



Richmond  
Valley  
Council

# Local Strategic Planning Statement: Beyond 20-20 Vision



A 20 year planning vision for the  
Richmond Valley Local Government Area



May 2020

# CONTENTS

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Introduction	2
Our Vision	7
Policy Context	9
Regional Context	11
Our Settlements	13
Planning Themes and Priorities	26
Theme 1 - Our Community	27
Theme 2 - Our Environment	40
Theme 3 - Our Economy	58
Action Plan & Implementation	73
References	77



Richmond Valley Council recognises the people of the Bundjalung Nation as Custodians and Traditional Owners of the land upon which we live and work. Council values and appreciates their continuing cultural connection to land and pay respect to Elders past and present as well as to young indigenous leaders of tomorrow.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

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I am pleased to present the *Richmond Valley Council's Local Strategic Planning Statement* which provides a long-term vision and planning priorities which will guide land use planning and outlines the challenges faced with balancing projected growth, maintaining a vibrant agricultural base, stimulating economy growth, and retaining healthy built and natural environments.

The statement identifies Richmond Valley is likely to have a population of 25,650 by 2036 and require an additional 1,550 dwellings to accommodate this growth. A key action from the statement will be preparation of new Local Growth Management Strategy to plan for this growth and how it will be delivered.

The statement also acknowledges Richmond Valley's place on the North Coast and its strong contribution to the regional economy through agricultural, fishing and timber industries, and value-adding industries which process primary products for both domestic and international markets. Unlike most of regional NSW in recent years, manufacturing has strengthened in Richmond Valley and is an important employment base which Council is striving to expand and diversify into the future.

The environment has recently suffered from natural disasters, such as bushfire and flood, and the health of the Richmond River has been assessed as poor. We know the natural environment is important to the community, and Council will continue to collaborate with Federal, State, local governments, and the community to find ways to recover from those disasters and to improve the quality of our environments.

The challenges faced with implementing the actions from this statement do not rest solely with Council. They require Council to work and engage with its community so the future vision for the Richmond Valley can be achieved.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Mustow', written over a white background.

**Councillor Robert Mustow**  
**Mayor**



# INTRODUCTION

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## ABOUT THIS STATEMENT

The Richmond Valley Council Local Strategic Planning Statement: Beyond 20-20 Vision (the Statement or LSPS) outlines the Richmond Valley Local Government Area's (LGA) town planning priorities and strategic direction to address planning and development issues of importance to a vibrant and sustainable future. It investigates the unique attributes of the local area, and its community values, and provides a rationale for decisions about how land use patterns will evolve to achieve the community's broader expectations over the next 20 years. The Statement is primarily informed by the North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (NCRP) and Richmond Valley Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP), as well as having regard to a range of State, regional and local plans, policies and strategies.





## POLICY CONTEXT

This Statement has been prepared as a statutory requirement under Section 3.9 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the Act), which requires it to include or identify the following:

- the basis for strategic planning in the area, having regard to economic, social and environmental matters,
- planning priorities for the area that are consistent with any strategic plan applying to the area and the applicable Community Strategic Plan under section 402 of the *Local Government Act 1993*,
- actions required for achieving those planning priorities,
- the basis on which Council is to monitor and report on the implementation of those actions.



Figure 1: Clear line of sight between each level of planning policies and actions in one plan are advanced in a subsequent plan in a consistent manner (adapted from NSW Government White Paper, 2013)



This LSPS gives effect to the *North Coast Regional Plan 2036*, by implementing the relevant directions and actions at a local level. It is also informed by a raft of other State-wide and regional policies including:

- NSW DPI Population Projections (2016)
- NSW Premier's Priorities
- NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People
- Northern Rivers Regional Economic Development Strategy
- NRJO Strategic Regional Priorities
- Future Transport NSW
- Transport for NSW Future Transport Strategy
- Northern Rivers Transport Plan
- Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan
- National Land Freight Strategy
- North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation Report
- Adapt NSW Climate Projections
- Northern Rivers Farmland Protection Project
- NSW Department of Primary Industries- Agriculture Right to Farm Policy
- State-wide Destination Management Plan
- Government Architect Draft Urban Design for Regional NSW
- Active Living NSW
- North Coast Settlement Planning Guidelines

The LSPS will work with Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) to set planning priorities, strategic directions and actions relating to how land will be used to achieve the community's broader goals. In turn this Statement will be used to shape the land use zones and development standards of the *Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012* (LEP) and the Development Control Plan (DCP).



## CONSULTATION

This first Statement has been developed from existing strategic work, along with community engagement undertaken during preparation of the *Richmond Valley Made 2030 Community Strategic Plan 2017*.

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) requires Statements to be reviewed at least every 7 years, however, Richmond Valley Council is committed to synchronising future reviews with the 4 year Community Strategic Plan (CSP) cycle: with the next CSP scheduled to commence preparation in 2020, but not before this first Statement has been produced.

### COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following slide summarises community engagement during preparation of the *Richmond Valley Council Community Strategic Plan 2017*. Engagement included a Community Satisfaction Survey undertaken by Micromex Research in August 2016: a telephone poll receiving 403 responses from residents of the Richmond Valley across all age ranges and localities.

The Community Satisfaction Survey results are plotted in figure 2 and provide an analysis of the communities stated importance and satisfaction with Council services. Overall clear direction was given about areas where Council could improve its service delivery and how Council should prioritise future signature projects. The following 11 areas

were ranked as having the highest importance to the Community (bold has been added to highlight Town Planning matters): Two (2) areas relate to strengthening business; another two (2) to improving communication; and another to having a long term town planning direction.

**1. Local employment**

2. Maintaining local roads
3. Support for young people
4. Support for people on low incomes
5. Health services
6. Lighting in public places

**7. Long term town planning for the Richmond Valley Council area**

**8. Community engagement/consultation**

**9. Opportunity to participate in Council's decision making processes**

**10. Financial management**

**11. Economic development of the Richmond Valley**

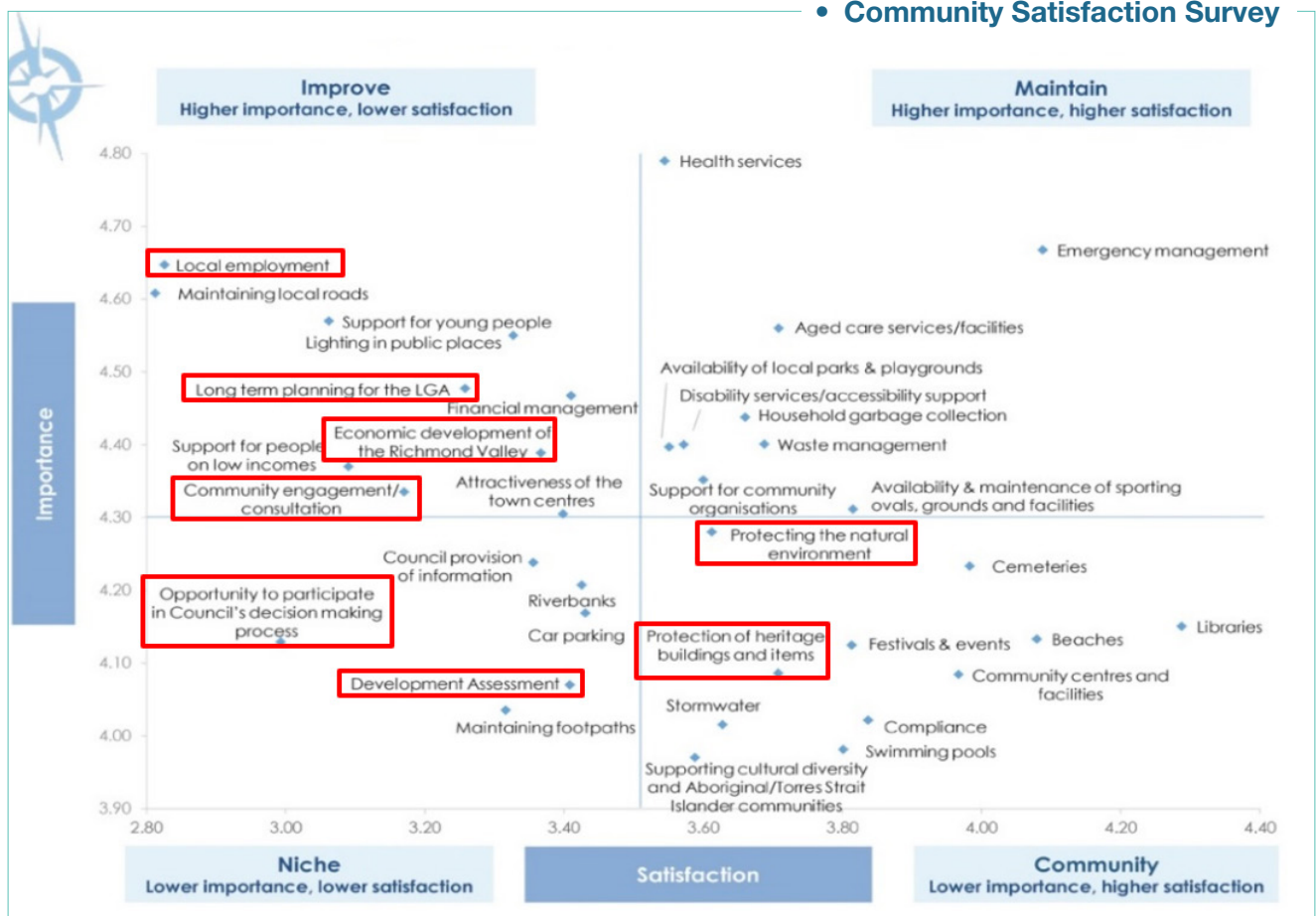


Figure 2: Richmond Valley community satisfaction survey with Town Planning matters highlighted (Micromex Research, 2016)

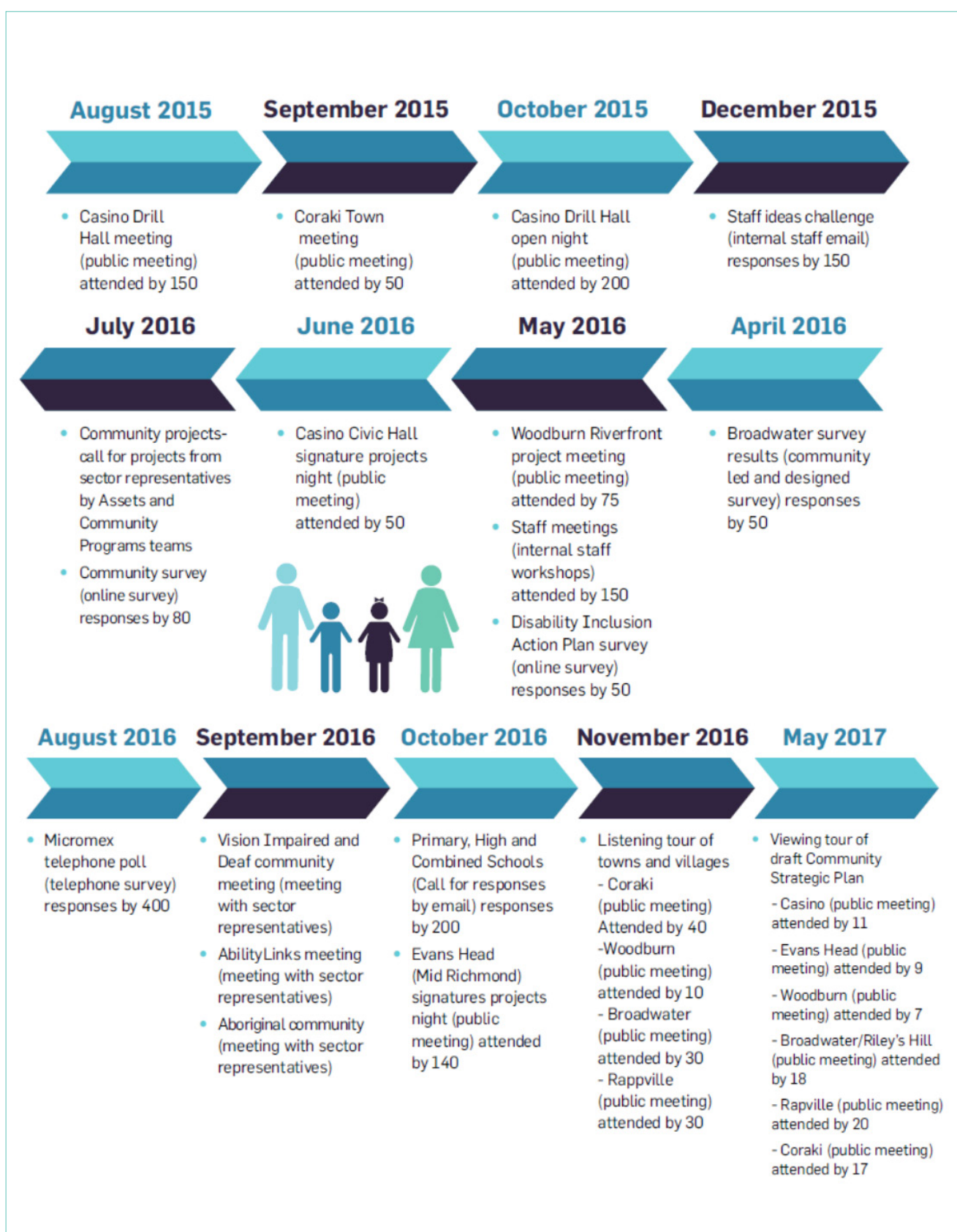


Figure 3: Community Engagement during the preparation of the Richmond Valley Made 2030 Community Strategic Plan 2017



