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BAROSSA GAWLER LIGHT ADELAIDE PLAINS

Annual Report

Financial Year 2024-25

Presented at the 2025 Annual General Meeting held on Monday 13 October 2025

Signatory:

Jennifer Lynch
CEO & Director of Regional Development
Regional Development Australia Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains



Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries
and Regions

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgment of Country

Regional Development Australia Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains acknowledge Ngadjuri, Kurna and Peramangk people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Acknowledgment of Core Funding Partners

Regional Development Australia Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains acknowledges our Core Funding Partners:



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Gawler



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Chair's Report

The future presents significant promise for our region, and the central message is clear: we must actively shape what lies ahead rather than simply respond to it.

The RDA Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains area is expected to accommodate about 30% of the current phase of housing expansion. While this growth is encouraging, it calls for thoughtful forward planning and strategic decision-making to ensure that new peri-urban precincts are both vibrant and sustainable, and that our community is well-equipped for the challenges of tomorrow.

Achieving a balanced relationship between jobs and housing will be critical as we seek to attract new employers and businesses ready to invest locally. Robust housing growth is only sustainable if matched by strong local job opportunities. To support this, we need a skilled workforce, either currently available or developed through tailored training pipelines that meet the needs of employers and job seekers alike.

Our strategy must also include a diverse range of housing options—social, affordable, and rental—to enable workers to reside locally, reducing the pressure of long commutes and fostering social cohesion. If essential services and infrastructure lag behind housing developments, it can negatively affect quality of life and deter investment. Temporary fixes are insufficient; lasting success relies on comprehensive, solutions-focused planning.

We must also be vigilant about the risks associated with rapid increases in the cost of materials and housing. Such trends can make it difficult for essential workers to remain in the region. This highlights the need for a targeted, strategic approach to community development rather than a haphazard one.

Stable growth requires the presence of anchor employers who can provide reliable jobs and support local demand for skills. Coordinated training and development programs aligned with industry needs will help keep wages and career prospects local, reinforcing the region's economic base.

As our region expands, building a cohesive community is vital to ensuring long-term prosperity and avoiding future decline. Key steps before commencing development include demographic analysis of incoming residents, understanding the existing communities, and evaluating the physical layout of new housing areas. Local councils play a crucial role in providing community centres and shared spaces, and nurturing a sense of local identity with clear long-term objectives.

Community members will naturally shape their surroundings through involvement in childcare, schools, sporting clubs, and, importantly, local employment opportunities. Fostering local champions—those who connect and lead others—and leveraging programs such as our RDA Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains Leadership course will empower individuals to guide their communities effectively.

It is essential to begin these initiatives now, building a forward-looking vision for the region. Strengthening community bonds is the cornerstone of resilience and future success.

Our region is well-positioned for the future, buoyed by the recent appointments of Mayor Shanks in Gawler and Mayor Close in Light, which provide strong, clear leadership. The resolution of boundary alignment discussions offers all stakeholders a defined path to collaboratively create a vibrant, prosperous community.

In closing, I acknowledge the outstanding contributions of our CEO, Jennifer Lynch, whose dynamic leadership in her initial months has set a positive trajectory for our organisation.

Supported by our dedicated staff and an unwavering board, we are firmly on course to build a robust regional economy and establish our region as a powerhouse within the state.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rolf Binder', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rolf Binder

Chair

Regional Development Australia – Barossa Gawler Light Adeliade Plains

Executive Summary

Regional Development Australia (RDA) Barossa Gawler Light Adelaide Plains (BGLAP) is a non-government, non-profit organisation dedicated to driving sustainable economic growth and community development across one of South Australia's most vibrant regions. We collaborate with local, state, and federal governments, businesses, industries, and communities to create local opportunities and enhance the liveability of our area.

FY25 Focus:

Our key focus for FY25 sought to continue to build on our Regional Strategic Priorities and Regional Operational Priorities as identified in RDABGLAP's simplified one-page Strategic Plan.

Ultimately, our focus and resources sought to ensure that planned housing and population growth is sustainable; that planning, development and land use is balanced; and that infrastructure (civic, social, digital) can meet current demand and can grow with future need, thereby supporting our region's businesses and community to optimise with and from local development and investment opportunities for current and future generations in our peri-urban region.

RDABGLAP's focus remained unchanged throughout the FY25 period, however our organisation's ability to deliver all planned activities against our regional priorities and focus fluctuated in momentum due to a number of changes in personnel in the latter half of the FY25 period as noted further below.

Progress, Successes and Significant Achievements:

In FY25, RDABGLAP delivered tangible results across multiple fronts, including:

- **Major Projects Enablement:** progressing major regional investment projects, including the Southern Barossa Winery & Tourist Accommodation Project (InterContinental Hotel) and Dublin Park Green Circular Economy Precinct
- **Business Capacity and Capability Growth:** supporting over 90 local businesses through our B2B Support Program, as well as welcoming two (2) new Program Providers to expand the Program's capabilities in Planning (developments) and Business Fundamentals
- **Leadership:** 21 graduates completed the Empowered Leaders Program (seven-session series with practical Community Impact Projects).
- **Sector & Community Resilience:** advising and coordinating support for the tomato industry during the ToBRFV response; targeted assistance for key proponents (Agrisano Fresh, Gawler Community Retirement Homes, King AI) including modelling and letters of support.
- **Regional Awareness and Engagement:** Q1 communications results showed strong digital reach; plus a packed calendar of forums and briefings (RBA Economic Briefing, Gather Round information session, Small Business & Innovation Forum, Back of the Napkin business lunches, skills workshops).
- **Additional Funding:** securing new funding to advance regional childcare, leadership, and drought resilience initiatives.

