

LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Bland Shire Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to all Elders past, present and future.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

In March 2018, amendments to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) introduced new requirements for councils to prepare and make local strategic planning statements (LSPS).

Our local strategic planning statement will focus on the vision and priorities for land use in the local area whereas our community strategic plan (prepared under the *Local Government Act 1993*) has a broader focus on achieving the long term social, environmental and economic aspirations of our community.

The NSW State Government recognises the critical role of councils in strategic planning for their local area and as such they have supported councils with the preparation of local strategic planning statements.

The Bland Shire local strategic planning statement sets out the 20-year vision for land-use in the Shire, the special character and values that are to be preserved and how change will be managed into the future.

The statement will shape how the development controls in the local environmental plan (LEP) evolve over time to meet the community's needs, with the LEP the main tool to deliver the council and community's plan.

Once implemented, the LSPS will be the key resource to understand how strategic and statutory plans will be implemented at the local level.

Councillor Brian Monaghan
Mayor

ABOUT THE STATEMENT

The Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) sets the framework for Bland Shire's economic, social and environmental land use needs over the next 20-years. The LSPS outlines clear planning priorities describing what will be needed, where these are located and when they will be delivered. The LSPS sets short, medium and long-term actions to deliver the priorities for the community's vision.

The LSPS has been prepared in accordance with Section 3.9 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)*. The LSPS brings together and builds on the planning work found in Council's other plans, studies and strategies, such as the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The LSPS also gives effect to the Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036, implementing the directions and actions at a local level. The LSPS planning priorities and actions provide the rationale for decisions about how we will use our land to achieve the community's broader goals.

CONSULTATION

Bland Shire Council has collaborated with the local community and Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to develop this LSPS. This LSPS will be reviewed every seven years to ensure it remains current with the communities needs and strategic direction at the local, regional and state level.



Figure 1: Alignment of the LSPS to other strategic planning documents

OUR VISION

OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES



Over the next 20 years as the Bland Shire's population changes, Council will adapt to meet community needs. Key priorities for Council will be to maintain the high levels of environmental amenity, liveability and affordability of property.

Housing opportunities and choice will continue to be a priority to cater for changing demographics and population needs. Housing growth will be in the form of infill development and small areas of new development on land in proximity to existing infrastructure. The demand for new infrastructure will be assessed as part of a feasibility study that will ensure that future residential lands can be appropriately serviced.

Parks and sporting facilities in our towns and villages has been identified in the Community Strategic Plan as something that we do well. Investigation will be undertaken to ensure that there is sufficient open space in our towns and villages for residents and visitors to continue to enjoy.

The Shire's heritage and environmental values will continue to be protected and conserved whilst still supporting growth and economic opportunities.

The Bland Shire's history is deeply engrained in agriculture and gold production which continues through to today; recognised as one of the most productive agricultural areas in the state with cereals and sheep being the major producers. It is the vision of this document that the Shire's heritage and environmental values will continue to be protected and conserved whilst still supporting growth and economic opportunities.



TOOHEYS
NEW
TANK HOTEL

ACCOMMODATION

TAB

THE WHITE TANK HOTEL

TOOHEYS

STIRLING

CONTEXT

CONNECTION TO THE RIVERINA MURRAY

The Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2036 is a 20-year plan for the Riverina Murray Region. The vision for the region is to be a diversified economy founded on Australia's food bowl, iconic waterways and a network of vibrant connected communities. The Regional Plan outlines directions to achieve the vision for the region and Bland has a role to play in successfully implementing these.

Situated in South-Western New South Wales, Bland Shire is situated on the northern edge of the Riverina Murray region, bordering Central West and Orana (Figure 2).

The Bland Shire has an important role to play in inter-regional connections to support the agricultural supply chain to the main domestic and international ports at Sydney, 500 kilometers east, and Melbourne, 450 kilometers south. Bland Shire has connections to its two nearest regional cities of Wagga Wagga and Forbes/Parkes, where residents can access higher-order health, education, retail, commercial and transport services.