# OUR VISION

“ A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER TO ADVANCE A RESILIENT AND ROBUST ECONOMY WHICH REFLECTS A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY, SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES AND A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT. ”

## COMMUNITY VISION

**A great community with a relaxed lifestyle,  
beautiful environment and vibrant economy**

## COMMUNITY VALUES

**Leadership**

**Accessibility**

**Transparency**

**Good Service**

**Sustainability**

**Innovation**



## COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

**Connecting People and Places**

**Growing our Economy**

**Looking after our Environment**



## COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

**Fresh and Vibrant  
Community**

**Getting Around**

**Working Together**

**Driving Economic  
Growth**

**Building on our  
Strengths**

**Promoting the  
Protection of the  
Environment**

**Leading and  
Advocating for our  
Community**

**Great Support**

## PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles (which are regarded as essential elements for good local government) are to be utilised as part of the everyday decision making processes, actions and management of Richmond Valley Council:

- good governance (delivers good performance, minimises risks, ensures transparency and accountability, and promotes efficiency and effectiveness)
- representative democracy and community support (Council's direction/activities to broadly reflect its community demographics and to provide community support)
- sound policy (a strong and sustainable LGA requires clear direction via a policy and planning framework)
- sufficient resources (a vibrant LGA needs human and financial resources to implement its decisions and to fulfill statutory obligations)
- meaningful planning (planning is a process to translate community needs and aspirations into Council services and must result in actions and outcomes for the community)
- connectedness (a strong local government environment requires a high level of connectivity across all the community)
- strong leadership (effective local government and outcomes can only be achieved via strong community leadership through Councillors and staff)



## VALUES

The various engagement processes undertaken during preparation of the CSP found a range of "values" which the community sought to retain into the future:

- a quiet, friendly and relaxed lifestyle
- access to natural attributes (waterways, national parks, natural bushland)
- open space and recreation
- wanting to contribute to the community
- economic diversity
- the expectation of community leadership

# POLICY CONTEXT



## NORTH COAST REGIONAL PLAN 2036

The *North Coast Regional Plan 2036* (NCRP) was endorsed by the NSW Minister for Planning in March 2017. It applies across the North Coast region, consisting of 12 local government areas from Tweed to Port-Macquarie Hastings. The NCRP comprises the NSW Government's strategy to guide land use planning decisions for the region, recognising its diverse rural and coastal landscapes and world-class environments. The Plan establishes four regionally focused goals articulating intended outcomes being-

- 1. The most stunning environment in NSW**
- 2. A thriving, interconnected economy**
- 3. Vibrant and engaging communities**
- 4. Great housing choice and lifestyle options**

Within these goals are-

- 25 directions—identifying the broad issues & policy areas to be focused on; and
- 80 actions—representing the steps to be taken to achieve the goals and directions (either as strategies or initiatives).

Priority actions from the Plan are economic and jobs growth, greater housing choices to meet demand, delivering infrastructure to support growth and communities and protecting natural areas.

## RICHMOND VALLEY MADE 2030 COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2017

The LSPS focuses on the long-term vision and priorities for land use planning in the local area. As part of this, it helps to translate the vision and priorities expressed in the CSP, and other strategies, into specific land use planning actions for the LGA.

Council's CSP is required under the *Local Government Act 1993* to have regard to economic, social, environmental and governance matters, and to identify the main priorities and aspirations of the community. These aspirations are then reflected in the council's suite of strategic plans – such as land use strategies, economic development strategies, cultural plans etc. – and translated into specific actions in councils four year delivery program and annual operational plan. Land use priorities can be identified through this process, expressed in the LSPS, and ultimately implemented through the Local Environmental Plan and other mechanisms.

Section 3.9 of the *EP&A Act* requires the council LSPS to include or identify the planning priorities for the area which are consistent with councils CSP and the actions required for achieving those planning priorities.





The Richmond Valley CSP aims to deliver in four key areas (themes):

### Connecting People and Places

#### PP1 Fresh and vibrant community

- ▶ Festivals & Events
- ▶ Sports grounds, parks and facilities
- ▶ Swimming Pools
- ▶ Cemeteries
- ▶ Libraries
- ▶ Community Centres & Halls
- ▶ Emergency Management

#### PP2 Getting around

- ▶ Building & maintaining roads

#### PP3 Working together

- ▶ Community Engagement, Consultation & Communication
- ▶ Community Programs & Grants

### Growing our Economy

#### EC1 Drive economic growth

- ▶ Economic Development
- ▶ Tourism
- ▶ Town Planning & Development Services

#### EC2 Build on our strengths

- ▶ Quarries
- ▶ Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange
- ▶ Private Works
- ▶ Real Estate Development

### Looking after our Environment

#### EH1 Manage our waste and water

- ▶ Waste Management
- ▶ Stormwater Management
- ▶ Water Supplies
- ▶ Sewerage Services

### Making Council Great

#### CS1 Leading and advocating for our community

- ▶ Governance & Advocacy

#### CS2 Great support

- ▶ Customer Services
- ▶ Information Technology Services
- ▶ Organisational Development
- ▶ Work Health & Safety
- ▶ Financial Services
- ▶ Engineering Support & Asset Management
- ▶ Fleet Management

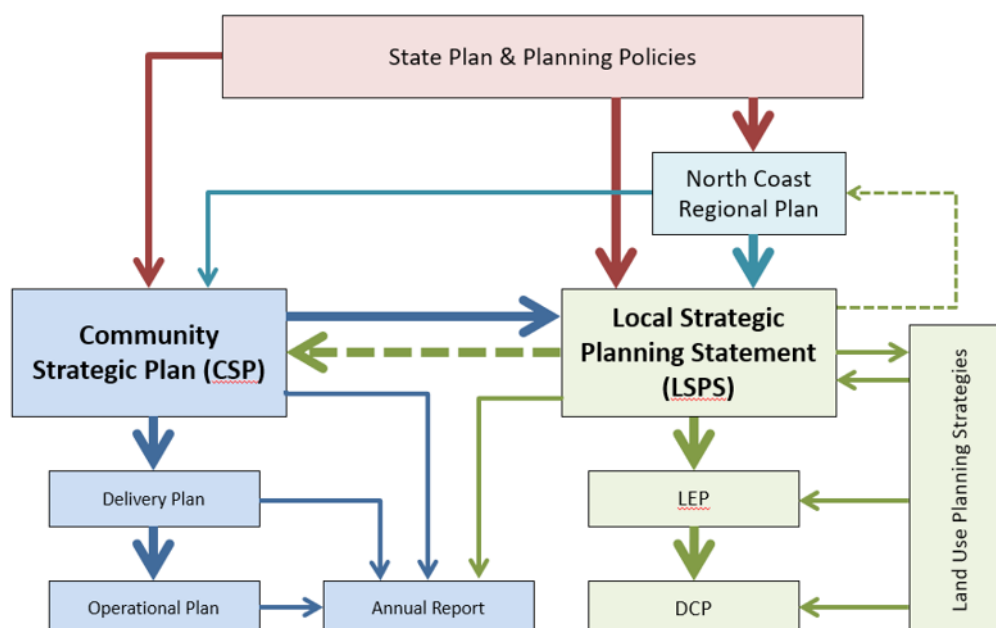


Figure 4: Integration of the CSP, LSPS with other State and regional plans and policies

# REGIONAL CONTEXT

## OUR PLACE ON THE NORTH COAST

Richmond Valley is one of 12 Local Government Areas (LGA) in the north-eastern corner of New South Wales which define the North Coast region: extending from the NSW/Queensland border south to the Hunter Region and inland to the New England North West Region (figure 5). The Region has an area of 32,030km<sup>2</sup>, with a combined Estimated Resident Population (ERP) of 519,250 persons (ABS Census, 2016).

The North Coast Regional Plan's forward describes the region as follows-

**The North Coast of NSW is undoubtedly one of the State's most desirable places to live and work.**

**More than 12 million people visit the region each year, making it also one of the great tourist attractions of the nation.**

**With the State's most biologically diverse environment and vibrant communities increasingly connected to economic powerhouses to the north and south, the North Coast has a solid foundation for a sustainable and prosperous future.**



Within the North Coast region are 3 subregions with Richmond Valley LGA positioned at the southern edge of the Far North Coast. The LGA is placed about 540km north of Sydney and 140km south of Brisbane (as the crow flies), and is neighboured by the 4 local government areas (clockwise from the south) of Clarence Valley Council, Kyogle Council, Lismore City Council and Ballina Shire Council (figure 6).

The LGA has an area of 3,050km<sup>2</sup>, and extends from the coastline at Evans Head, along the alluvial floodplains of the Richmond River beyond Casino towards Kyogle, and spreading across to the foothills of the Great Dividing Range where the LGA is skirted by the Richmond Ranges along its southern and western boundaries. The LGA includes the towns and villages of (in descending order of population) Casino, Evans Head, Coraki, Woodburn, Broadwater, Rappville, Rileys Hill and Whiporie.

The LGA is traversed by 4 major transport arterials comprising: the Pacific Highway, Summerland Way and North Coast Rail Line, providing direct access to South East Queensland; and the Bruxner Highway providing east-west connectivity from the coast to the New England Tablelands.

While Casino is Richmond Valley LGA's largest community, and provides a wide range of essential services, there is a strong regional focus towards the centres of Lismore and Ballina for the provision of specialist services and facilities.



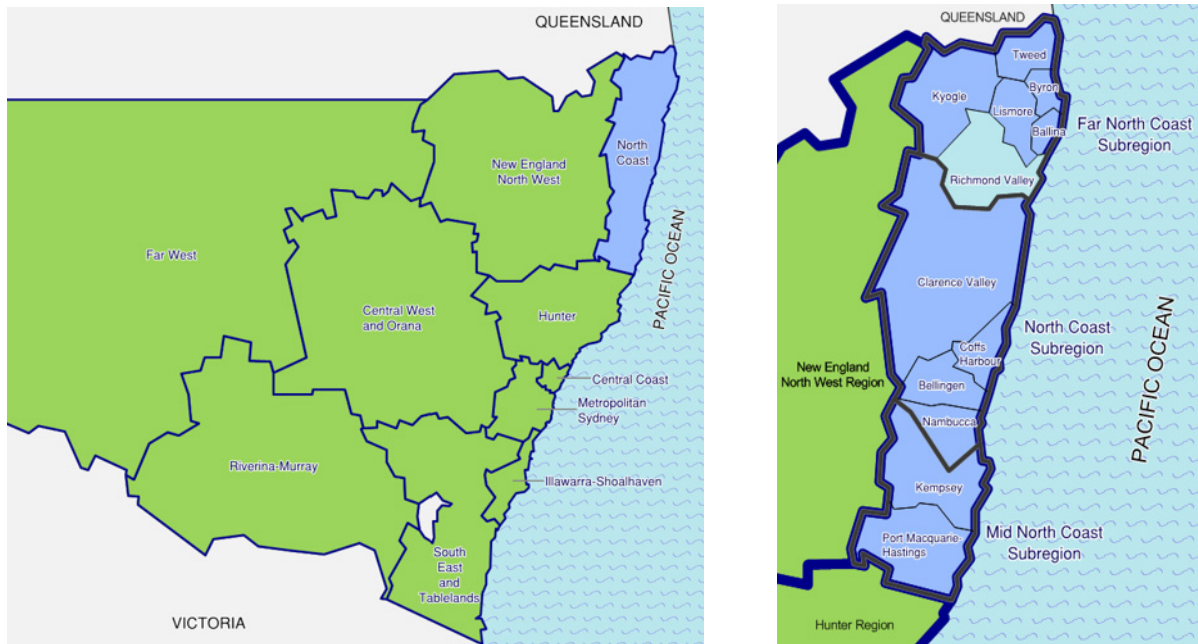


Figure 5: New South Wales Planning Regions (left); and subregions and LGAs of the North Coast Region (right)