Our organisation maintained strong momentum in advocacy, investment attraction, and workforce development, ensuring our region remained well-positioned for sustainable growth.

Our Board

Our Board is passionate about its role in growing a strong and connected regional economy and facilitating connections across regional communities and with all levels of government to support economic development.

The Board comprises both industry leaders with senior corporate experience and expertise and experienced local government leaders.

In FY25, Board Meetings were held bimonthly, and complimented by Board Workshops to explore key areas of RDABGLAP's focus. In addition to our Board Meetings and Workshops, two designated Committees of the Board – RDABGLAP's Finance Committee, and, RDABGLAP's Governance & Risk Committee – met quarterly per annum in support of ensuring robust corporate governance, financial and risk management.

Our Board Membership remained stable throughout FY25, which included welcoming the appointment of Mr Chris Cowley, CEO of the Town of Gawler, in late calendar year 2024 as the only change in our Board's membership and composition for the 12-month reporting period.

Please click [here](#) to view Board Member Profiles.

Our Team

In FY25, RDABGLAP's leadership was dynamic and includes/ed three (3) leaders throughout the 12-month reporting period:

- former CEO Leonie Boothby (1 July 2024 – 20 December 2024),
- Acting CEO Grace Trimboli (21 December 2024 – Monday 27 January 2025), and
- current CEO Jennifer Lynch (27 January 2025 to present).

In FY25, RDABGLAP's day to day operating team experienced a number of changes in personnel, resulting in temporary periods of operating below required and planned resource capacity for extended periods of time due to recruitment and on-boarding, as well as off-boarding.

As at the conclusion of the FY25 reporting period, and as at preparation of this report (early October 2025), RDABGLAP's resourcing challenges and changes have been settled, and our current team are experienced and knowledgeable, cohesive and collaborative.

As a collective, our team:

- Directly support business development, sector development, investment attraction and stakeholder support as well as regional, economic, and business development
- Communications, promotion, engagement, advocacy, facilitation, and project delivery
- Corporate services, governance, planning and reporting
- Program delivery including Barossa Regional University Campus, Regional Leadership Development Program.

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BAROSSA GAWLER LIGHT ADELAIDE PLAINS Board

Rolf Binder
Chair
Andrew Morphett
Deputy Chair
Stephen Balch
Treasurer
Rachel Brdanovic
Secretary
David Bailey
Board
Kieran Chappel
Board
Chris Cowley
Board
Bridget Kimber
Board
Sami Koerner
Board
Martin McCarthy
Board
Ashden Saegenschnitter
Board
Natalie Seaman
Board

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BAROSSA GAWLER LIGHT ADELAIDE PLAINS Team

Jennifer Lynch
CEO & Director of Regional Development
Dr Laura Hodgson
Economic Development Manager
Anita Mariani
Regional Development Manager
Dr Caryn Rogers
Communications Manager
Skye Martin
Finance & Administration Manager
Kate Goodes
Barossa Regional University Campus Manager
Danika King
Barossa Regional University Campus Support Officer
Amanda Wells
Barossa Regional University Campus Student Success & Engagement Mentor

The above resource profile *includes* resources that are funded through Program Delivery Funding for the Barossa Regional University Campus (BRUC) (total: 1.8 / 6.49 FTE).

Strategic context and regional priorities

Regional Context

Our region – spanning the peri-urban areas of Barossa, Gawler, Light, and Adelaide Plains (BGLAP) – has been identified by the Federal and South Australian Governments as a key high-growth area, offering tremendous opportunities for business owners, investors, and new residents.

The BGLAP region is experiencing significant housing and population growth with further growth forecast for the next 15+ years, including the development and finalisation of the South Australian Government's [Greater Adelaide Regional Plan](#), which was released on 17 March 2025, in this reporting period.

RDABGLAP represents more than \$4 billion in Gross Regional Product to South Australia (SA) and more than 6,200 regional businesses across the Barossa, Gawler, Light and Adelaide Plains areas.

Major industries in our region include agribusiness (wine, food, and broader agriculture), tourism, advanced manufacturing and infrastructure development (leveraging our strategic location on Adelaide's industrial growth corridor), as well as the care economy (childcare, aged care workforce), and, regional education and training opportunities and initiatives.

Strategic Plan

RDABGLAP's purpose is to actively grow our regional economy to create liveable communities. We achieve this through core operational activities relating to business development, sector development, economic development, and communications, advocacy and consultation to help drive the local economy, attract business opportunities and seek place-based solutions that make our region a better place to live, work and thrive for generations.

The Board and team of RDABGLAP are committed to facilitating business sustainability and growth, building small business capacity and capability, attracting investment and suitably skilled workforce, and upskilling of local workers.