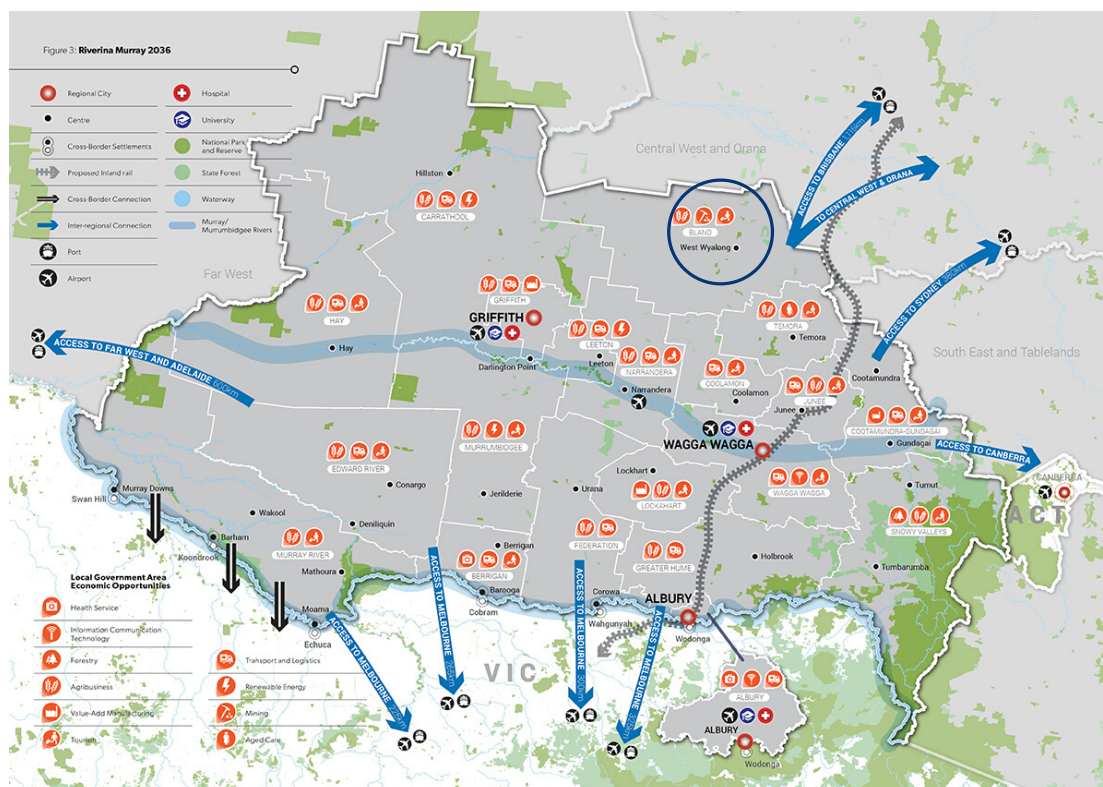


Figure 2: The Riverina Murray Region

CONTEXT

BLAND SHIRE SETTLEMENT

The original occupants of the district were the Wiradjuri people. Explorer John Oxley was the first European to investigate the area in 1817, prophesising that *"From want of timber, grass and water, it would never be inhabited by civilised man"*.

Despite this, squatters began to settle in the district in 1833 recognising the area's agricultural potential. Vast sheep and cattle runs were introduced, and the area became known as *"The Blands"* after a Sydney doctor.

It was not until Joseph Neeld discovered gold in 1893 that a centralised settlement developed. The town of Wyalong was laid out in 1894 to service the new population of up to 10,000. However, a settlement to the

west at the 'Main Camp' had already developed which also boasted the 'White Tank', the only established water supply. Hence in 1895 West Wyalong was officially laid out.

West Wyalong's crooked Main Street reflects these early days as it follows the original bullock track that curved around trees and gold diggings. The Wyalong fields were reported as one of the most productive gold fields in NSW until the 1920s.

Today, the Shire is recognised for outstanding country hospitality in welcoming new residents and visitors. Situated at the junction of Newell and Mid-Western Highways, many travellers choose the Bland Shire as their preferred destination and resting point.





BARMEDMAN

Located 32 kilometres from West Wyalong the historic village of Barmedman is famous for its mineral pool, which originated from the flooding of Barmedman goldmines by an underground stream in the 1880s. The pool is situated on a four-hectare reserve, is run by locals and is said to have some healing properties due to its high mineral content. Barmedman's biggest annual event is the Barmedman Modified Tractor Pull which is held in October every year. In the 2016 Census, Barmedman had a population of 224 people.

MIRROOL

Mirrool is a vibrant village nestled just off the Newell Highway 47 kilometres south of West Wyalong. The village is best known for the annual silo kick where people come from far and wide to attempt to hoist a Sherrin football over the historic silos. The historic Royal Hotel is a popular place for locals and visitors as well as the picturesque Sunshine Park.

NARADHAN

Located 127 kilometres from West Wyalong in the north-west of the Bland LGA, Naradhan is a close knit community with areas of high environmental value and a rich agricultural heritage, with winter cropping and sheep grazing the predominant agricultural activities. The Naradhan Historic Woolshed was built in 1888 and has been fully restored to its glorious past and is a must see for visitors to the region.



TALLIMBA

Tallimba is a quaint agriculture community situated 35 kilometers south-west of West Wyalong. Sheep grazing and winter cropping are the predominant agricultural activities in the locality. The community hub is the Tallimba Inn which stands directly across from the public park which has public toilets, a barbecue, shelter area, basketball court and War Memorial.

UNGARIE

With a population of 290 and located 42 kilometres from West Wyalong, Ungarie is the home of "The Big Football" - a large fibreglass Sherrin football which stands at Bing Walder Park as a tribute to the Daniher family. Born and raised in Ungarie, Terry, Neale, Anthony and Chris Daniher are the only set of four brothers to play together in a VFL/AFL premierships match. The Daniher legend is part of Ungarie's rich sporting heritage. Sheep grazing and winter cropping remains the major industries in Ungarie.