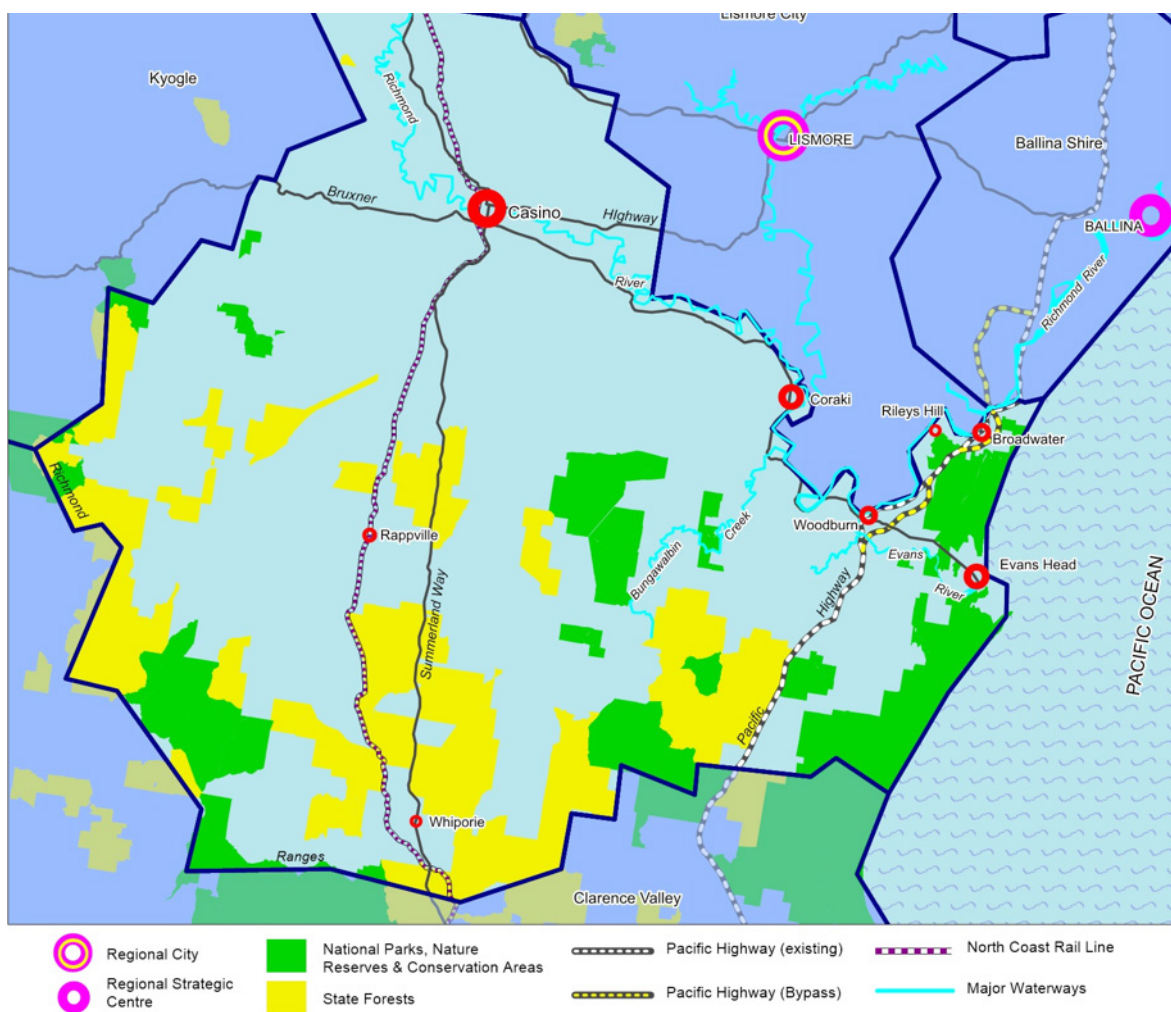


Figure 6: Richmond Valley Council Locality Plan



# OUR SETTLEMENTS



## CASINO

Casino is the largest settlement in the LGA having an urban ERP of 9,982 (or 11,763 when surrounding rural residential estates are included) (Census 2016).

The town is located on the banks of the Richmond River, at the cross roads of the Summerland Way, Bruxner Highway, and North Coast Rail. This gives it a strategic advantage over other Far North Coast centres for freight transport north into South-East Queensland, south towards Sydney & Newcastle, and westerly towards the New England Tablelands.

The town has very strong links to its agricultural sector having a strong focus on beef, dairy, timber, and broad acre cropping for soy beans, and recent expansions into sugarcane and tea tree. The town also hosts several food manufacturing industries, associated with local and regional primary production, which contribute significantly to the Region's GRP and employment.

Casino is the focal centre for the region's beef industry with the:

- ▶ Northern Cooperative Meat Company (NCMC)— the largest abattoir on the North Coast
- ▶ Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange (NRLX)— a livestock selling facility which recently underwent significant upgrades to be a state of the art complex
- ▶ New World Foods—formerly known as Mariani Foods, producing high quality beef jerky for domestic and international markets
- ▶ Casino Beef Week Festival—a celebration of the region's beef industry held annually since 1982.



Other significant features of the town are:

- ▶ Richmond Dairies—producing a range of milk products
- ▶ PRIMEX—one of the Nation's leading primary industries expos
- ▶ Art Deco main street
- ▶ Meat Chicken industry—this industry had a significant presence in the district and was a large contributor towards the Region's GRP. However, a recent restructure of the industry has seen grower contracts lapse without renewal, leaving the industry in limbo while it investigates future options

Prospects for future economic growth include potentially the largest medicinal cannabis production facility in the southern hemisphere; an energy from waste facility which could revolutionise landfill management on the Far North Coast; an intermodal rail freight terminal as a siding to the main North Coast rail corridor; the Northern Rivers rail trail; and the only North Coast station for a High Speed Rail (HSR) proposal.



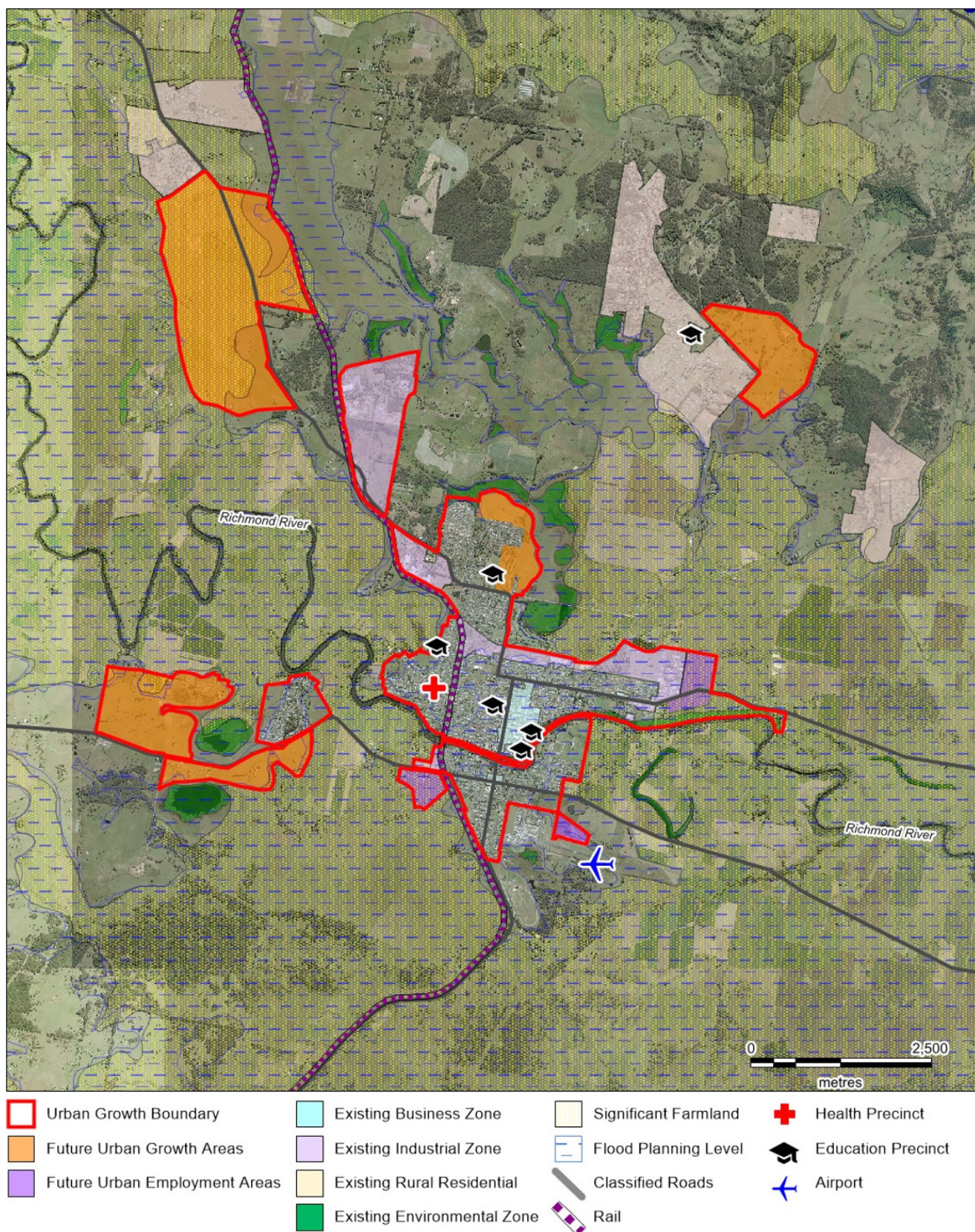


Figure 7: Casino Locality Plan



## EVANS HEAD

The second largest urban settlement in the LGA is the coastal settlement of Evans Head located at the mouth of the Evans River and surrounded by natural settings framed by the Pacific Ocean, golden sandy beaches, rocky headlands, and 2 extensive coastal National Parks to its north and south.

The town has an urban ERP of 2,843 (or about 3,054 when including a nearby rural residential estate and manufactured home estate) (Census 2016).

Domestic tourism is the major economic driver in Evans Head with the population in peak holiday periods swelling with day trippers, and large numbers of tourists residing in holiday homes and units throughout the town as well as camping at the popular Silver Sands Reflections Holiday Park. Anecdotally, the population of Evans Head is estimated to double in size during peak holiday seasons, however, is unconfirmed and should be researched further.

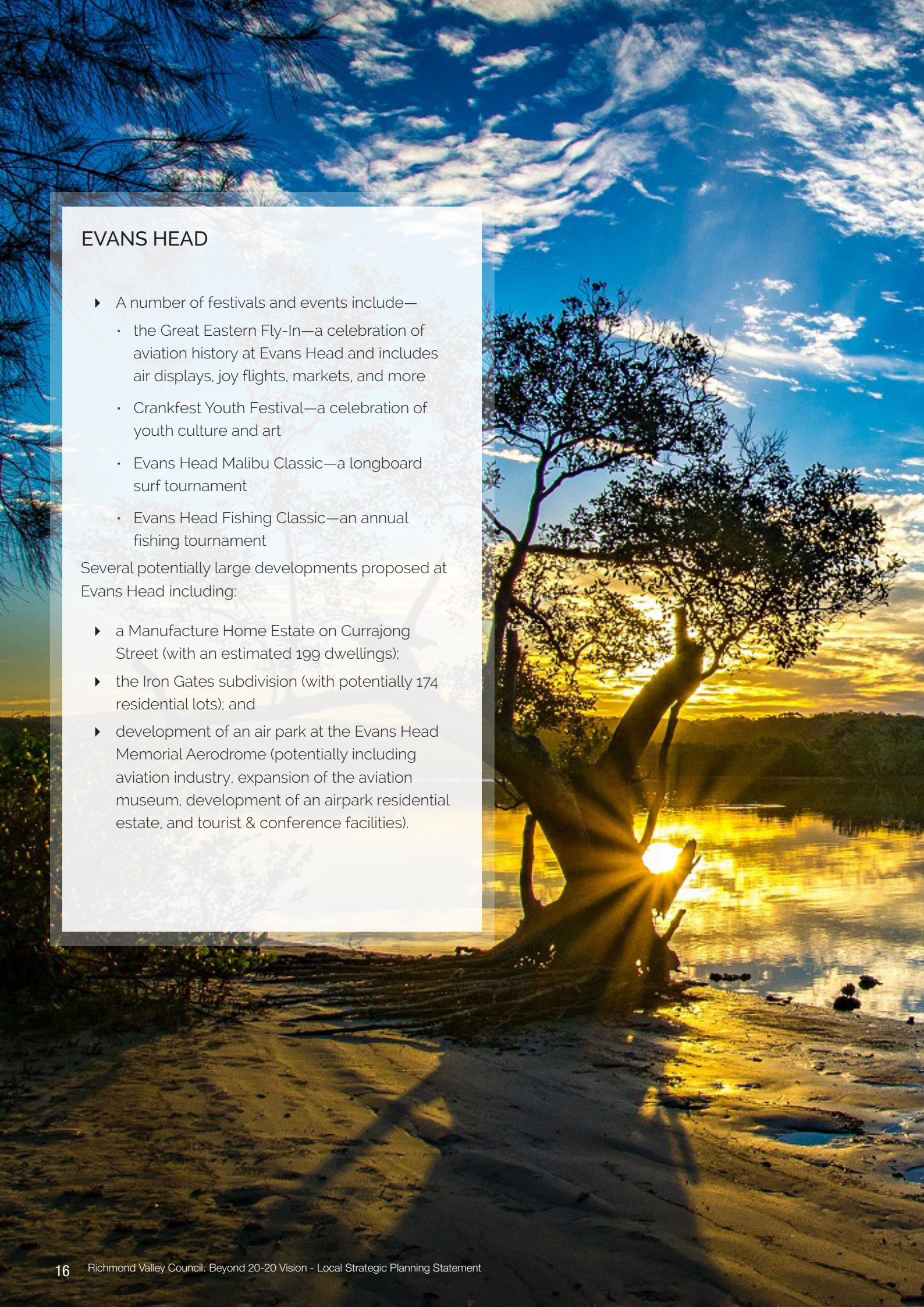
Evans Head is also renowned for its associations with commercial fishing and the infancy of the Australian prawning industry, and the Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome which was home to the Royal Australian Air Force No. 1 Bombing and Gunnery School (BAGS) during World War 2.