Our team works in partnership with business, government, and community members to provide the support, resources and connections required to succeed. Our activities are funded by grants provided under contract by the Australian Government, South Australian Government, and the Councils within our region. We also bid for complementing grants aligned to areas of service delivery, key priorities, regional research, strategy, and planning.

RDABGLAP's day-to-day delivery and longer-term focus is underpinned and guided by our Strategic Plan, which identifies our Regional Strategic Priorities and core operational activities.

Our Strategic Plan and Strategic Regional Priorities were identified through on-going consultation with representatives and businesses from our core industries and employment sectors, our regional partners and stakeholders including Government, our community, as well as external experts and observers.

Our Strategic Plan compliments and co-exists with specific sectoral plans, local and State government plans, and industry plans.

Our Purpose: to actively grow our regional economy to create liveable communities.

Our Vision: to create a regional economy that is built on our strengths, is sustainable, and supports the changing needs of our communities.

Our Mission: we use our strengths through collaboration and connection, to unlock opportunities, foster a supportive environment, and facilitate growth for businesses in our region.

Our Values:

- **Teamwork:** we work openly, honestly and support each other.
- **Impact:** we are lean and focused on priorities that make a difference.
- **Creativity:** we think outside the box and foster a culture of sharing ideas.

Regional Strategic Priorities

1. Housing

Housing supply meets current and future regional demand and is fit for purpose (affordability, diversity / greater housing choice, sustainability, accessibility, and neighbourhood character).

2. Workforce, Skills & Education

Regional workforce capacity and capability supports economic growth and key labour market performance measures are improved.

3. Sustainability

Regional environmental, social and economic strength and resilience.

4. Infrastructure & Land Use Planning

Infrastructure and land use planning supports regional sustainability, productivity, and growth.

5. Investment Attraction & Business Growth

Regional investment pipeline projects delivered, and retention and sustainable growth of regional businesses (new and existing).

Regional Operational Priorities

1. Business Development and Growth

Retention and growth of businesses:

- Support existing businesses with sustainability and growth (jobs, output, profitability).
- Support new business start-ups (planning, and establishment, and training).
- Increase business capacity and capability.

2. Investment Attraction and Growth

- Support the delivery of projects identified in the pipeline of economic and infrastructure investment projects.
- Influence increased regional economic diversity.

3. Communications

- Create communications that support RDABGLAP's strategic goals.
- Improve access to regional information and resources for all stakeholders.
- Increase the level of regional community engagement and feedback.
- Promote RDABGLAP's programs, events, and successes to build awareness and program participation.
- Raise awareness of the region and the opportunities available.
- To be inclusive, ensuring that everyone feels valued and respected in our business interactions.

4. Corporate Governance and Organisational Development

- Regulatory and funding compliance; and sound prudential management.
- Continuous improvement of our teams' skills and processes.
- Improved team and board member satisfaction.
- Comprehensive regional and organisation information.

5. Program Delivery – Barossa Regional University Campus (BRUC)

- Sustain and incrementally increase student registrations and student engagement.
- Support students to achieve course graduation.

- Maintain and strengthen partnerships with local industry, community, councils, and government.

6. Program Delivery – Regional Leadership Development

- Support and advocate for regional community and business leadership priorities

7. Collaboration and Advocacy

- Facilitate regional collaboration and joint advocacy aligned to key regional priorities.

- Contribute to Australian and SA Government regional policy making by providing intelligence and evidence-based advice on regional development issues.

The abovementioned Regional Strategic Priorities and Regional Operational Priorities were further refined in their focus and delivery for the FY25 operating period, and a summary of both RDABGLAP's **top 5 strategic priorities and top 5 key business activities for the FY25 year** are detailed further below in this report.

In addition, specific details regarding the activities that RDABGLAP has undertaken for the FY25 period in relation to delivering against our strategic priorities for our region and all levels of government are also detailed further below in this report.

Annual Work Plan

Work Delivered and Value Added

In FY25, RDABGLAP's work delivered continued to build on previous year's efforts, creating value to our region through supporting:

- **Investment Readiness and Growth:** Economic modelling, advocacy and case management moved multiple private projects along the pipeline (tourism, horticulture, infrastructure, aged living)
- **SME Capability and Resilience:** Hands-on advisory, B2B referrals, skills events and grant support improved digital, marketing, and operational foundations for our region's businesses
- **Policy and Planning Influence:** Submissions and ministerial engagement on GARP, Dublin Green, water, housing and transport aligned land-use, infrastructure and workforce agendas
- **Crisis and climate response:** Coordinated support for the tomato virus impacts; progressed drought/climate programs; promoted grants to de-risk costs/emissions
- **Regional Coordination:** Cross-council forums, State roundtables and Board governance created a single, evidence-based voice that accelerates enabling infrastructure and unlocks growth in our sectors and regional communities.

Collaborations with other RDA Committees and Work Delivered in Partnerships (*not exhaustive*)

RDABGLAP has continued to work with all seven (7) other RDA Committees in South Australia towards addressing key economic development opportunities, challenges and priorities that are common across all of regional South Australia. Our collaboration includes activities such as attending and contributing to RDA SA CEO meetings, which are held every three weeks, both virtually and in-person, and which discuss and consider common opportunities, challenges and priorities such as water, housing and workforce. In addition, RDABGLAP has attended and contributed to multiple additional meetings coordinated by Regional Development South Australia and Adelaide to meet with relevant stakeholders from public or private organisations in relation to addressing these common opportunities, challenges and priorities.