WEETHALLE

Located 58 kilometres to the west of West Wyalong, Weethalle is home to the first silo art project in New South Wales. Unveiled in 2017, the spectacular artwork depicts a shearer, sheep in a pen and a farmer in a field of wheat with the famous sunshine harvester in the background as a tribute to the town's agricultural history. The Weethalle Whistlestop Museum takes visitors on a journey through time and serves delicious Devonshire teas most days.

WYALONG

Rich with historic buildings Wyalong provides an attractive village that supports the economic centre of West Wyalong. With wide streets, large residential blocks, Wyalong is a thriving rural community with strong community spirit.

STRATEGIC LANDS MAP

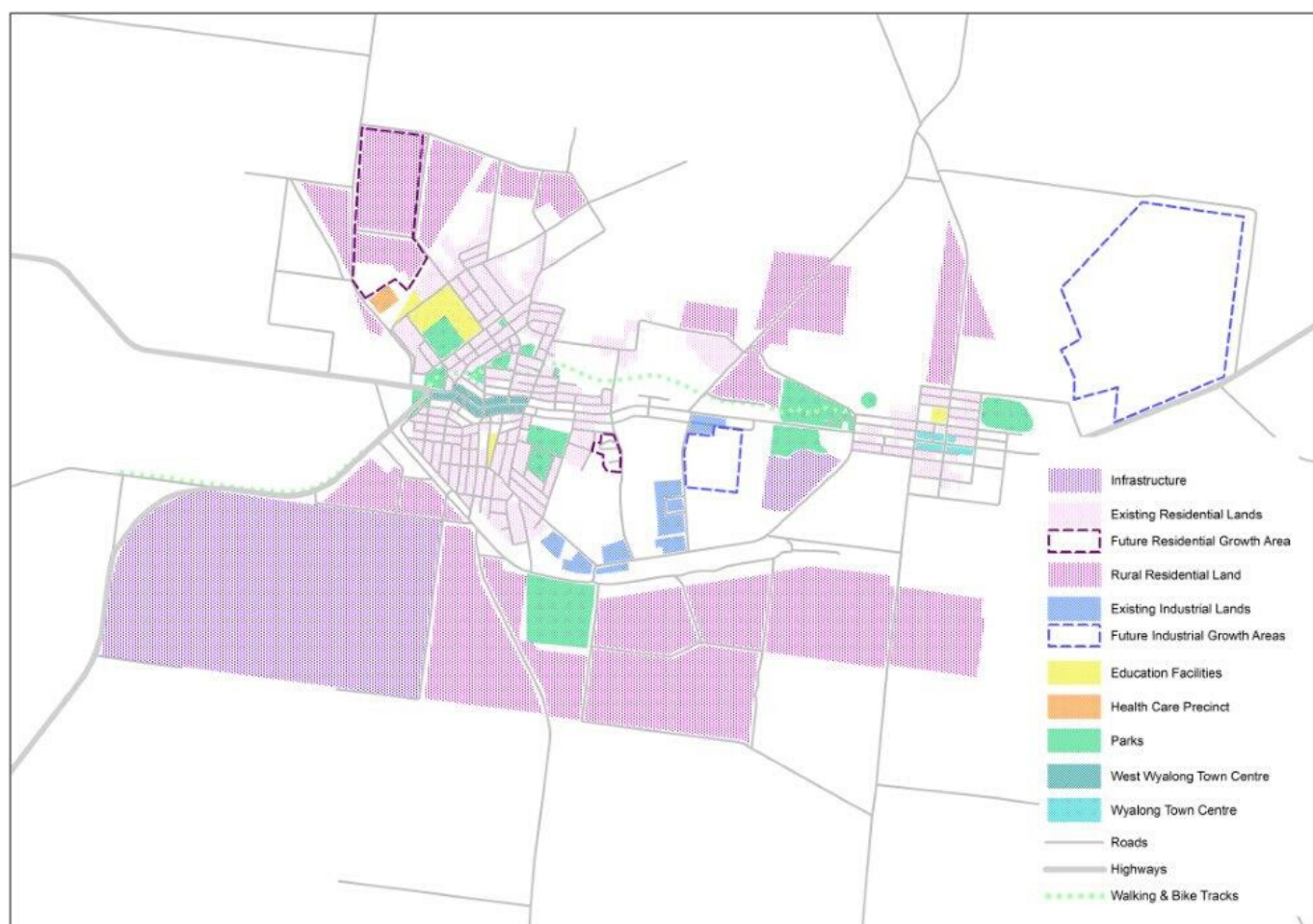


Figure 3: Bland Shire Council Strategic Lands Map

BLAND SHIRE SNAPSHOT

BLAND SHIRE IN 2016

Population
5,955



Median Age
43

Older Adults (65+)
20%



Understanding Bland's demography and economy can provide insights into the future opportunities and challenges the Shire is likely to face.