Other features of the town include:

- ▶ a beautiful coastline consisting of a number of patrolled and unpatrolled surf beaches and Razor Back lookout
  - ▶ Evans Head Heritage Aviation Museum—the museum is located within a refurbished WW2 Bellman Hangar at the Memorial Aerodrome and houses a collection of aircraft including a F-111C fighter/bomber, a Canberra bomber, Caribou transport, a Russian MiG-15 fighter, and a Bell Kiowa helicopter
  - ▶ Evans Head Living Museum—the Museum is staffed by dedicated volunteers involved in the collection, identification and interpretation of the rich human and natural resources making up the history and development of the Evans Head area
- ▶ Dirrawong Reserve—a Crown Reserve dedicated to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, the preservation of fauna and flora, and for public recreation. The reserve incorporates Goanna Headland, Snapper Rocks, and Chinamans Beach
  - ▶ National Parks—Broadwater National Park extends to the north and west of the town, with Bundjalung National Park to its south. These Parks form part of a system of coastal national parks including sites of spiritual significance to the local Aboriginal community. Prominent features include Salty Lakes, the Gumma Garra picnic area, and Jerusalem Creek
  - ▶ Fishermen's Cooperative—supporting a small fleet of fishing trawlers, and selling fresh seafood direct to the community
  - ▶ Camp Koinonia—CampK features heritage listed cabins to accommodate school camps, group events, and conferences, while offering a range of educational and fun activities
  - ▶ Deep Sea Fishing Charters—operating out of the Evans Head Marina







## EVANS HEAD

- ▶ A number of festivals and events include—
  - the Great Eastern Fly-In—a celebration of aviation history at Evans Head and includes air displays, joy flights, markets, and more
  - Crankfest Youth Festival—a celebration of youth culture and art
  - Evans Head Malibu Classic—a longboard surf tournament
  - Evans Head Fishing Classic—an annual fishing tournament

Several potentially large developments proposed at Evans Head including:

- ▶ a Manufacture Home Estate on Currajong Street (with an estimated 199 dwellings);
- ▶ the Iron Gates subdivision (with potentially 174 residential lots); and
- ▶ development of an air park at the Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome (potentially including aviation industry, expansion of the aviation museum, development of an airpark residential estate, and tourist & conference facilities).





Figure 8: Evans Head Locality Plan



## CORAKI

Coraki is situated at the junction of the Richmond and Wilsons Rivers—and is named after the Aboriginal word for “meeting of the waters”.

The village sits midway between Casino and Woodburn, has an ERP of 1,127 (Census 2016).

Coraki is internationally renowned as the home area for the Australian Tea Tree oil industry and is the focal point for a number of large and small Tea Tree plantations and oil distillation operations which

produce high quality medical grade Tea Tree oil for domestic and international distribution.

The Richmond River is a stunning backdrop to this peaceful village, which was historically a thriving river port Municipality. Now days the wharves, jetties and shipping have disappeared leaving beautiful foreshore parklands and a recently refurbished swimming beach, making this a popular destination for water skiing, rowing and other aquatic activities.







Figure 9: Coraki Locality



## WOODBURN

Woodburn is the southern entrance to the Richmond Valley, located on the banks of the Richmond River, and a major rest area for travellers on the Pacific Highway. Apart from overlooking a beautiful section of the Richmond River, this small village is surrounded by expansive plains of sugar cane, having an ERP of 500 (Census 2016).

Construction of a Pacific Highway bypass around the eastern outskirts of the village is well underway and expected to be complete in late 2020. The business sector of the Village relies heavily on passing highway trade, therefore plans are already in motion to reinvent the village as a tourist stop-over, and rest area, post highway bypass. Stage 1 of a Riverside Park upgrade has opened with a new Visitor Information Centre, amenities, revitalised parklands and playgrounds to take in the best views of the Richmond River. The river is also a focal point for recreational water sport activities including rowing, sailing, swimming, fishing and water skiing.



Other features of the Woodburn area are–

- ▶ New Italy Museum—on the Pacific Highway just south of Woodburn, this museum is a celebration of the early Italian pioneers which settled on the North Coast
- ▶ Bundjalung National Park—featuring Jerusalem Creek, Black Rocks camping area, and a Wilderness Area in the upper catchment of the Esk River
- ▶ Mountain Biking—an exciting network of cross country mountain bike trails has been established in Doubleduke State Forest, at New Italy.





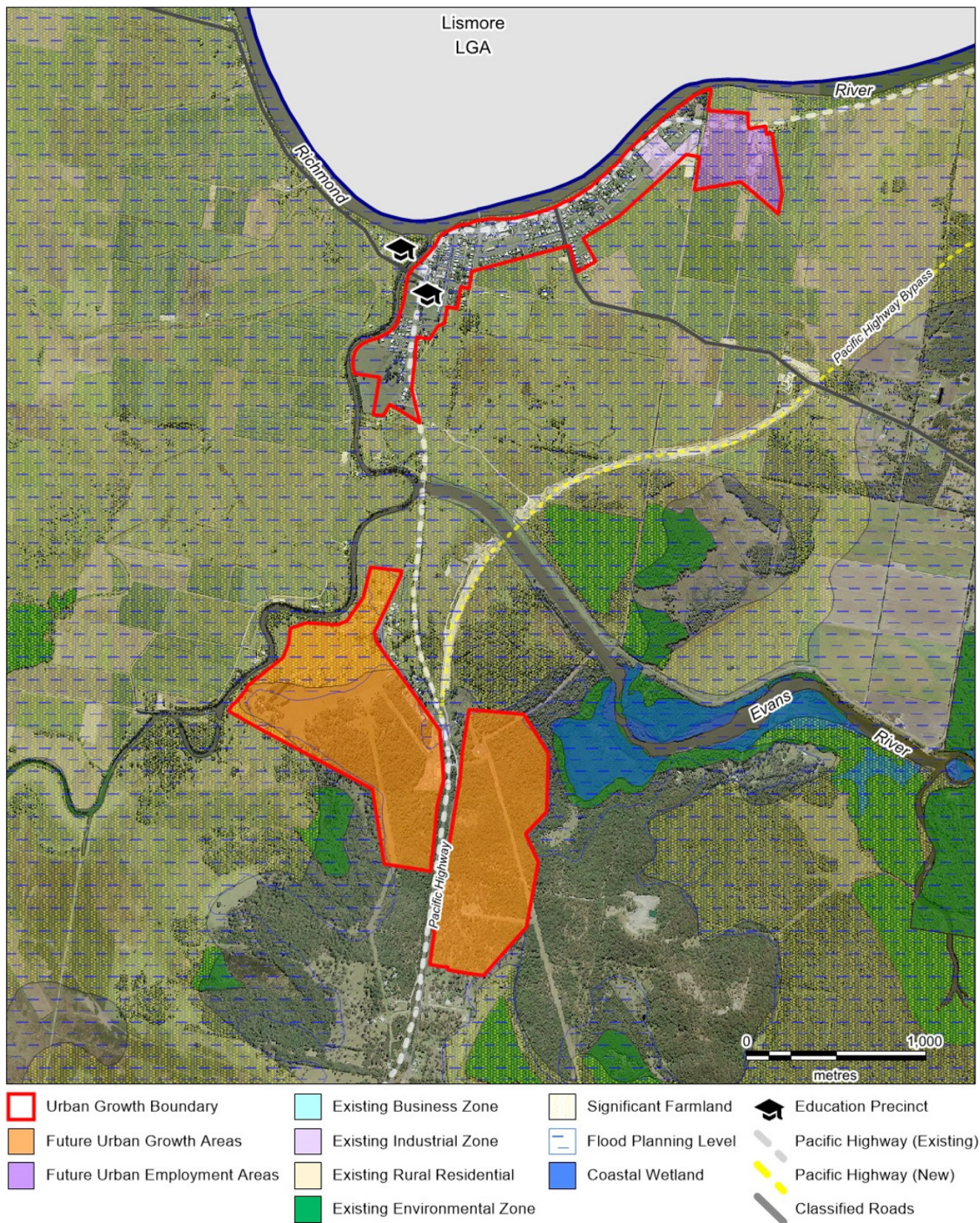


Figure 10: Woodburn Locality Plan



## BROADWATER

Broadwater is placed on the Pacific Highway, and the southern bank of the wide expansive Richmond River. This small village has an ERP of 484 (Census 2016), but has huge urban growth potential given its connection to sewer in 2014, its location close to the coast, and the imminent opening of the Pacific Highway bypass in late 2020.

Apart from the Richmond River, the dominant focal point of the village is the Broadwater Sugar Mill, 1 of 3 on the North Coast, with its tall smoke stacks towering above the village skyline.

Surrounding the Village is a landscape dominated by the Richmond River, fields of sugar cane and coastal National Park. Broadwater NP is located to the village's south & east and includes Broadwater Beach and 2 lookouts which offer views of the coastline from Evans Head to Ballina. On the south side of the village is a 2.6ha environmental reserve established in 1991 for the protection of the local Koala population which exists between Broadwater and Rileys Hill.

Recent development consent has been granted for a 68 lot subdivision which could increase the population of Broadwater by 150 persons.



## RILEYS HILL

Rileys Hill has strong links to the nearby village of Broadwater, being only 2 kilometres apart.

This small village has a population of 120 (estimate only)(Census 2016) and is perched on a small hill overlooking the Richmond River, Broadwater National Park, and surrounding plains of sugar cane.

The Village's origins lie with the nearby Rileys Hill Dry Dock, and quarries which supplied rock boulders to build the break wall entrances to the Richmond River at Ballina, and Evans River at Evans Head.

A key feature of the village, and with huge tourist potential, is the Rileys Hill Heritage Reserve Dry Dock which is carefully being restored by community volunteers.