Throughout FY25, RDABGLAP has continued its support as a partner to the *Northern and Yorke Alliance* (NYA) with additional partners including Northern and Yorke Local Government Association, Northern and Yorke Landscape Board (of South Australia) and Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North. The NYA has partnered with the Government of South Australia via a non-legally binding agreement to work together in relation to achieving common goals and outcomes which seeks to reduce carbon emissions and improve the resilience of regional communities, assets and infrastructure, local economies and natural environment across the region to cope with the inevitable impacts and challenges of climate change in the short, medium and long term, through the implementation of climate change actions and initiatives. These actions and initiatives include activities associated with the delivery of the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund – Regional Drought Resilience Program for the Northern & Yorke area (encompassing the BGLAP area). With specific regard to the NYRDRP project, activities in FY25 have included reviewing and prioritising a long list of activities, developing a delivery schedule, considerations towards resourcing support requirements, scoping of work packages, delivery plan, procurement plan, reporting framework, and delivery management.

External Funding Received, not included as a Third-Party Arrangement

RDABGLAP applied for project-based funding from the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal's (FRRR) *Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought Community Impact Program* in mid-2023, and was successfully awarded project monies to support strengthening drought preparedness and drive local action in the Northern and Yorke region (encompassing the BGLAP area) through the coordination of Community Impact Program activities and evaluation administration throughout FY24 and FY25.

Project Activities concluded 30 June 2025, and RDABGLAP's Final Report and acquittal was submitted and accepted by FRRR on 1 August 2025.

Challenges and Lesson Learnt

In FY25, RDABGLAP's day to day operating team experienced a number of changes in personnel, resulting in temporary periods of operating below required and planned resource capacity for extended periods of time due to recruitment and on-boarding, as well as off-boarding. This resulted in some expected challenges relating to momentum of delivery, and loss of corporate working knowledge and the need to re-establish some external working relationships (predominantly with project-based partners). Conversely, the changes in personnel and temporary capacity limitations also provided RDABGLAP with the necessity to 'step back' and reassess processes and further streamline efforts.

As at the conclusion of the FY25 reporting period, and as at preparation of this report (late September 2025), RDABGLAP's resourcing challenges and changes have been settled, and our current team are experienced and knowledgeable, cohesive and collaborative, and we are continuing to rebuild momentum in delivery.

Communications

Overall, All RDABGLAP communications activities align to these content pillars:

- **Regional News and Updates:** relevant regional initiatives, projects, news, and events
- **Business Support and Development:** business development resources, opportunities, and local case studies
- **Community Engagement:** engagement programs, surveys, and volunteer opportunities
- **Economic Development:** housing, infrastructure and investment data, resources, regional plans, and grant information
- **Education and Workforce:** BRUC updates, education programs, pathways, workforce development and skills training.

Please refer to **Supporting Documents:**

1. *RDABGLAP Communications Quarterly Report Q1 2025* for details regarding communications activities undertaken **.

Key Highlights for Q1 of 2025 **:

- **Website:** Barossa.org.au
 - o A total of 16,560 page views
 - o A total of 10,710 visits, of which 9,938 visitors were unique
- **Social Media:**
 - o RDABGLAP's follower growth of +6.39% (+388 new followers) was well above the industry average of 2–3% per quarter for community organisations
 - o The top-performing post featured new images of the \$150 million Two Wells Town Centre project, reaching 7,932 people and generating 5,454 interactions
 - o All top-performing content was infrastructure-related, reflecting strong community interest in local investment, planning, and development activity
- **Media Releases:**

Four (4) Media Releases were produced in this quarter, which has resulted in additional media coverage regarding RDABGLAP activities – growing awareness for our RDA
- **Art Music Design:**
 - o AMD was previously managed by RDABGLAP, and was transferred to Barossa Council on 1 December 2024. RDABGLAP has user access to AMD's social media accounts only, and our activities are low effort, that is, duplicating relevant Creative Industries content from RDABGLAP and posting through AMD accounts – RDABGLAP is not responsible for content creation, messaging, brand ownership, ++
 - o RDABGLAP will continue to review if / how this support continues beyond December 2025.

**Note:

- The abovementioned Supporting Document *RDABGLAP Communications Quarterly Report Q1 2025* provides details for the January to March 2025 reporting period only
- Reports for Q3 (July to September 2024), and Q4 (September to December 2024) for the 2024 Calendar Year may have previously been developed and supplied, however these two (2) reporting quarters for communications were prior to current CEO, Jennifer Lynch joining the RDABGLAP team (Q3 and Q4 in 2024 were managed by the former CEO, Leonie Boothby), and reports cannot be located on file
- A report for Q2 (April to June 2025) was not produced as former Communications and Program Manager, Nathan Little, resigned in April 2025, and a suitable replacement Communications Manager was not appointed until early FY26 – limited communications activities occurred during this quarter.