Like many communities in Regional NSW, Bland is experiencing a declining population of -0.8% per year. Our population is also ageing. Bland's population size means that it does not benefit from the economic shift towards services industries that naturally agglomerate in cities. Finding ways to attract low level healthcare services and value added industries will help us retain our population.

BLAND SHIRE IN 2036



Employment Sector
9.1%
Sheep/Cattle Farming



Population
Projection
4,850

Most common
household
32% Couple Only



Older Adults (65+)
25%



Household income
range
35% high income



Most common
household
33% Couple Only

Data sources:

ABS, 2018, *Regional Population Growth, Australia (Cat. No. 3218.0)*, ABS, Canberra
DPE, 2016, *NSW population, household and implied dwellings projections*, DPE, Sydney

BLAND SHIRE POPULATION

The Shire was home to an estimated 5,955 people in 2016. The population of Bland Shire is expected to decrease by 7.8% by 2036, in comparison to the Riverina Murray Region which will grow by around 4%.

Most of the Shire's population were born in Australia (82.2%). The next most common country of Birth in the Bland Shire is England (1.2%), then New Zealand (0.5%). approximately 4.4% of Bland Shire population identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, which is higher than the State average of 2.9%.

The age structure of Bland Shire's residents will shift from 2016 to 2036 (*Figure 3*). An increasing proportion of older people is expected. In 2016, 20% of the population was 65 or older. This is expected to increase to 25% in 2036. There is a corresponding decrease in the proportions of working age people. While the percentage of children is stable, the absolute numbers of younger people are declining. For example, in 2016 there were 1,250 children between 0-14 years old. In 2036 there is expected to be only 1,000 children in that age group. An ageing population is a common trend across many parts of NSW and Australia and will require proactive planning to enable residents to age in place.