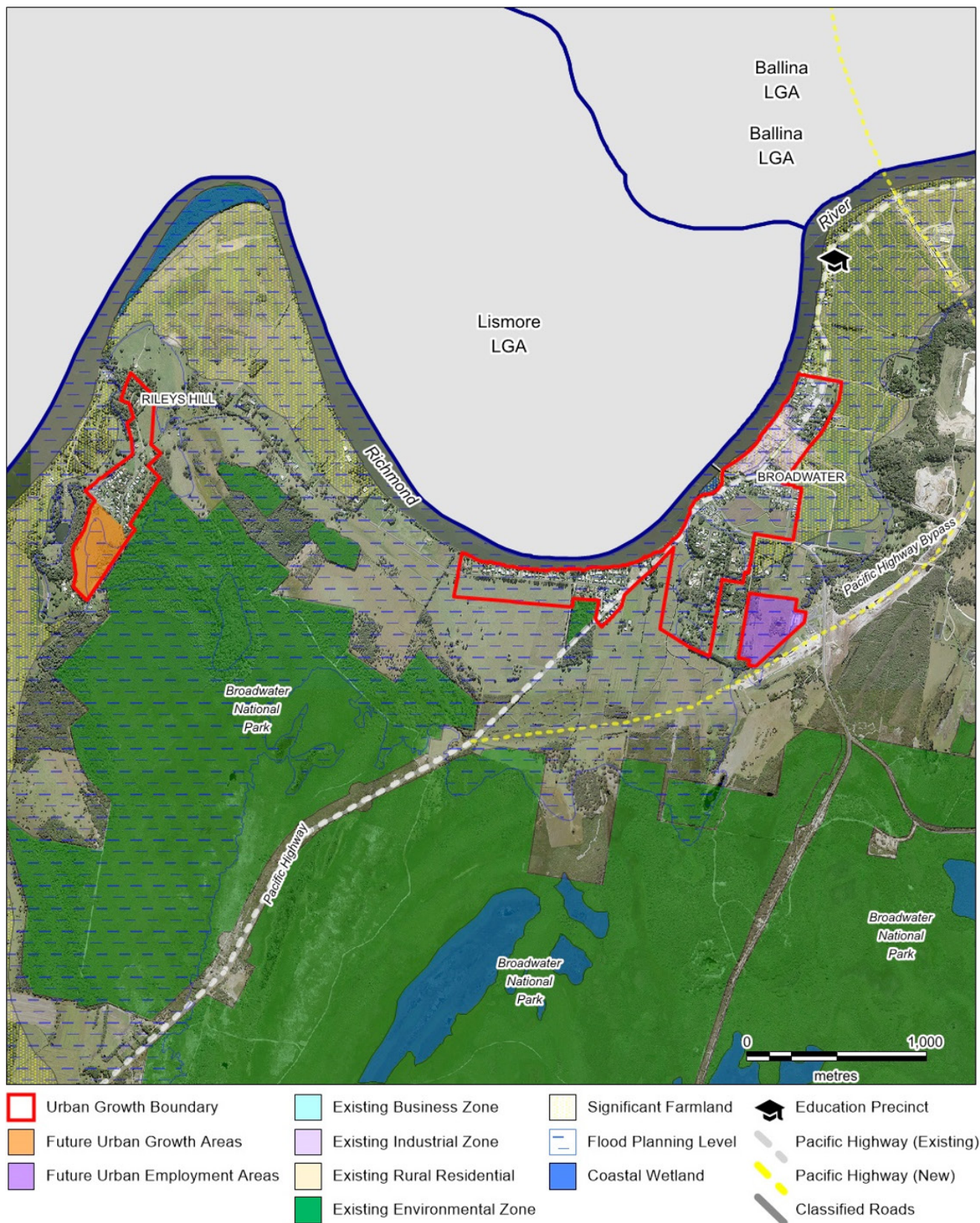


Figure 11: Broadwater and Rileys Hill Locality Plan



## RAPPVILLE

Rappville is a small village with a population of 105 (estimate only) (Census 2016). It owes its historic origins to the opening of the railway between Casino and Grafton in 1905 around which the village thrived as a loading point for passengers, timber and cattle from as far as the Upper Clarence. The area surrounding Rappville is still dominated by forestry and cattle grazing but trains no longer stop at Rappville.

The community retains a passion for its heritage and the tremendous sacrifices made by the community's contribution towards war efforts especially during World Wars 1 and 2.



A major feature of the Village is the historic federation style Commercial Hotel (known locally as the Rappville Pub) built by Henry Rapp in 1911, and after whom the Village was named.

In October 2019 the village was ravaged by a fire storm which, along with other wild fires, burnt out almost 50% of the Richmond Valley LGA. The fires caused extensive damage to the village, destroying 11 houses and the Rappville Community Hall, while damaging another 6 homes and part of the Nandabah Street memorial tree planting.

As part of the bushfire recovery, Council has commenced an investigation into what can be done to make the village of Rappville thrive. The Master Planning exercise will consider potential to expand the village, key social and community needs, infrastructure requirements, and economic opportunities. This Master Plan will be used to leverage Government funding for its implementation.





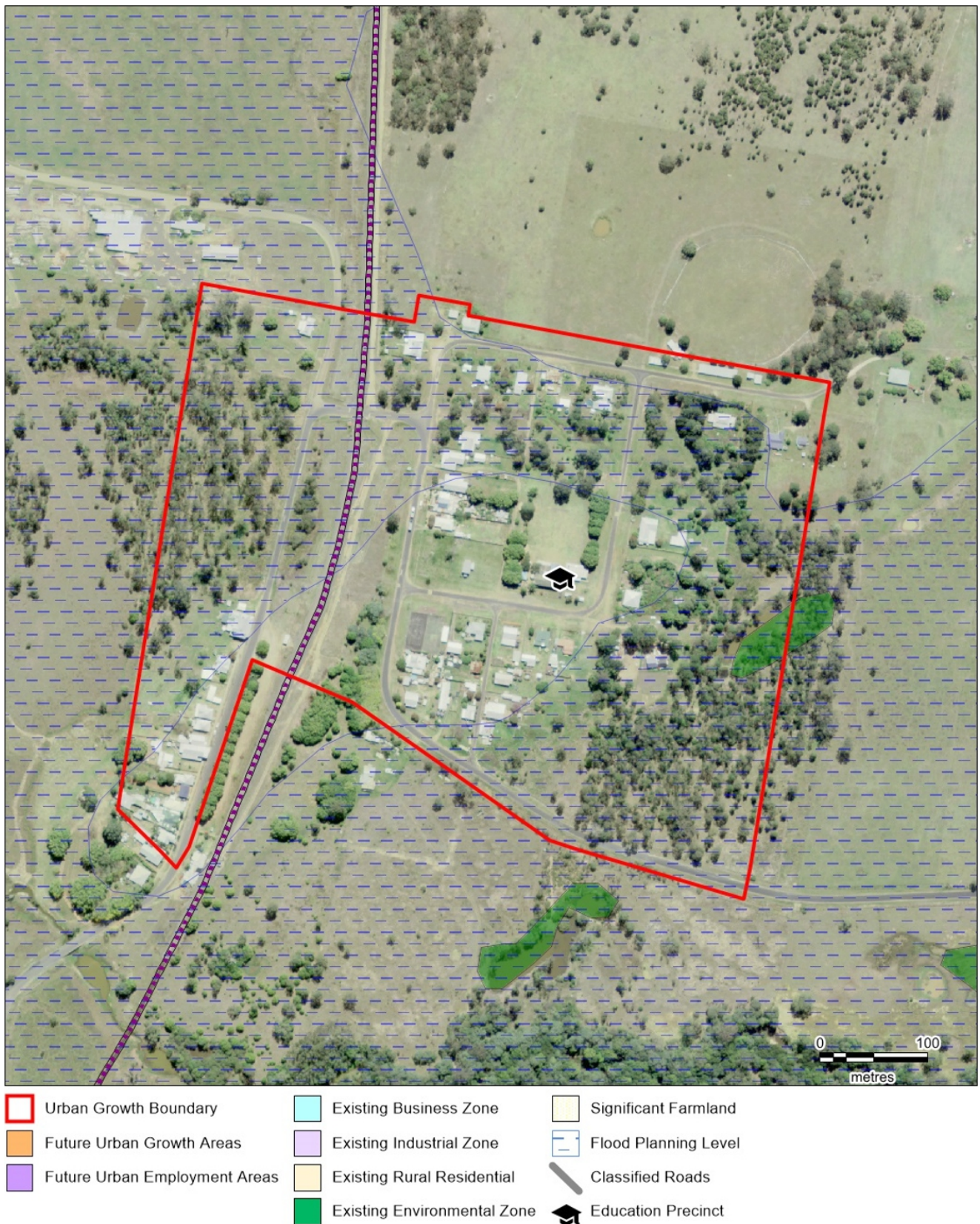


Figure 12: Rappville Locality Plan



# PLANNING THEMES AND PRIORITIES

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THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN ARRANGED INTO  
THE FOLLOWING THEMES AND PLANNING PRIORITIES-

## THEME 1—OUR COMMUNITY

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(CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES)

- ▶ Planning Priority 1 Have well planned and designed space to grow
- ▶ Planning Priority 2 Align development, growth and infrastructure
- ▶ Planning Priority 3 Improve the delivery of planning services

## THEME 2—OUR ENVIRONMENT

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(LOOKING AFTER OUR ENVIRONMENT)

- ▶ Planning Priority 4 Look after our environment
- ▶ Planning Priority 5 Create resilient communities
- ▶ Planning Priority 6 Celebrate our heritage

## THEME 3—OUR ECONOMY

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(GROWING OUR ECONOMY)

- ▶ Planning Priority 7 Protect productive agriculture land & significant resources
- ▶ Planning Priority 8 Diversify the range of services and employment options





# THEME 1—OUR COMMUNITY

(CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES)

## ESTIMATED RESIDENT POPULATION

**23,399** AT 2018

2011 CENSUS **22,717**

2016 CENSUS **23,256**

GROWING at a rate of **+0.42%**  
per annum (between 2011 & 2018)



## FORECAST TO BE

**25,650** BY 2036

@ an average growth rate of

**0.5%** per annum



## AGING POPULATION

POPULATION AGED **0-24 Years**

Forecast to be **31.1%** of population by 2036

(Was **33.4%** in 2006, then **32.1%** in 2011,  
and **30.6%** in 2016)



POPULATION AGED **25-64 Years**

Forecast to be **45.8%** of population by 2036

(Was **48.7%** in 2006, then **48.3%** in 2011,  
and **46.9%** in 2016)



POPULATION AGED **65+ Years**

Forecast to be **35.1%** of population by 2036

(Was **17.9%** in 2006, then **19.6%** in 2011,  
and **22.4%** in 2016)



## HOUSING STOCK

**10,296** AT 2016



Implied housing demand to  
meet forecast growth

**+1,550** by 2016

## HOUSEHOLD OCCUPANCY

rate average **2.4** persons per household in  
2016 (was 2.5 in 2006)

**Increasing** number of  
**Lone Person &  
Couple Only Households**





## PLANNING PRIORITY 1

### HAVE WELL PLANNED AND DESIGNED SPACE TO GROW

Richmond Valley LGA's was home to an estimated 23,399 people at June 2018 and had been growing at an average of 0.42% per annum over the previous 10 year period (figure 13).

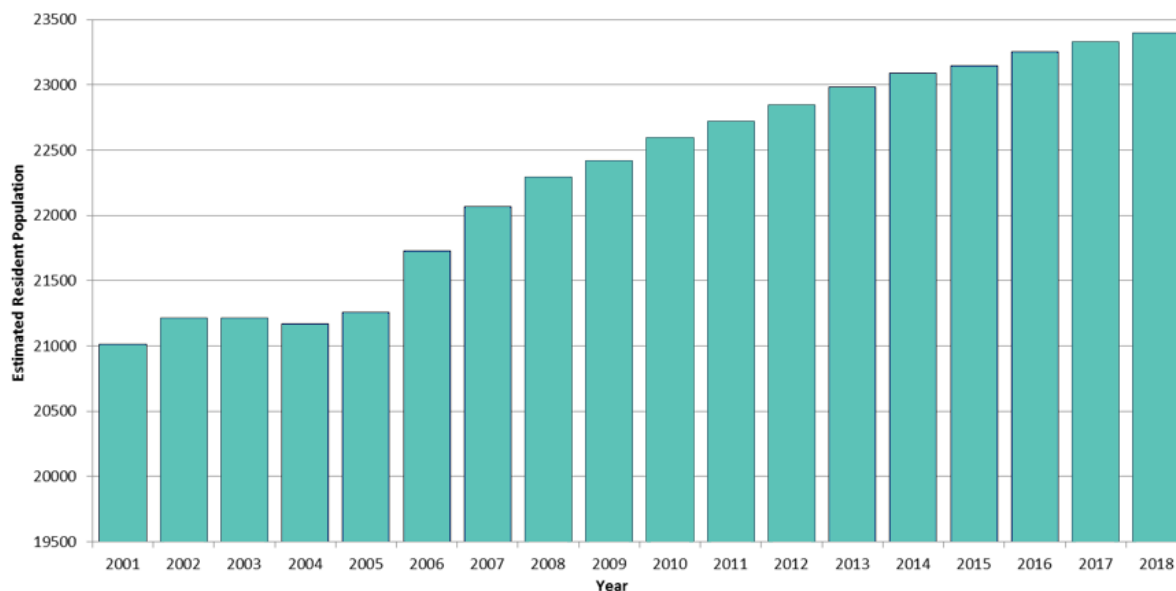


Figure 13: RVC Estimated Resident Population (ERP) between 2001 and 2018 (Source: Adapted by RVC from ABS.Stat ERP Data 2018)

### POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections provided by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's Demographic Unit (2016) forecast the North Coast to reach 595,450 persons by 2036: an increase of 76,200 persons at an average growth rate of 0.69% p.a..

Most of this growth (almost 70%) is expected within the 3 regional centres of Tweed Heads, Coffs Harbour & Port Macquarie-Hastings, with Richmond Valley LGA forecast to achieve a population of 25,650: an increase of 2,950 persons (from a base date of 2016), at an average annual growth rate of 0.5% p.a. (figure 14).