Case Studies

Southern Barossa Winery & Tourist Accommodation Project

Background

The Southern Barossa Winery & Tourist Accommodation Project (SBWTAP) proposes a new 150-room, five-star *Intercontinental Hotel* for the Barossa Valley. Positioned as a significant economic driver for the BGLAP region and South Australia, the project includes a restaurant, bar, day spa, and other visitor facilities. The 21.5-hectare site will also operate as a vineyard, with upgrades to existing plantings and the development of a new winery.

Opportunity

Early discussions between RDABGLAP and project proponent, Strategic Alliance, identified that SBWTAP warranted consideration as an Impact Assessed Development, which is the highest level of planning assessment in South Australia, reserved for projects with potential wide-reaching impact. To proceed, the South Australian Minister for Planning must declare the project as such, triggering additional layers of assessment criteria.

Response

RDABGLAP directly collaborated with Strategic Alliance and its partners to produce a Regional Economic Impact Assessment report in support progressing the Project's significant planning and development assessment milestones. Using data provided by Strategic Alliance, modelling from Economic Profile .id Informed Decisions¹ and other publicly available sources, as well as the economic assessment criteria as prescribed by the South Australian State Planning Commission – RDABGLAP's Regional Economic Impact Assessment report identified and considered:

- Economic impacts at regional and state levels
- Workforce requirements during construction and operation
- Implications for existing industries and supply chains
- The opportunity cost should the project not proceed

In addition to the Regional Economic Impact Assessment, RDABGLAP provided a formal Letter of Support for the SBWTAP, detailing the economic benefits to the region identified in the Regional Economic Impact Assessment. The data also informed the Project's community consultation process, approach and messaging held in June 2025.

Outcome

The SBWTAP is currently undergoing review with the South Australian Government's Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD), to provide early feedback prior to the project proceeding to the statutory public consultation phase. The Regional Impact Assessment report identified substantial economic benefits for the BGLAP region and South Australia more broadly as a direct result of the SBWTAP Project:

- **Construction Phase:** The two-year construction phase with a \$110M spend will result in \$61M added to the economy (GRP) in addition to SBWTAP's anticipated construction workforce of 350 full time equivalent employees (FTE)
- **Opportunity Cost:** The opportunity cost of not proceeding with the Project would result in a potential loss of over \$28M in unrealised Gross GRP and 229 unrealised FTE in local employment opportunities
- **Workforce Participation:** The BGLAP region's workforce profile, and employment data indicates a strong opportunity for the SBWTAP to support increasing local workforce participation

¹ <https://economy.id.com.au/rda-barossa>

- **Training Pathways:** RDABGLAP's initial, high-level assessment indicated collaborative training and development pathways available through Intercontinental Hotel Group's (IHG) Hotels and Resort's IHG Academy and the Barossa Regional University Campus.

While assessment is ongoing, the SBWTAP represents a transformational project for the Southern Barossa, and broader BGLAP region. It has the capacity to stimulate investment, strengthen the visitor economy, expand local employment, and create long-term training and education pathways. RDABGLAP continues to provide strategic support to Strategic Alliance and project stakeholders ensure the project's potential benefits are clearly articulated and understood at all levels of decision-making.

Next Steps

- **Impact Assessment Process:** The SBWTAP is currently undergoing review as an Impact Assessed Development with DHUD. Initial feedback will be provided to the project team following completion of the first stage of review.
- **Statutory Consultation:** The assessment process includes a six-week public consultation period in late 2025, coordinated by DHUD.
- **State Planning Commission Consideration:** Following DHUD's assessment and consideration of community feedback received through the consultation period, a recommendation will be prepared for the State Planning Commission. The State Planning Commission will then determine whether the project is approved to proceed. An outcome from the State Planning Commission is expected in early 2026.
- **Construction:** Pending approval, construction of the SBWTAP is expected to commence in the first half of 2026.

Further information:

- **InterContinental Hotels Group (IGH) Media Release regarding the Project:** [click here](#)
- **Plan SA Development Application for Project:** [click here](#)



Image above: InterContinental Hotels Group (IGH) Media Release regarding the Project

Dublin Green Circular Economy Precinct

Background

Dublin Green proposes to become South Australia's first Circular Economy Precinct, positioning the BGLAP region as a leader in circular economies, sustainable development and innovation in the heart of the Adelaide Plains area. By diversifying the local economic base and connecting to key state and regional priority sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, transport and logistics, as well as housing and workforce – the Precinct proposes to deliver long-term economic benefits to the Adelaide Plains region and the broader BGLAP area.

The initiative includes a master planned residential community of up to 1,300 dwellings over 104 hectares alongside approximately 240 hectares of Employment Lands and green buffers, enabling more people to live and work locally. Circular economy principles and practices are embedded into the Precinct's design via an integrated mixed use development comprising future residential development, industry, employment lands and mining opportunities facilitated and supported by sustainable infrastructure, energy, water and wastewater production.

Challenge

For the Precinct to proceed, the land requires a Change of Use through a South Australian State Government Code Amendment. The Dublin Employment Code Amendment, proposed by Precinct proponent, Leinad Land Developments (Dublin) Pty Ltd, seeks to rezone 630 hectares of land on the Northern Adelaide Plains from 'Rural Zone' to 'Strategic Employment Zone'. Of this, 436 hectares would be allocated for future employment land, featuring the Green Circular Economy Precinct, while the remainder will serve as an environmental buffer. This rezoning is critical to unlocking the site's potential to meet both economic and environmental priorities.