BLAND SHIRE POPULATION

PERCENTAGE OF ALL PEOPLE IN AGE GROUP

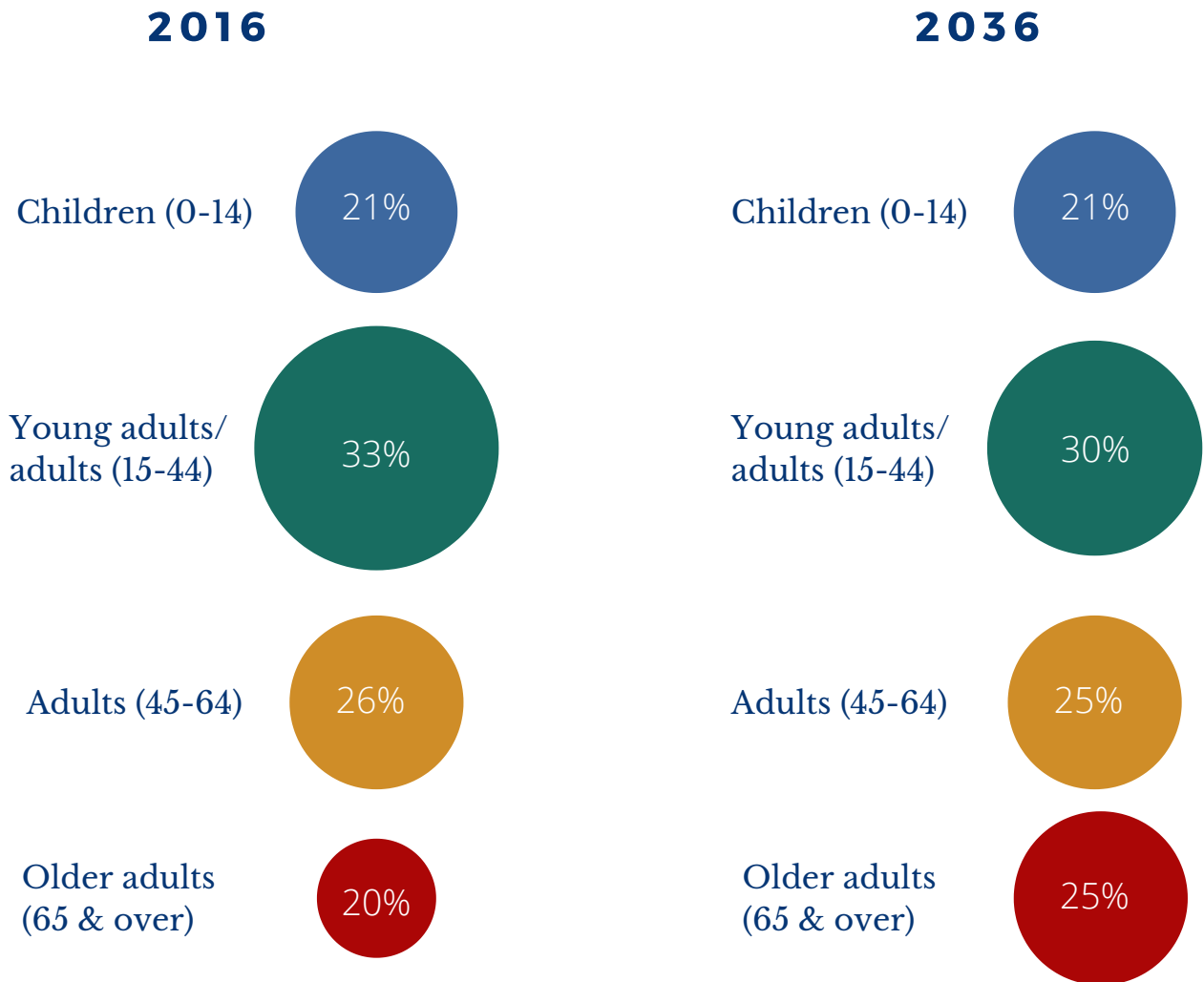


Figure 3: Age structure changes for Bland Shire between 2016 and 2036.



ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

In 2017/18 Bland's gross regional product was estimated to be \$423m (*National Institute of Economic and Industry Research 2016*). The Shire's economy is largely centered around agriculture and mining.

Bland Shire has a high level of employment self-containment, with only 12% of employed residents in the LGA working in other LGAs. In 2016, Bland Shire had a low unemployment rate of 3.6%, lower than the State average of 6.3% (*ABS, 2016*).

The most common occupations in Bland included Managers (27.5%), Technicians and Trades Workers (13.8%), and Labourers (12.0%). The most common occupations are reflective of the diverse range of average household incomes. In 2016, 27% of households earned a very low income and 35% of households earned a high income. The median weekly household income is \$1,100, which is below the state average of \$1,486 (*ABS, 2016*).

The largest employment sectors in Bland Shire are grain-sheep or grain-beef cattle farming (9.1%), gold ore mining (7.4%), other grain growing (7.3%) and sheep farming (specialised) (4%). Bland Shire has and will continue to play an integral role in agriculture and mining production.

Occupation	Bland	%	NSW	%	Australia	%
<i>Employed people aged 15 years and over</i>						
Managers	701	27.5	456,084	13.5	1,390,047	13.0
Technicians and Trades Workers	352	13.8	429,239	12.7	1,447,414	13.5
Labourers	306	12.0	297,887	8.8	1,011,520	9.5
Machinery Operators and Drivers	276	10.8	206,839	6.1	670,106	6.3
Professionals	268	10.5	798,126	23.6	2,379,966	22.2
Clerical and Administrative Workers	240	9.4	467,977	13.8	1,449,681	13.6
Community and Personal Service Workers	191	7.5	350,261	10.4	1,157,003	10.8
Sales Workers	159	6.2	311,414	9.2	1,000,955	9.4

Figure 4: Most common occupations in Bland (ABS, 2016).





ENVIRONMENT

Bland Shire is home to a wide variety of natural and enhanced environmental features. The West Wyalong Wetlands are an example of engineering and ecological ingenuity where Council developed on an existing wildlife sanctuary to create a series of watercourses and ponds to manage drainage issues during heavy rainfall. Through native revegetation a passive recreational area and wetland environment has been created for all to enjoy.

Bland is home to the iconic Lake Cowal, which covers more than 13,000ha and is the largest natural inland lake in NSW. The significance of Lake Cowal is evident through the diversity of animals, including 277 bird species and Aboriginal items which reside there. Lake Cowal is derived from the Aboriginal word for large water. Home to the Lake Cowal Foundation Ltd and Lake Cowal Conservation Centre, research has been conducted here since the 1960s. This research not only helps preserve Lake Cowal and the adjacent hold mining operations, but also develops improved land management practices which can benefit industry and the environment across NSW.

Continuing with the partnership of industry and the environment, Bland is home to Back Creek, Jingerangle, Kolkibertoo, Mandamah, and Wyrra State Forests to name a few. These are all native Cypress Pine forests, which have recorded threatened plant and animal species. Given most of the Shire is used for agricultural grazing or cropping, areas like these State Forests become havens for threatened species. Sustainable timber harvesting is key for managing these habitats and providing timber for future generations.

Other protected areas of Bland include the South-West Woodland, Charcoal Tank and Buddigower Nature Reserves, and Jimberoo National Park, which are managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Wah Way Creek, Barmedman Creek and Warralonga Cowal are other areas of high environmental value in Bland. These areas are valued by our community as recreational areas for bushwalking and bird watching, especially Malleefowl.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

PLANNING PRIORITIES

To achieve the Shire's 20-year vision, five planning priorities have been identified to guide us towards this vision. The planning priorities cover 13 themes to improve the social, environmental and economic development of our Shire and will form the focus of our strategic planning.