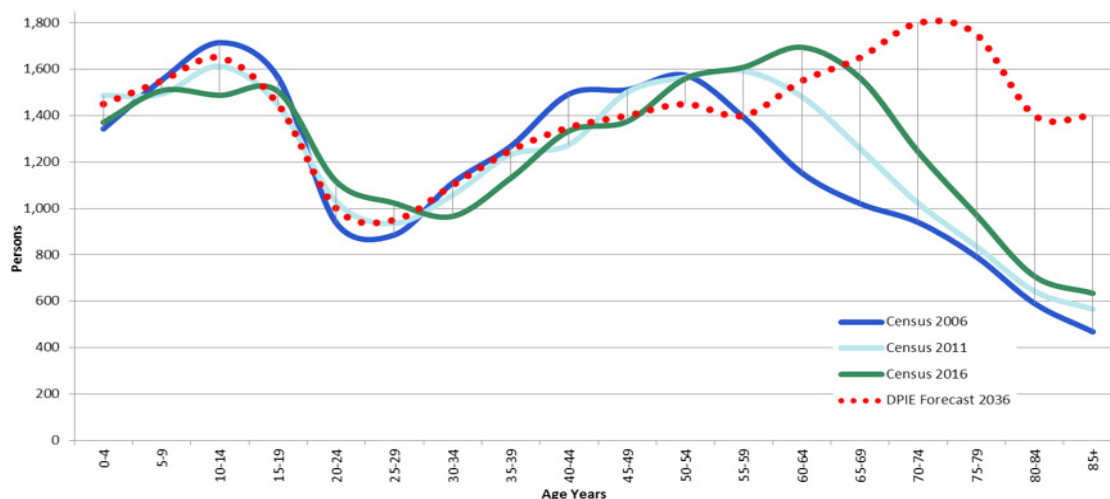


Figure 14: Population Age Profile for Richmond Valley LGA over the last 3 Census' including the projected age profile for 2036 (Source: Adapted from ABS Census data and DPIE Dem. Unit projection data 2016)

## AGING POPULATION

The current trend of an "aging" population is set to continue with 35.1% of Richmond Valley LGA's expected 2036 population to be aged 65+: up from 22.4% in 2016 (figure 14). This trend is comparable to the North Coast region, but significantly higher than the State average of 21% in 2036: up from 16% in 2016.

## HOUSING DEMAND

The *North Coast Regional Plan* identifies an implied housing demand of 46,050 dwellings to meet predicted growth on the North Coast: with RVC to contribute 1,550 of those dwellings, or an average 77 new dwellings p.a..

The *North Coast Regional Plan* aims to supply this implied housing demand through a mix of 60% single dwellings and 40% low-medium density housing (consisting of multi-dwelling housing, residential flats, dual occupancies, seniors living, secondary dwellings, and smaller allotments sizes <400m<sup>2</sup>).

## LOCAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

RVC has several urban settlement strategies to guide local land release including-

- Casino Urban Land Release Strategy 2005
- Urban Land Release Strategy Town of Evans Head 2007
- Richmond River Shire Rural Residential Development Strategy 1999
- A revision of Future Urban Growth Boundaries for submission to *Draft North Coast Regional Plan* (2015)

These strategies have contributed towards the urban growth boundary mapping contained within the *North Coast Regional Plan* (figure 15) but are aging and require review in context with the *North Coast Regional Plan*, housing construction data, and recent population growth projections.

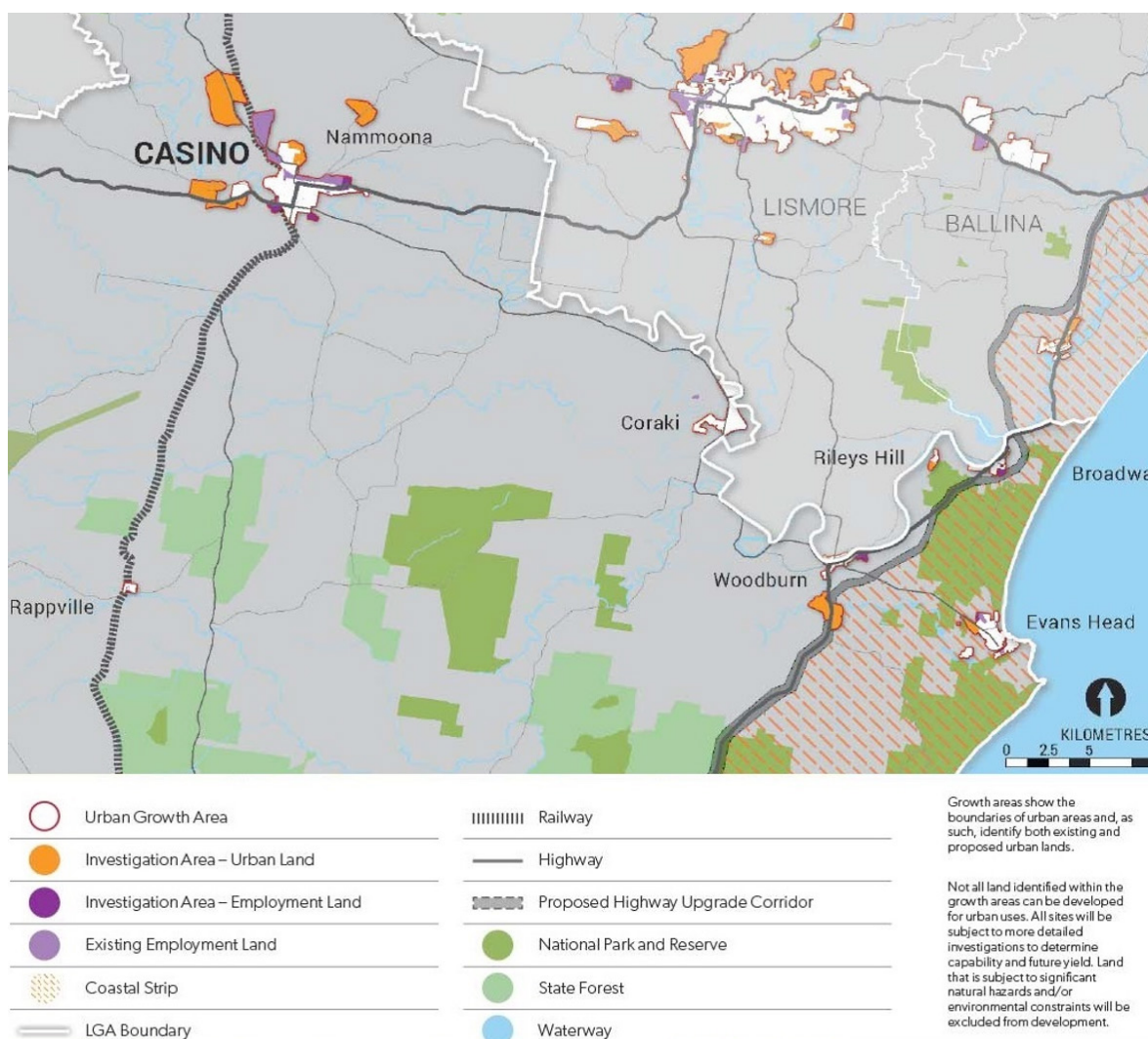


Figure 15: Urban Growth Areas mapping extracted from the North Coast Regional Plan 2036



## HOUSING STOCK & CONSTRUCTION

At the 2016 Census Richmond Valley Council had 10,296 dwellings, with 7,987 in its urban settlements.

An average of 65 new dwellings were constructed per annum during the 10 year period 2008 to 2018 (figure 16) which was just under the implied 77 dwellings per annum demand estimated to meet projected growth. This housing construction varied dramatically from year to year but is slowly recovering from a slump in 2011/12 around the time of the Global Financial Crisis. The figures also show a large proportion of housing consisted of low-medium density and rural residential.

The largest share of housing construction was at Casino (341 dwellings) followed by Evans Head (91). The housing construction at Casino was split almost evenly between single dwellings, low-medium density and rural residential. Evans Head had a large proportion of its housing provided in the form of low-medium density, reflecting in part to a lack of available vacant land but also investors capitalising on more expensive land, and a higher demand for coastal real estate.

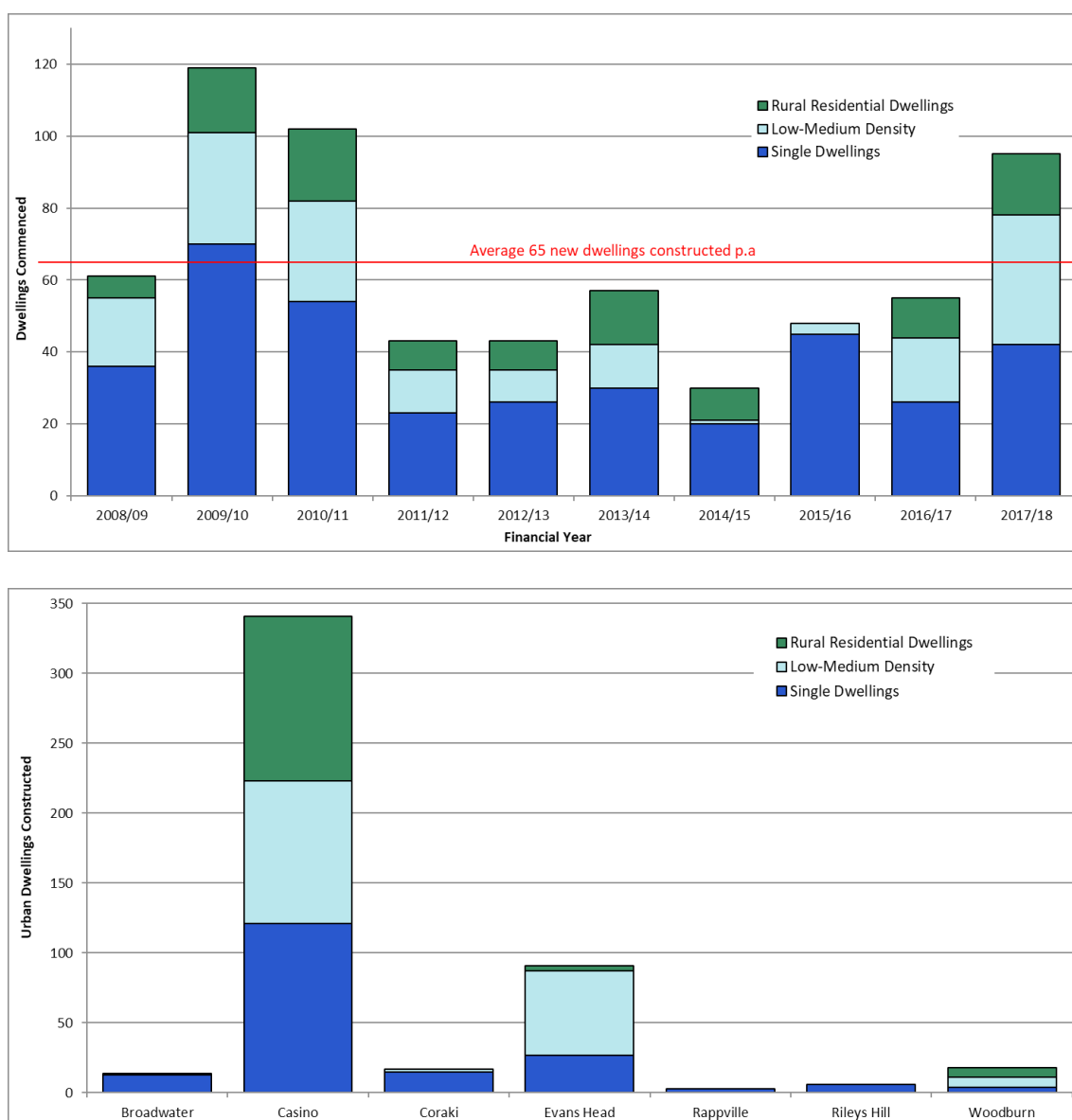


Figure 16: Dwellings erected per annum 2008/09 to 2017/18

## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Household composition (the number of persons and their relationship residing in each dwelling) is a useful statistic for showing how household types may change over time. This in turn may influence future housing needs and the calculation of the implied housing demand.

Figure 17 shows family composition of households over the last 3 Census' has changed notable for couples only (+152), couples with children (-169), and lone person households (+369). Meaning the average household size has shrunk, which strongly links to an increase in lone person households and an aging population.

Population forecasts predict by 2036 62% of the housing stock will be occupied by single and couple only households: up from 58% in 2016 and increasing at 2.2% p.a..

The Development Control Plan and LEP, as well as the Local Growth Management Strategy, need to encourage future housing types which reflect on shrinking household sizes by providing greater supply of low-medium density housing, smaller residential lot sizes, and appropriate seniors living opportunities.