Response

RDABGLAP has played a direct and key role in supporting the Precinct's progression, including:

- Facilitating regional relationship building with the Adelaide Plains Council and various relevant South Australian State Government agencies and Ministers
- Providing regional economic data to strengthen the Code Amendment submission.
- Issuing a formal Letter of Support for the amendment.
- Showcasing the project at the RDA SA Summit 2024, The Future of Regional South Australia: Transition to Net Zero, a Circular Economy and AI, through participation in a panel on "Circular Economy in Action – Industry Projects in South Australia."

By providing strategic support, RDABGLAP has helped position Dublin Green as a genuine model for future regional development.

Outcome

Public consultation on the Dublin Employment Code Amendment concluded in December 2024, and the proposal is currently under consideration by the State Government. If approved, the Dublin Park Green Circular Economy Precinct will deliver significant economic, social, and environmental benefits to the BGLAP region, demonstrating how South Australia can lead in sustainable, future-focused development.

Next Steps

While awaiting the outcome of the Code Amendment, the proponents are advancing several critical elements of the Dublin Park Green Circular Economy Precinct:

- **Wastewater Infrastructure:** An application for Crown Sponsorship has been lodged for a new wastewater treatment plant with the capacity to service up to 50,000 homes. This will benefit both the future Dublin Park community and the broader region, where limited water connections have constrained new development in recent years.
- **Site Preparation:** Early works are underway at the mine site, with a compound established and equipment mobilised to enable future construction activity.
- **Waste-to-Energy:** Testing of waste is being conducted in partnership with the project's Chief Scientist and the University of Adelaide to inform the design of a bio-reactor. This

facility will repurpose waste into energy, powering the precinct and reinforcing its circular economy focus.

Further information:

- **Dublin Green Precinct video:** [click here](#)
- **Plan SA Code Amendment for Precinct:** [click here](#)



Image on left: Frank Vounasis, Co-Founder of Dublin Green, speaking at the 2024 Regional Development South Australia Annual Summit
Image on right: Dublin Green Precinct video reel on YouTube

Top 5 Strategic Priorities and Business Activities for 2024-25

Summary of top 5 strategic priorities:

- 1 Housing** Identify regional housing supply gaps (current and forecast), opportunities and challenge >> advocate for key initiatives and provide evidence-based input into government policy setting.
- 2 Workforce, education & skills** Identify priority workforce and skills gaps (current and forecast), opportunities and challenges (including education, skills and career pathways) >> advocate for key initiatives and provide evidence-based input into government policy setting.
- 3 Infrastructure** Identify agreed priority infrastructure needs (particularly water and sewer) and shared funding opportunities >> advocate for key projects and provide evidence-based input into government policy setting.
- 4 Land use planning** Support sustainable and appropriate regional economic growth >> engage with and inform land use planning processes, investigations and proposed changes.
- 5 Sustainability** Support sector and business sustainability with a focus on transitioning to net zero, and maximising efficient use of utilities >> advocate for regional priority projects - climate, drought resilience, water security and circular economy.

Summary of top 5 key business activities:

- 1 Business development and growth** Connect businesses to: RDA B2B, start-up program, capacity & capability building workshops and case management support; and to delivery partners, technology and innovation, training and development, and stakeholder programs and support (including grant funding)
- 2 Investment attraction and growth** Maximise economic investment in the region by providing case management support, evidence-based advocacy to address barriers to growth, and promoting identified investment opportunities.
- 3 Key industry sector growth** Support regional economic diversification and growth by working with partner organisations to identify clusters, collaborative growth opportunities and projects aligned to regional strengths.
- 4 Communications** Build a quality database and targeted communications to promote the RDA brand, our work, regional opportunities, and to maximise regional awareness of and engagement with Australian Government policies, grant programs and research - via social media, electronic direct mail, website, and print and digital media.
- 5 Collaboration and advocacy** Maximise economic and regional prosperity through:
 - evidence based advocacy informed by regional data, information and intelligence and aligned to agreed regional priorities
 - informed input into government policy setting; and
 - effective collaboration with stakeholders

Outcome 1

Facilitate regional economic development outcomes, investment, jobs and local procurement.

Led / Championed

Please refer to the Case Studies section of this report for two (2) examples of how RDABGLAP has directly **led and championed** facilitating regional economic development outcomes, investment, jobs and local procurement – Dublin Green Circular Economy Precinct, and, Southern Barossa Winery & Tourist Accommodation Project (InterContinental Hotel).

Contributed To

SA Mushrooms

RDABGLAP produced and provided economic modelling to support the expansion of the SA Mushrooms facility at Waterloo Corner. In addition, RDABGLAP also supported a (State) Ministerial Briefing, which considered discussed and considered mechanisms to bring forward capital funding requirements to realise earlier expansion and raise awareness of safety concerns on Port Wakefield Road and Crabb Road intersection (the need for 'slip lane').