ACTIONS

We will work towards the planning priorities by completing the actions according to the short (2-5 years), medium (5-10 years) or long term (10-20 years) schedule. Actions may include preparation of strategies or policies, updates to the LEP or sourcing funding for projects aligned with our planning priorities. These actions are consistent with our CSP and LEP and will enact some of the Regional Plan actions.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & REPORTING

Council will ensure the planning priorities are achieved through regular review and monitoring of the actions progress. Monitoring of the actions will, where possible, be aligned to existing review and reporting schedules including the LEP (5 years) and CSP (4 years). The entire LSPS will also be reviewed every seven years. This approach is consistent with the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework under the *Local Government Act 1993*.





BR
Brandon
Kroon
2019

COMMUNITY

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While Bland Shire has experienced an overall population decline, due to the expansion in renewable energy and mining, West Wyalong's population is expected to increase and needs to be responsive to the temporary housing needs of these groups. Planning for new housing to facilitate these groups must consider our existing township and balance competing considerations including: planning for the rural-residential interface; ensuring adequate infrastructure provision; land subsidence; heritage protection and preserving local character; and affordability. Currently, our towns have enough land to accommodate any residential growth opportunities. The challenge for Council is to attract investment in our townships to provide housing for temporary workers and visitors. Increasing housing diversity and choice, particularly for its senior residents, is important moving forward. In order to do this, more strategic work is required. Understanding our infrastructure capabilities, costs to upgrade/maintain and the costs to develop land in our townships will be vital. These costs will then need to be balanced with a return on the sale of the land.

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Providing this information to our employers and the development industry will be a key initiative of Councils, which will ensure new and emerging economic opportunities have a place to house their employees.

Balancing attracting new residential investment with the need to provide for health and wellbeing are fundamental for attracting and maintaining the population base. Community facilities across the local government area include the West Wyalong District Hospital, West Wyalong Community Health Centre, TAFE NSW Riverina Institute, as well as the many schools and child care centres. Maintaining and improving availability and access to these facilities will also allow our community to age in place.

Our Shire also hosts recreational areas such as the West Wyalong Skate Park, Holland Park and Ungarie pools, Barnardo Park, McCann Park and Barmedman Mineral Pool. Council will undertake a review of the amount of accessibility of open space in the Shire to maintain these facilities. By delivering healthy built environments through better urban design, the community will be encouraged to be more active and involved in their built environment and natural surrounds.

COMMUNITY

ACTIONS

Action 1.1

Undertake a feasibility assessment for residential development in the township of West Wyalong.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Short Term

Action 1.2

Conduct a review of open space to measure the supply, quality, and accessibility of open space in the Shire.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Medium Term

Action 1.3

Council's Bland Development Control Plan 2012 will be reviewed to incorporate design considerations regarding the provision of well-designed shade, with reference to the latest shade guidelines.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Short Term

Action 1.4

Identify and capture Aboriginal cultural heritage and cultural landscapes heritage to inform the completion of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study to protect cultural heritage and cultural landscapes, and investigate the listing of these items.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Short Term

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COMMUNITY

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Priority 1 gives effect to the following Riverina Murray Regional Plan Actions:

Direction 25: Build housing capacity to meet demand.

Direction 26: Provide greater housing choice.

Direction 27: Manage rural residential development.

Direction 28: Deliver healthy built environments and improved urban design.

2

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Encourage the establishment of childcare, healthcare, aged care and social assistance.
- Apply for grants to improve recreation, sporting and community facilities.
- Support community initiatives such as sports and cultural events, and programs which will encourage community engagement and social inclusion within the Shire.
- Ensure Residential Development will:
 - Be located to avoid areas that are identified as important agricultural land or areas that create potential for land use conflict;
 - Align with the utility infrastructure network and its capabilities;
 - Avoid or mitigate the impacts of hazards, including the implications of climate change;
 - Protect areas with high environmental value and/or cultural heritage value and important biodiversity corridors;
 - Not hinder development or urban expansion and will contribute to the function of existing townships;
 - Create new neighbour-hoods that are environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, easy to get to, healthy and safe.
- Work alongside industry to ensure investment into the Bland Housing market.
- Consider the benefits of shade in all decisions about infrastructure provision and maintenance.
- Consider the provision of well-designed shade, both natural and built in the provision of all public infrastructure.

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NOW IS THE TIME TO EAT AT

LUXOR ESPRESSO

THOM'S
CORNER
1894-1923

THOM, DICK & HARRY'S

SALE
SALE
SALE
SALE

ECONOMY

2 Besides from agriculture, one of the largest employment and income generating fields for our Shire is mining and supporting industries. The Cowal Gold Operation is approximately 38km north-east of West Wyalong and partially operates across Lake Cowal. This mine is currently approved to operate until 2032 and employs, on average, 385 people. Operations at the mine are expected to expand and Council are investigating additional temporary accommodation options to help facilitate this expansion.