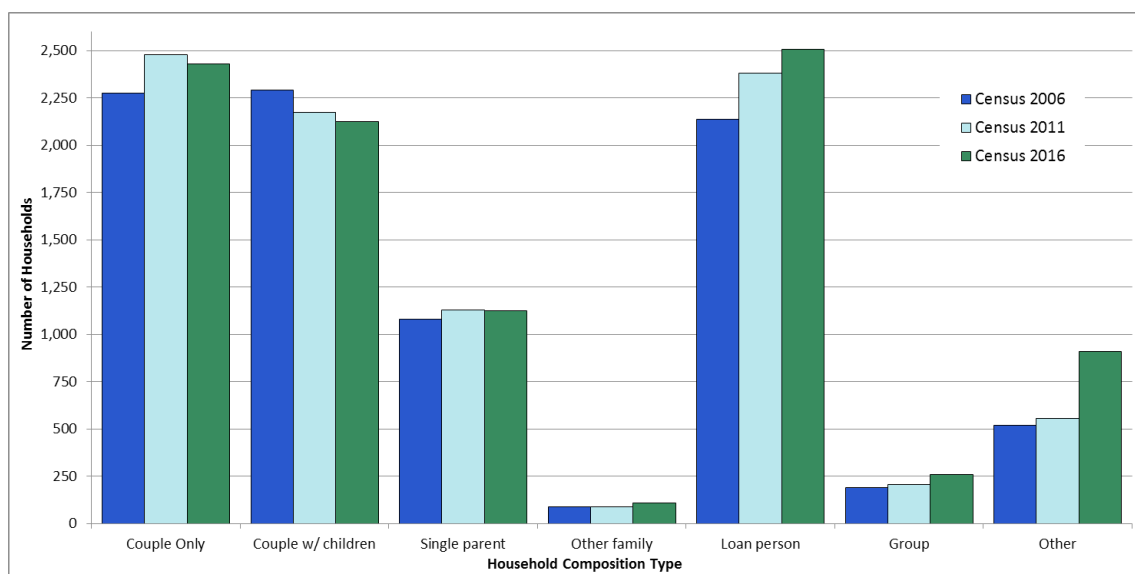


Figure 17: Household Composition Type by total housing stock in Richmond Valley LGA  
(Source: RVC adapted from ABS, Census 2016 QuikStats Time Series Profile – Tables T14a, T14b & T14c)





## PLANNING PRIORITY 1 -

### HAVE WELL PLANNED AND DESIGNED SPACE TO GROW

#### ACTIONS:

1.1	Prepare Local Growth Management Strategies to sustainably grow the region's population, and investigate new and innovative ways to accommodate projected population growth
1.2	Deliver sustainable, well planned, safe, healthy and efficient housing and settlement areas through healthy urban design and hazard avoidance/management
1.3	Monitor the supply and demand for housing and zoned urban land to gauge how Council is tracking against projected future demand
1.4	Review Council's planning scheme to encourage delivery of a diverse range of housing options (including low-medium density housing, affordable housing & Seniors Living), and improve the functionality and quality of housing delivered
1.5	Deliver robust and accessible towns and communities with well planned, maintained and functional public spaces
1.6	Prepare a bushfire recovery Master Plan for Rappville



## PLANNING PRIORITY 2

### ALIGN DEVELOPMENT, GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

#### TOWN WATER SUPPLIES & RESERVOIRS

Reticulated water for Richmond Valley settlements are sourced from 2 supplies:

- Mid-Richmond—where bulk water is supplied by Rous Water primarily from the Rocky Creek Dam via the Nightcap Water Treatment Plant. This supply services about 100,000 residents on the Far North Coast and has a capacity to supply 70 ML per day, with provision to be expanded to 100 ML; and
- Casino—where Richmond Valley Council operates a water treatment facility (with capacity to supply 23 ML per day) sourcing its water from an onstream storage located behind Jabour Weir on the Richmond River (the weir has a total capacity of 1,719 ML and is replenished while ever there is flow in the river).

The Mid-Richmond supply can be supplemented from a groundwater supply near Woodburn. Rous Water is also investigating options to safeguard

the regional water supply by ensuring there will be sufficient supply to support future sub-regional growth.

The NSW government has funded an investigation into future proofing the Casino water supply as the current onstream storage may be insufficient to meet:

- Casino's long term future water needs
- a changing climate with longer droughts and warmer temperatures; and
- environmental constraints such as elevated levels of blue-green algae and manganese during hot periods combined with low flows.

The outcomes of this investigation will be used to update Council's *Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWC) Plan*.

Fish passage beyond the weir is also a major consideration.

	Average Consumption (kL/day)	Total Reservoir Storage Capacity (ML)
Broadwater	260.59	0.83 ML
Evans Head	834.09	4.5 ML
Coraki	269.39	1.14 ML
Rileys Hill	27.11	0.037
Woodburn	168.89	2.27 ML
Casino	5499.92	21 ML





## TOWN SEWER

Casino, Coraki, Rileys Hill and Evans Head each has a sewerage treatment plant, with the latter also servicing Woodburn and Broadwater.

Casino's aging STP is earmarked for an upgrade or replacement within the next 10 years.

Evans Head's STP was replaced in 2007 with the construction of stage 1 having a design capacity of 5,500 EP (equivalent persons). Timing for the construction of Stage 2, an additional 5,500 EP, is being monitored given additional demand is likely from such developments as the Broadwater subdivision (68 lots), additional liquid trade waste

from the Sugar Mill, Evans Head Manufactured Home Estate (199 dwellings), and potential subdivision at the Iron Gates (174 lots).

Rileys Hill's STP is a small modular treatment plant capable of being added to, and replaced, as needed. A rezoning at Rileys Hill is under investigation and must remain under the design capacity of the existing STP or meet the cost of adding to its capacity.

A Bushfire Recovery Grant for Rappville will be used to investigate options, and community desire, to have the village serviced by a sewer scheme similar to that at Rileys Hill.

	Design Capacity		Average Treatment Flows (2015/16 to 2018/19)		
	Equivalent Persons (EP)	Equivalent Tenement (ET or Dwellings)	Average Dry Weather Flow (ADWF ML/day)	Max Peak Dry Weather Flow (DWF ML/day)	Max Peak Wet Weather Flow (WWF ML/day)
Casino STP	12,700	5,520	2.45	7.5	38.3
Evans Head STP	5,500 (stage 1 constructed 2007) 5,500 (stage 2 designed)	5,240	1.05	2.2	2.6
Coraki STP	1,300	500	1.4775	4.1	11.8
Rileys Hill STP	200	80	0.02175	0.05	0.5



## PUBLIC & OPEN SPACES AND ACTIVE LIVING

Richmond Valley LGA manages approximately 351 ha of greenspace at its showgrounds, sporting fields, parks, playgrounds and environmental reserves, which is in addition to its public halls and streetscapes: equating to an average 150m<sup>2</sup> per capita.

A substantial body of evidence demonstrates the positive effects of greenspace on wellbeing, with the value of this space increasing with population density.

Active Living NSW is a program established in April 2017, as a partnership between NSW Ministry of Health and the National Heart Foundation-NSW Division, to support the physical activity and healthy built environment deliverables of the *NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living Strategy*. It continues key pieces of work previously undertaken by the NSW Premier's Council for Active Living (PCAL) to promote active living through influencing the physical and social environments in which communities live. And fits within a framework of work produced by the NSW Government Architect (*Greener Places*) and NSW Health (*Healthy Urban Development Checklist*). The NSW Cancer Council and Cancer Institute NSW also advocate the provision of shade as an important tool for mitigating UV exposure and the effects of heat.



Council's *Facilities Needs Review* (2010) looked at all of its parks and facilities to determine how, and by whom, they were being utilised, as well as evaluating things like accessibility (access by transport as well as for persons with disabilities), and embellishments & infrastructure provided and whether they were fit for purpose. The study found many parks and reserves were underutilised and surplus to community needs, with several identified to be either repurposed, or sold following their reclassification as Operational Land. Proceeds from sales will be reinvested into upgrading and embellishing centralised and better utilised community facilities and open spaces which support community connectedness and active lifestyles.

*Sports grounds, and significant parklands & recreational areas provided by Richmond Valley Council:*

Casino	Queen Elizabeth Park; Centennial Park; Albert Park; Colley Park and the Casino Sports Stadium; Casino Showground; Drill Hall Community Space and Coronation Park; Casino Memorial Baths; Riverview Park; Civic Hall
Evans Head	Stan Payne Oval including a public pool; Casino-Evans Head Surf Club including Main Beach and Airforce Beach; Razor Back Lookout and Shark Bay; Kalimna Park; Recreation Hall
Woodburn	Woodburn Recreation Reserve; Riverside Park; Woodburn Memorial Hall; Woodburn Pool
Coraki	Riverside Park; Windsor Park; Coraki Youth Hall; Coraki Pool
Broadwater	Broadwater Community Hall and adjoining parklands
Rappville	Rappville Showground; Rappville Community Hall (to be replaced); Rappville Tennis Courts
Rileys Hill	Rileys Hill Community Centre (former school)
Fairy Hill	Fairy Hill Public Hall
Leeville	Leeville Public Hall
Piora	Woodview-Piora Public Hall



## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

As with most regional areas, the LGA has limited public transport options, particularly inter-regional transport.

### Air Travel

While Richmond Valley LGA has 2 airports, at Casino and Evans Head, neither is licensed for commercial flights. The nearest airports offering commercial routes are at Lismore, Ballina-Byron Gateway, Grafton and Gold Coast airports.

### Rail

Casino is serviced by XPT rail services twice daily. The morning service travels between Sydney and Brisbane, while the evening service travels between Casino and Sydney. Both services have connecting buses which provide access to destinations across the Far North Coast and as far as the Gold Coast and Brisbane.

### Buses

Apart from school bus runs, there are daily services connecting urban settlements to, and between, Far North Coast regional centres. However, there is no integrated transport plan to coordinate routes and timetables.

Casino Buses operate daytime town services at Casino.

### Cycleways and Cycle Trails

Council will continue to add to its cycleway networks via funding from Transport for NSW.

The NSW Coast Cycle Trail connects Brisbane to Melbourne, via Sydney and Eden. Where possible, cycle paths and rail trails are being incorporated into the route to avoid busy highways. Sections of the trail extend from Ballina to Evans Head and Evans Head to Yamba.

The last passenger service to use the Casino-Murwillumbah rail line was on 15 May 2004. While lobbying continues to return rail services to the line, plans to convert the 130km long rail corridor into a modern cycling and walking trail have gathered momentum. Aims of the project are to: preserve the community asset; deliver a walking and cycling trail compatible for short and long term active transport; link regional towns and villages; incorporate light rail

where practical; and capitalise on the popularity of cycling and cycle tourism.

Bipartisan support for the project has been received and the Federal Government has awarded a \$7.5m grant towards construction of the Casino to Bentley section.

### High Speed Rail (HSR)

The Australian Government is investigating the feasibility of a High Speed Rail (HSR) network through the region linking Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane. Phase 2 of the investigation has identified a conceptual stop just west of Casino providing the only station on the Far North Coast.

It is too early to be integrating the conceptual HSR into Council's planning scheme, however, Council will work with the State and Federal government to identify the preferred route and integrate the station with regional transports options.



Figure 18: Nominal High Speed Rail route through North Coast with a stop at Casino (Source: Australian Government, 2017)

## PLANNING PRIORITY 2

### ALIGN DEVELOPMENT, GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

#### ACTIONS:

2.1	Partner with the State government and developers to deliver local infrastructure in a timely manner to meet the demands of future projected growth
2.2	Review Council's Developer Contributions Plans
2.3	Implement the Facilities Needs Review including the reclassification of identified surplus and underutilised public lands from 'Community Land' to 'Operational Land'
2.4	Update Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy (IWCM) to ensure the community is serviced with a reliable long term drinking water supply
2.5	Develop and implement strategies to reduce Land Use Conflict with essential infrastructure, significant extractive resources, agricultural lands, and road & rail networks
2.6	Endorse the State's Highway Service Centre Policy and discourage inappropriate development adjoining or intersecting with the Pacific Highway
2.7	Further the design and construction of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail including integrating it with the cycleway/pedestrian network
2.8	Provide a safe integrated traffic, cycle and pedestrian network
2.9	Provide clean and well-maintained public recreational and sporting facilities, and outdoor spaces which are accessible and safe, as well as encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle





## PLANNING PRIORITY 3

### IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF PLANNING SERVICES

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A *Community Participation Plan* (CPP) is a new statutory requirement setting out when and how Council will engage its community across the range of town planning functions it performs under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The CPP helps community members set expectations on how they will be consulted by Council in relation to town planning matters, which include development applications and strategic planning documents.

*Richmond Valley Community Participation Plan 2019* came into force on 1 December 2019 and identifies:

- The mandatory community engagement requirements of the Act, including variations to those requirements where permitted;
- How community engagement will be undertaken;
- The minimum period for community engagement; and
- How the community can make submissions.

Why is community participation important?

