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REGION PLAN TO GROW LIMESTONE COAST ECONOMY

Minister for Urban Development, Planning and the City of Adelaide John Rau says a new planning strategy for the Limestone Coast aims to foster a more diverse regional economy.

Mr Rau, who visited the Limestone Coast this week, says the *Limestone Coast Region Plan* contains policies and principles to protect and manage the region's natural assets and existing industries, while allowing communities to grow and new industries to expand.

"The Limestone Coast is a fast-growing area, and the plan lays the groundwork to realise the region's enormous economic potential," Mr Rau said.

"The Limestone Coast has a strong primary production sector, an industrial sector poised for expansion particularly in alternative energy, and significant nature-based tourism and manufacturing. Its largest city, Mount Gambier, is well positioned to become one of the state's principal growth centres."

Mr Rau said the land use arrangements within the plan aimed to encourage initiatives that would help retain the special qualities of the region while fostering vibrant and distinctive towns.

"To achieve that, it identifies where housing, population and industry growth is best located – and not located," he said.

The *Limestone Coast Region Plan* is the result of a collaborative process involving seven local councils as well as Regional Development Australia– Limestone Coast, the South East Natural Resources Management Board and the South East Local Government Association during 2009–10.

The *Limestone Coast Region Plan* aims to:

- Promote industrial growth, particularly in Mount Gambier, Naracoorte, the Katnook industrial area near Penola, Snuggery, Bordertown, Keith, Kingston and Millicent
- Manage growth to protect and enhance natural assets and existing industry
- Foster small, micro and home-based businesses
- Assist primary production industries to adapt to increasing variations in climate and water availability and to become more sustainable
- Strengthen the roles of Mount Gambier as the major regional centre; Naracoorte and Millicent as major commercial and service centres; Bordertown, Kingston and Penola as

supporting commercial and service centres; and Keith, Robe, Beachport and Port MacDonnell as local and visitor commercial/service centres

- Strengthen the tourism industry by building on the region's natural and cultural assets
- Protect areas of environmental and conservation significance
- Retain built heritage and link it with tourism, especially in Robe, Kingston, Beachport, Port MacDonnell, Penola and Mundulla
- Support and strengthen emerging industries, including the renewable energy (particularly wind) sector.

The final plan has been adopted as a volume of the South Australian Planning Strategy following a two-month public consultation period in March and April last year.

Twenty-two submissions were received during the consultation process, most from State Government agencies and councils. These submissions resulted in changes to the final plan.

Formal adoption of the plan means it has statutory effect and will provide direction to local councils and the private sector.

The Department of Planning and Local Government (DPLG) will be working with councils and Regional Development Australia, Natural Resource Management Boards and regional Local Government Association representatives to prepare an action plan for implementing short, medium and long-term priorities.

These action plans will be developed as part of regional forums to be held in South Australian Government regions during 2011 and 2012.

A copy of the *Limestone Coast Region Plan* can be found online on the planning section of the DPLG website at: www.sa.gov.au/regionplans

Hard copies are available from each of the local councils in the region and copies are also available on CD-ROM.