3 Bolstering other facets of our economy is imperative to ensure prosperity of our Shire once the mine closes. West Wyalong has a strong, locally owned retail industry focused on Main Street. Main Street is characterised by colonial style buildings and a crooked street layout based on the original bullock track which curved around trees and gold diggings in the late 1800s. Given the size of Bland Shire the West Wyalong retail industry services a large catchment. Residents will still access larger retail services in Wagga Wagga and Griffith as required. *The Future of Retail Study* identified the retail sector will undergo rapid changes over the next 20 years in response to demand for online unique retail experiences. To protect and grow our retail industry the local planning system will need to be flexible to accommodate emerging retail trends.

4 Tourism is a valuable contributor to the economy of the Shire and could assist with bringing more people to live, work and enjoy the region. The tourism industry is supported by the development of assets and attractions such as the Wyalong Museum, Barmedman Mineral Pool and Weethalle Whistlestop which capitalise on the Shire's heritage buildings and outback landscapes. Murals including the Weethalle Silo Art project, the Bland Big Bull Mural and Horsing Around Mirrool Mural are particular highlights. Promotion and creative uses of our heritage buildings is an opportunity for the Shire to increase visitor rates and expenditure in our local stores. Our Shire is also home to many events including the Barmedman Twilight Modified Tractor Pull, Ungarie Show and Rodeo, Bland Flavour Festival and Weethalle Country Music Muster. Ensuring we have adequate temporary housing options to cater for tourists who come for these events will enable people to stay overnight and spend in the towns to boost our local economy.

ECONOMY

ACTIONS

Action 2.1

Investigate options for the development of temporary accommodation to provide options for working and leisure based visitors.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Short Term

Action 2.2

Review planning controls to provide flexibility and accommodate the changing nature of retail.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Short Term

Action 2.3

Develop a tourism strategy which aligns with the Destination NSW Plan.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Medium Term

Action 2.4

Preparation of a Heritage Study to review Heritage items currently listed in the Bland Local Environmental Plan and to investigate the inclusion of new heritage items.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Short Term

ECONOMY

2

Priority 2 gives effect to the following Riverina Murray Regional Plan Actions:

Direction 4: Promote business activities in industrial and commercial areas.

Direction 7: Promote tourism opportunities.

Direction 12: Sustainably manage mineral resources.

Direction 29: Protect the region's Aboriginal and historic heritage.

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Protect mining areas by consulting with State authorities when development or changes to planning controls are proposed which could affect mines.
- Encourage preservation and reuse of heritage buildings along Main Street for retail.
- Provide essential services, signage and infrastructure to promote local tourism.

Priority



AGRICULTURE

3

The Shire is economically dependent on agriculture and is the largest employment sector across the Shire. In 2011 Bland Shire had the highest gross value agricultural product of the Riverina Murray region at \$328 million (*RMCG, 2016*). The main agricultural produce for the Shire was Wheat (\$146M), Barley (\$46M), Wool (\$22M), and Canola (\$20M). There are approximately 450 businesses involved in primary production across the Shire. Aside from those directly employed by the agriculture industry, there are also significant flow-on economic benefits from this industry to other related enterprises in our townships.

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The importance of agriculture is reflected in the land use, as approximately 1.76 million hectares of the Shire is actively farmed. Given the climatic conditions and availability of water, dryland cropping, and grazing are the main forms of produce and the average holding is large, at nearly 4000ha. Drivers of change in the agricultural industry include technology improvements, which reduces the need for manual labour and changes in climate and water availability increases the viability of corporate farming. These trends are resulting in a decline in the rural population of Bland, which we must prepare for.

Council has identified that emerging agricultural businesses (e.g. aquaculture, agritourism and new technologies) are not adequately catered for in its LEP. In order to encourage agribusiness diversification and value-adding opportunities, council will review local plans to ensure land use, zoning and definitions that reflect industry requirements. This will inform the development of a land use strategy to protect and improve development controls for high value agricultural land.

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Land use conflict can occur around the periphery of agricultural and non-agricultural uses. Land use conflict and fragmentation of high value agricultural land can impact our region's economy by limiting the productivity, employment potential and diversification agricultural industries. The land use strategy can identify our important agricultural land and will provide guidance for future land use decisions in and around this land by appropriately locating future renewable energy and rural-residential development.

AGRICULTURE

3

ACTIONS

Action 3.1

Prepare and endorse a Land Use Strategy which includes protection of high value agricultural land prior to any amendment of the Bland Local Environmental Plan 2011.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Medium Term

Action 3.2

Encourage agribusinesses diversification and value-adding opportunities by reviewing local plans to ensure land use, zoning and definitions reflect industry requirements.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Ongoing

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AGRICULTURE

3

Priority 3 gives effect to the following Riverina Murray Regional Plan Actions:

Direction 1: Protect the region's diverse and productive agricultural land.

Direction 2: Promote and grow the agribusiness sector.

Direction 3: Expand advanced and value-added manufacturing.

5

Direction 27: Manage rural residential development.

