WBBRP, a targeted briefing on the draft WBBRP was conducted with the ICEWG on 13 December 2022 and the FNWG and community elders on 17 January 2023.

## 2.5 Statutory Public Notification

Statutory public notification on the draft regional plan commenced on 8 November 2022 and closed on 24 February 2023.

Local governments, sectoral groups and community were invited to have their say and provide feedback on the draft plan through various platforms (e.g. on-line platform, written correspondence).

During this time, the department held community consultation events (open meeting and meet-a-planner sessions) as follows:

» Gympie	22 November 2022
» Maryborough (Fraser Coast)	23 November 2022
» Bundaberg	7 December 2022
» Gayndah (North Burnett)	24 January 2023
» Cherbourg	7 February 2023
» Kingaroy (South Burnett)	8 February 2023
» Hervey Bay (Fraser Coast)	14 and 21 February 2023

The department also held a number of stakeholder working group meetings for local governments, First Nations peoples, and sectoral groups, and attended key forums including the Fraser Coast Regional Community Forum (Gympie), Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) forum (Hervey Bay) and WBB Resource Group workshop.

## 2.6 Online Platforms

The department coordinated an online platform for managing community input during the WBBRP public notification period. This platform (Engagement HQ) was updated to provide community members access to the draft WBBRP for their review and comment during the formal consultation period. Community consultation activities and submissions received through the draft WBBRP's public consultation process assisted in the finalisation of the WBBRP.

The following provides a summary of statistics to the online platform:

<b>Aware participants</b>	<b>4,273</b>
• Visited webpage	4,273
<b>Informed participants</b>	<b>1,616</b>
• Downloaded documents	624
• Visited key dates page	56
• Visited FAQ page	619
• Visited multiple pages	985
• Contributed to a consultation tool (became engaged)	363

Engaged participants	363
• Participated in surveys	25
• Participated in quick polls	315
• Asked questions	15
• Contributed to ideas	42

### 3. Overview of registration process

In deciding whether to make the regional plan under section 10 of the Planning Act, the (Planning) Minister must consider all submissions that were properly made, as required under the public notice published on 8 November 2022 advising of the public notification of the draft WBBRP.

All but one submissions were received electronically. Once submissions were received, they were registered and reviewed. Table 1 provides an overview of the submission registrations and review process.

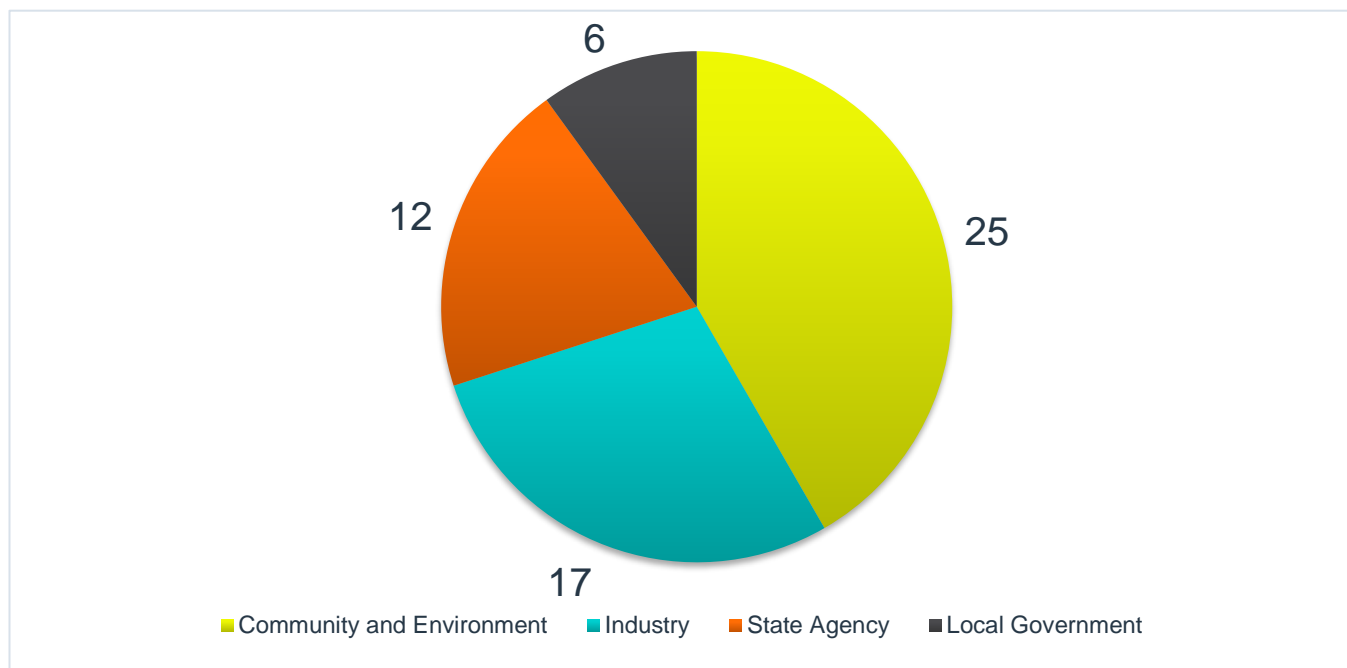
**Table 1 Submission registration and review process**