- **Investment (\$):** 35M
- **Jobs (number):** 50
- **Local procurement (\$):** significant engagement with construction, transport, and input suppliers
- **Other regional development outcomes:** strong and direct engagement with a key business and in a key employment sector for the BGLAP region (horticulture)

EnviroCopper

RDABGLAP provided a letter of support to support the continuation of EnviroCopper's proposed InSitu Recovery (ISR) Test at the Kapunda Mine in Light Regional Council area. Subsequently, EnviroCopper has received approval from the South Australian Department for Energy and Mining. This has allowed EnviroCopper to begin a 90-day trial at the Kapunda Mine. During this trial, EnviroCopper will test a number of economic models for the potential of copper extraction using the ISR method, and has sought RDABGLAP's support for economic modelling relating to GRP and Value Created.

- **Investment (\$):** 5M
- **Jobs (number):** 25-30
- **Local procurement (\$):** specialised contractors engaged locally where available
- **Other regional development outcomes:** strong and direct engagement with a key business and in a key employment sector for the BGLAP region (resources / manufacturing)

Nexus Hotel

RDABGLAP prepared and provided an economic impact model to inform and support the development and positive economic impacts of the Nexus Barossa, a 98-room hotel with a restaurant, function space and day spa.

- **Value Add (\$):** \$81.6 M in construction and \$ 23.4M in Year 1 of operations
- **Jobs (number):** up to 616 in construction and 225 in Year 1 of operations
- **Local procurement (\$):** strong opportunities across hospitality, construction, and local supply chains
- **Other regional development outcomes:** strong and direct engagement with a key business and in a key employment sector for the BGLAP region (tourism / hospitality)

Otherwise Assisted

- **Agrisano Fresh** – supported Agrisano Fresh's application for Federal and State Government grant funding to co-fund the required water infrastructure to enable expansion of the business; this included a letter of support and economic modelling (GRP / GRV / jobs – FTE).

- **Gawler Community Retirement Homes** – provided economic modelling (GRP / GRV / jobs – FTE) and a letter of support for grant funding for the Bruce Eastick Complex – Apartments Development Stage 2 through the South Australian State Government’s *Thriving Regions Fund*.
- **King AI** – provided advice to King AI who are investigating land options suitable for commercialisation of King AI’s sovereign artificial intelligence capabilities.

Other Facilitation Activity (*not exhaustive*)

Tomato industry

RDABGLAP provided support to region’s highly valuable tomato industry which was impacted by the Tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV). In the early stages of the outbreak, RDABGLAP’s support included working with the Department of Primary Industries & Regions South Australia (PIRSA) to communicate with growers through the RDABGLAP newsletter and social channels. RDABGLAP also worked closely with Workforce Australia to assist local employers to redeploy their workforce and provided assistance to establish the Virginia Horticulture Centre as a Worker Assistance Hub. RDABGLAP also worked with Tomatoes SA and the Northern Adelaide Plains Food Cluster to support the industry.

Barossa Regional University Campus (BRUC)

RDABGLAP receives Commonwealth funding through the Department of Education to run the Barossa Regional University Campus (BRUC). BRUC operates as a study hub for students in higher education and runs programs to support training and education of students to retain future workers in the region.

Business to Business (B2B)

The RDABGLAP B2B Support Program has been running for a decade, connecting local small businesses with local experts at a subsidised rate. Throughout the FY25 reporting period, RDABGLAP referred 93 local businesses to trusted local professionals. The top three categories of support local businesses received through the B2B program were website and digital presence, marketing and social media, business planning and strategy. Based on demand and feedback from partner councils, RDABGLAP welcomed a planning and development specialist as a new business provider for the Program.

Empowered Leadership Program

In March 2025, 21 people from across the Barossa, Gawler, Light and Adelaide Plains graduated from the 2025 Empowered Leaders Program – a practical course designed to build leadership capability, grow networks and support community development. The Program is delivered by RDABGLAP in partnership with the Leaders Institute of South Australia thanks to funding from the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) through the 2024–26 Regional Leadership Development Program. Over 7 sessions, participants developed skills in strategic planning, communication, volunteer engagement and leading through change. Participants also worked in teams to design and present Community Impact Projects focused on sustainability, education, life on land and zero hunger—applying their learning to real-world challenges.

Workforce Australia

RDABGLAP works with both the Mid North and Adelaide North Jobs Coordinators for Workforce Australia (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations) to bring industries and organisations together to strengthen the region’s workforce. These connections help businesses find the right people, job seekers access opportunities, and the region build a stronger, more skilled future.

Outcome 2

Promote greater regional awareness of and engagement with Australian government policies, grant programs and research.

Federal Grant Program Support:

In FY25, RDABGLAP directly supported more than 40 organisations with Grant Program related efforts for Federal, State or Local Government grant opportunities. RDABGLAP's efforts included support to applicant businesses or consortia for drafting their submissions, reviewing their submissions and or providing advice about a submission, and letters of support.