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To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Encourage local entrepreneurship and emerging industries to attract new business and industry to create long-term employment opportunities.
- Collaborate with State agencies, local business and land owners to identify important agricultural land and protect it from incompatible developments and identify alternate locations for other types of development.
- Encourage co-location of agricultural value-added industries, renewable energy and emerging industries in appropriate locations.

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ENVIRONMENT

4

With the extremes of our variable climate, increasing natural hazard resilience is vital for our Shire to manage the impacts from drought, bushfire, water availability and floodplain management. Temperatures are expected to rise throughout the Riverina Murray region, resulting in heightened frequency and severity of natural hazards. To help manage these impacts we will embrace new technologies and practices to reduce carbon emissions, efficiently manage natural resources and appropriately locate developments.

5

Council and the community must be well informed, resilient and able to adapt and plan for future climate risks and land use planning plays an important role in this. Council will show leadership by committing to transitioning its energy needs to renewable sources and creating healthy public spaces and resilient infrastructure.

6

Council will work with the relevant State agencies to prepare for natural hazards and avoid their impacts as well as was experienced with the temporary closure of the Newell Highway during the 2016 floods.

7

Council has identified the need to strategically locate future offsets to protect biodiversity and future development land to prevent land use conflict. Balancing needs for new developments to facilitate growth and avoiding natural hazards (e.g. bush fire, flooding and biodiversity constraints) will be a driver of planning control changes for Bland in the years ahead. Understanding the location and risks associated with abandoned mine shafts and land subsidence is another consideration for council. Investigating the potential for offsets to be located on these areas is an opportunity to reuse this constrained land.

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ENVIRONMENT

4

ACTIONS

Action 4.1

Update Development Control Plan to regulate conversation vegetation as per the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017*.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Short Term

Action 4.2

Implement the Ungarie Flood Study.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Medium Term

Action 4.3

Create educational material for the management of local noxious weeds.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Short Term.

Priority

ENVIRONMENT

ACTIONS

Action 4.4

Review council owned land to identify offset requirements for future development and any opportunities to use council land for Biodiversity.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Medium Term

Priority 4 gives effect to the following Riverina Murray Regional Plan Actions:

Direction 11: Promote the diversification of energy supplies through renewable energy generation.

Direction 15: Protect and manage the region's many environmental assets.

Direction 16: Increase resilience to natural hazards and climate change.

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Encourage adoption of new technologies and practices to build climate resilience and efficient use of natural resources.
- Locate developments, including new urban release areas, away from areas of natural hazards and high environmental value.
- Support the enhancement of high environmental value areas and restoration of degraded vegetation.
- Have a proactive and educational approach to noxious weeds.



INFRASTRUCTURE

5

West Wyalong is intersected by the Mid-Western and Newell Highways, both major freight routes. Currently roads are the only viable option for residents to reach regional cities of Wagga Wagga and Griffith. During the 2016 floods the Newell Highway was inaccessible for nearly two months which significantly isolated our Shire. Despite West Wyalong having a functional all weather airport there are no regional air services available. Encouraging a regional airliner to be established at the airport would be a great opportunity for the Shire.

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The stronger the connections across the region, especially to cities, the greater the region's ability to access higher level health care and education, and capitalise on tourism opportunities. Council will plan, design and operate the road network to deliver movement and place outcomes in line with *Future Transport 2056*, the *NSW Freight and Ports Plan 2018-2022* and future outcomes of the *Connecting Central West and Orana Transport Program*.

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The Ungarie-Naradhan and Cootamundra-Lake Cargelligo Railways also service the Shire, providing an important transportation network for the agricultural sector. The proposed Inland Rail Corridor, while not bisecting the Shire, will provide another avenue for the region to move freight by rail. The Calleen and West Wyalong grain storage and logistics hubs are well located to take advantage of the Inland Rail's accessibility to international markets.

Ensuring towns have adequate infrastructure to access electricity, water, telecommunications, sewer and other locations is important to support current and future populations. Access to water is an ongoing constraint as it is currently piped from Wagga. The Wyalong and West Wyalong solar farms were both approved in 2019 and combined will produce 190 megawatts once built. Council will continue to work with State agencies to promote investment and guide infrastructure improvements to ensure the Shire has capacity to facilitate our community's needs and enable future large scale developments such as the solar farms to occur.

INFRASTRUCTURE

ACTIONS

Action 5.1

Prepare a local infrastructure provision plan to identify priority projects and accommodate needs for our changing demographic.

Responsibility

Council

Timeframe

Medium Term

Priority 5 gives effect to the following Riverina Murray Regional Plan Actions:

Direction 18: Enhance road and rail freight links.

Direction 21: Align and protect utility infrastructure investment.

Direction 22: Promote the growth of regional cities and local centres.

To deliver this planning priority, Council will:

- Identify and protect future transport corridors from incompatible land uses.
- Work with government agencies to advocate for the development of appropriate infrastructure to facilitate freight and public transport needs.
- Advocate for the development of appropriate infrastructure and establishment of a regional airline to enhance community transport needs.

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