Step	Action
1 Registration of submissions	Submissions were registered and allocated a unique submission number. Submitters received an acknowledgement email that their submission had been received.
2 Classification of submissions	Submissions were classified by number and section relevant to the draft WBBRP.
3 Summarising submissions issues	Each submission was reviewed, and each distinct matter was entered into the submissions database.  Submissions were summarised and allocated against relevant themes.
4 Evaluation and responses to issues	Once all comments were summarised, they were assessed, and responses prepared.  Not all submission matters resulted in a change, however all changes proposed in consideration of feedback raised were identified.
5 Submissions report	The submissions report collates steps 3 and 4, providing a summary of the submissions considered, information about the merits of the submissions and recommendations for changes to the draft WBBRP to reflect submissions.  Comments raised through submissions have been summarised to simplify the presentation and review of comments.
6 Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (the Minister) approval	The final submissions report and WBBRP was submitted to the Minister for review and consideration when deciding on the making of the regional plan.
7 Publishing and notification of the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan	As soon as practicable after the Minister approved the final WBBRP, the department published: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a gazette notice establishing the date the WBBRP came into effect and stating the WBBRP has been approved and is available on the department’s website for inspection</li> <li>• the WBBRP on the department’s website.</li> </ul>

### 4. Overview of submissions

During the notification period, a total of 60 formally made submissions on the draft WBBRP were received, along with the inclusion of four late submissions. A breakdown of the submissions formally received is outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Graphical representation of submissions received by interested party during public notification period.



### 4.1 Key themes and matters raised in submissions

Submitters provided in principle support for the regional plan review process and plan objectives, with some support also for the plan’s emphasis on people and social drivers backed by economic development.

Table 2 Submission overview of key themes and key issues

Common themes	Key issues
Competing land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolution of competing land uses and area of regional interest</li> <li>Co-existence of existing and proposed high value land use activities</li> <li>Balancing resource values, agricultural, environmental and renewable energy values</li> </ul>
Dark Sky provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic, social, cultural and biodiversity values of internationally significant wildlife population</li> <li>Implications for coastal urban development</li> <li>Ability for local contextualisation by councils</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of adequate housing supply and diversity in the region</li> <li>Density and diversity targets not stipulated for townships</li> <li>Insufficient policy guidance on housing delivery</li> </ul>
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of clarity on how to integrate into local planning schemes</li> <li>Perception of lack of tangible policy outcomes and implementation actions</li> </ul>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absence of WBB Infrastructure Plan</li> <li>Lack of identified regional and local infrastructure project funding</li> </ul>
Regional plan mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absence of urban footprint or similar urban boundary</li> </ul>
Regional identity and vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater consideration of regional competitive advantages</li> <li>Challenges in finding a shared regional vision</li> </ul>

Common themes	Key issues
Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Long term regional settlement pattern not clearly articulated</li><li>• Settlement hierarchy and competing primary centres</li><li>• Future of small regional towns and declining settlements</li><li>• Rural residential land supply</li></ul>

## 4.2 Sectorial feedback

Seventeen submissions were received from sectorial representatives, covering a diverse range of interests. Overall feedback from industry was supportive of the review process, commending the emphases on people and social drivers backed by economic development.

## 4.3 Local government feedback

Local governments were predominantly in support of the regional plan's objectives. However, some opposed the plan in its current form, suggesting that aspects may not result in tangible outcomes, or the policy is too broad to be effective. Majority of the feedback received was targeted and assisted in amendments to the final plan.

Follow-up one-on-one meetings between representatives of local governments of the region and the department were undertaken during April and May 2023.

## 4.4 Community, industry and environment, and First Nations feedback

A total of 42 submissions were received from industry, community and environment representatives, including community groups, consultants, landowners and key industry representatives, all of which covered a wide array of key matters. Overall, majority of the feedback received was in support of the regional plan. No submissions were received from FNWG representatives.

# 5. Amendments based on submissions

The following is a summary of amendments from the draft to final regional plan in response to the feedback received:

- » updated the narrative around key challenges and opportunities in the region to provide more support for the region's future economic development
- » amended the Dark Sky provisions to allow more flexibility for local contextualisation and implementation by local governments when implementing through local planning instruments (which are subject to state review and approval)
- » clarified (through graphical representation) the regional settlement and growth areas and incorporation of strengthened narrative and supportive mapping
- » included editorial changes to amend/rectify inconsistencies in data, mapping, and infographics based on newly available information and context provided from stakeholders via submissions
- » removed guidance designed to inform community understanding for consultation purposes.



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