Examples below include *Federal* grant program support only:

- **Adelaide Soaring Club Gawler Airfield** –supported the Adelaide Soaring Club's application to the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund Round 3. The proposed project directly supports the DRF initiative for improving disaster resilience and risk reduction by bolstering our region's physical infrastructure needs and airborne capabilities during natural disasters
- **Aimpoint** – supported Aimpoint's grant application to Australian Government Department of Industry, Science and Resources, Schools Pathways Program for the establishment of Defence Schools Pathways Hub
- **Barossa Village** – supported a grant application for Australian Government Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program (Stream 1 Precinct Development and Planning funding) towards Barossa Villages' Heritage Park Precinct – a project designed to provide affordable housing options tailored to a diverse range of community members, including independent living, disability accommodation, and housing for essential workers. These housing solutions are vital for meeting immediate needs and for fostering a more inclusive and sustainable community
- **Gawler River Flood Management Authority (GFRMA)** – RDA supported the GFRMA's business case through the Australian Government Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program
- **Integrated Farming Services** – RDA provided a letter of support for the Australian Government Climate-Smart Agriculture Program Grants, for its project 'Monitoring and Managing for Climate Smart Best Practice in Covered Cropping Systems'
- **Southern Barossa Alliance** – RDA provided a letter of support towards the Australian Government's National Drought Fund's Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal's (FRRR) Small and Vital Grant Round 23 to deliver a community, not-for-profit event as part of the Barossa Vintage Festival 2025

Workshops and Events Support

In FY25, RDABGLAP directly hosted 7 events to support business capacity and capability building workshops, including:

- **Skills Forum with SA Skills Commissioner** – in July 2024, hosted Commissioner Cameron Baker, Chair of the South Australian Skills Commission, at the Hewett Centre to discuss workforce development in our region. Key discussions facilitated by RDABGLAP's CEO focused on education and health sector challenges and included powerful stories from local business owners about the impacts of skill shortages.
- **Small Business & Innovation Forum** – in March 2025, hosted a free, sold-out event which brought together >50 individual local entrepreneurs, industry insiders, and government representatives – including AusIndustry, Department of Industry, Science and Resources – to showcase real-world examples of innovation in action across the BGLAP region.
- **Back of the Napkin Lunches** – in October 2024 and May 2025, supported two themed Back of the Napkin lunches to connect >60 local businesses, entrepreneurs and industry leaders. The first Back of the Napkin Lunch was held at the Greenock Hotel hosted by Sea to Valley Startups and Light Regional Council in October 2024 and the second at the Lyndoch Hotel, hosted by Sea to Valley Startups and Barossa Council in May 2025, both were attended by 60 plus businesses.
- **Business Skills Workshops** – various workshops held, supported by RDABGLAP to improve business skills among small to medium sized businesses across the BGLAP region. These workshops included topics such as the use of Microsoft Teams in small business settings; practical

website improvements to turn website visitors into customers; use of ChatGPT; business fundamentals; and smart phone photography for businesses.

- **Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) Economic Briefing** – in May 2025, supported the RBA to deliver a national economic update. The session covered current and expected national conditions including the economic outlook, gross domestic product, inflation, input costs, hiring conditions, pricing trends, and housing. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions directly to RBA staff—under Chatham House rules.

- **Gather Round Information Session** – in November 2024, co-hosted with The Barossa Council and Barossa Australia, an information session to help businesses understand the opportunities involved in the AFL's Festival of Footy and Gather Round and was attended by 140 individuals.

- **Australian Rural Leadership Foundation Changemaker Workshop – Barossa** (National Drought Forum - Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)) – in May 2025, RDABGLAP's CEO addressed all attending Changemakers regarding the importance of regional leadership as a tool for navigating change.

Meetings Held Support

In FY25, RDABGLAP estimates that a more than 50 meetings were directly hosted, attended and or supported by RDABGLAP Board Members and or Team to promote greater regional awareness of and engagement with Australian government policies, grant programs and research.

Australian government related meetings include:

- Workforce Australia Mid North (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations)
- Workforce Australia Adelaide North (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations)
- Department of Education
- Reserve Bank of Australia
- Meetings with Federal Ministers (The Hon. Kirsty McBain MP, The Hon. Matt Burnell MP)
- AusIndustry (Department of Industry, Science and Resources)

Social Media Support

Please refer to the Communications section of this report for details regarding RDABGLAP's social media support for Australian Government policies, grant programs and research.

Other Support

In May 2025, RDABGLAP's CEO attended the National Drought Fund's Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal's (FRRR) Initiative Outcome Panel session for the Community Impact Program CPLOs. The session was an opportunity for grant recipients to review and reflect on the draft evaluation findings alongside other funded Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought (HRCPD) organisations from across the country. The session outputs will help to shape the future delivery of FRRR grant programs.

Outcome 3

Contribute to Commonwealth regional policy making by providing intelligence and evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on regional development issues.

Meetings With Federal Members of Parliament to Discuss Regional Matters

Two (2) briefings delivered to the Hon. Kirsty McBain MP and the Hon. Matt Burnell MP on housing, infrastructure and workforce challenges in late 2024 while in Caberra for the national summit for Regional Development Australia.

Federal Departmental Surveys or Submissions

- **Australian Bureau of Statistics** - Survey of Research and Experimental Development, Government and Private Non-Profit Organisations response (2025)
- **National Skills Plan** submission (2024)

Federal Regional Intelligence Briefing Teleconferences: 6 contributions provided in FY25.