- It builds community confidence in the planning system;
- Community participation creates a shared sense of purpose, direction and understanding of the need to manage growth and change, while preserving local character; and
- It provides access to community knowledge, ideas and expertise.

Council will periodically review the CPP with the aim to incorporate it into Council's *Community Engagement Strategy*.

#### EPLANNING

Electronic planning (or ePlanning) is the delivery of town planning services and the dissemination of information via electronic means, usually on-line. Such services may include libraries of plans, policies,



fact sheets and strategies; on-line application lodgement; dissemination of geographical information via mapping; electronic referrals and concurrences.

Council already utilises many ePlanning services and will be moving to on-line application lodgement through the NSW Planning Portal by 1 July 2021.

Hosting of a geographical information system (GIS) on Council's website will present tremendous opportunities to display planning information in an interactive visual form.

#### DEVELOPMENT CONCIERGE SERVICE AND FACT SHEETS

Council offers a Development Concierge Service to assist the community with lodgement of applications, to simplify application forms, and with the dissemination of information via self-help fact sheets. This service is part of delivering an efficient

planning service as it reduces the number of customer enquiries made of Town Planning Staff, but also attempts to improve the quality of applications received, and therefore reduce delays in processing applications.

## ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

How Council disseminates information to, and engages with, the Aboriginal Community on planning matters is an area where communications can improve. The planning system is a complex and intimidating system which quite often requires engagement with the Aboriginal community

Many Aboriginal people find the planning engagement process to be foreign and confusing, and many non-Aboriginal people can equally find the Aboriginal engagement processes to be confusing. An engagement protocol, developed in collaboration with the Aboriginal community, will ensure appropriate engagement is undertaken and this knowledge can be used to improve the decision making within the Council's planning process.



## PLANNING PRIORITY 3

### IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF PLANNING SERVICES

#### ACTIONS:

3.1	Integrate the <i>Community Participation Plan</i> (CPP) into the <i>Richmond Valley Council Community Engagement Strategy</i>
3.2	Continuously improve the efficiency and effective delivery of Council planning services, especially through its Development Concierge Service and delivery of fact sheets
3.3	Develop engagement protocols in collaboration with the Aboriginal community to ensure appropriate engagement is done with knowledge holders during planning processes
3.4	Implement ePlanning services to streamline the Development assessment system and offer the community an on-line application lodgement option
3.5	Establish an on-line mapping system to deliver digital geographic information to the community



## THEME 2—OUR ENVIRONMENT

### LOOKING AFTER OUR ENVIRONMENT

**LGA 3,050 km<sup>2</sup>**

ELEVATION - SEA LEVEL TO 650 m  
(@ BUSBYS FLAT)



#### CONSERVATION AREAS

**38,856 ha**

**17,339** ha NATIONAL PARK

**10,928** ha NATURE RESERVE

**6,895** ha STATE CONSERVATION AREA

**3,694** ha ENVIRONMENTAL  
CONSERVATION ZONE (E2)



POTENTIALLY

**HIGH  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
VALUE**



Habitat **113,900 ha**  
(outside conservation areas)

#### WILDERNESS AREA

**3,153 ha**

LOCATED WITHIN THE SOUTHERN  
AREA OF BUNDJALUNG NP



#### WORLD HERITAGE AREA

**475 ha**

PART OF THE GONDWANA RAINFORESTS OF  
AUSTRALIA (LOCATED WITHIN  
MALLANGANEE NP)

#### STATE FOREST

**49,096 ha**

includes Native Forest and Pine Plantations



**Coastline 37.5 km**  
**(28.3 km fronts National Park)**

**RICHMOND RIVER 140 km**

**EVANS RIVER 15 km**

**WILSONS RIVER 2 km**

**BUNGAWALBIN CREEK 52 km**

(before branching into Myall and Myrtle Creeks)



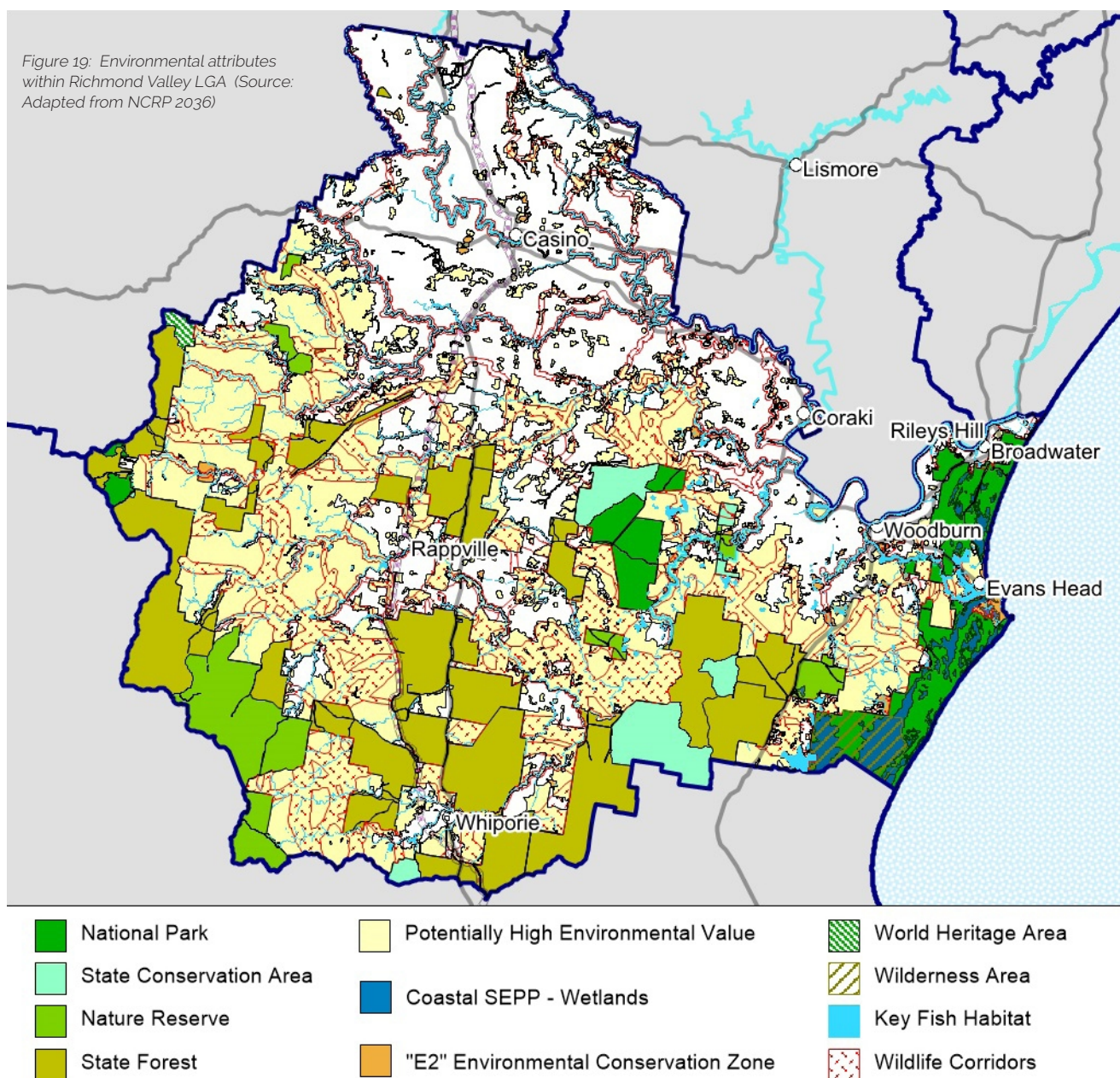
## PLANNING PRIORITY 4

### LOOK AFTER OUR ENVIRONMENT

The North Coast region is defined by its coastal and rural landscapes, and its distinctive character, lifestyles, and environments. It is for this reason the *North Coast Regional Plan* is focused on the future delivery of sustainable land uses and directing growth to locations which do not compromise the natural environment.



Richmond Valley LGA is defined by a diverse range of environments from the coastline and coastal fringes, to the alluvial floodplains, and undulating foothills of the Great Dividing Range. The LGA has an area of 3,050km<sup>2</sup>, with dimensions of about 70 km (north to south) by 77 km (east to west), with terrain ranging in altitude from sea level to just over 650 metres @ Busbys Flat.





## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The North Coast region is one of the most biologically diverse regions in Australia and its High Environmental Value (HEV) habitats underpin the intrinsic values of the region. Figure 19 is a snap shot of some key environmental areas within the LGA.

The array of geological landforms, terrain, elevation and climate have had a major influence on the type and distribution of biodiversity and land uses in the region.

Areas of the landscape within the Richmond Valley LGA have been heavily cleared of native vegetation for historical and ongoing agricultural and forestry land use practices. The areas impacted the greatest tend to be those lands on lower elevations with level to moderately inclined slopes. The Clarence-Richmond Alluvial Plains, which occupies a large area of the Shire, is identified as an over-cleared landscape and has had more than 70% of native woody vegetation removed.

A pattern of wildlife or biodiversity modelled corridors traverse across the LGA's landscapes. These corridors often encompass larger remnant vegetation parcels connecting major hubs of habitat such as National Park Estate or State Forest areas, and include riparian waterways. These corridors along with potential HEV have been incorporated into the *Richmond Valley LEP 2012* as a Terrestrial Biodiversity Overlay Map for development assessment purposes.

## THREATENED SPECIES

There are 283 threatened terrestrial species of fauna and flora, 2 threatened species of fish, and 12 threatened ecological communities either known, or having the potential, to occur within the Richmond Valley LGA.

## ENVIRONMENTAL OVERLAYS

The Richmond Valley LEP 2012 contains several overlays to identify additional development assessment requirements for mapped environmental attributes. These maps include:

- Terrestrial Biodiversity Map—map of remnant native vegetation incorporating corridors and areas of potential HEV (Clause 6.6)

- Landslide Risk—map of land likely to have slopes greater than 18° (or 32%) (Clause 6.7)
- Riparian Land and Watercourses—map of Key Fish Habitat where Fishery permits may be required to do works (Clause 6.8)
- Drinking Water Catchments—map identifying the drinking water catchment for the Casino onstream water storage (to the extent of the boundary with Kyogle Shire), and a 500 metre buffer around Rous' groundwater extraction point at Woodburn (Clause 6.9)
- Wetlands—map of wetlands (which may include both natural and anthropogenic water bodies) (Clause 6.10)

The effectiveness of the overlays provisions, including accuracy of mapping, needs to be reviewed especially given new mapping releases and recent amendments to legislation, such as the *Biodiversity Conservation Act* (BC Act) and Coastal Management Act which may result in duplicate assessment processes.

## BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT

The land management and biodiversity conservation reforms commenced in New South Wales on 25 August 2017. They consist of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act) working together with the *Local Land Services Act* and the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas) 2017* (the Vegetation SEPP) to regulate the clearing of native vegetation in NSW.

An area of concern is the limited regulation over clearing of environmental protection zones (which are considered to within a non-rural zone). One option would be for Council to implement a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) permit system, however, it became abundantly apparent a far simpler option would be to regulate clearing within the environmental protection zones by adding them to the BC Act's *Biodiversity Values Map*.



## PLANNING PRIORITY 4

### LOOK AFTER OUR ENVIRONMENT

#### ACTIONS:

4.1	Work collaboratively in partnership with the community, State and local governments to improve the health of the Richmond Valley environment
4.2	Participate in the preparation of a new <i>Richmond River Catchment Management Program</i> (CMP) and the <i>Richmond River Governance and Funding Framework</i>
4.3	Prepare a Catchment Management Program (CMP) for the Evans River and Evans Coastline
4.4	Engage with the State government to have environmental protection zones from the <i>Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012</i> included on the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> Biodiversity Values Map
4.5	Review the <i>Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012</i> Environmental Overlay Maps and provisions to ensure they are current, and effective given new legislation such as the <i>Coastal Management Act</i> and <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act</i> may have created duplicate development assessment processes





## PLANNING PRIORITY 5

### CREATE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

#### BUSHFIRE PRONE LAND (BFPL)

Section 10.3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* requires councils to prepare bushfire prone land mapping, with the current Bushfire Prone Land Map being endorsed by the Commissioner of RFS on 17 February 2015.

New mapping guidelines released in November 2015 introduced a third category of vegetation hazard to be incorporated into the next mapping review due in 2020. Assistance has been sought from the RFS to help with producing these new maps.

#### Bushfires from 2019

Wild fires were a feature of the LGA during the 2019/20 Spring and Summer seasons, as they were for extensive areas of the Australian east coast. Two bushfires which had significant impacts on the LGA were the Busbys Flat Road Fire (commenced on 8 October 2019) and the Myall Creek Road Fire (commenced on 8 November 2019) which together devastated 1,427 km<sup>2</sup> of land (about 46.8% of the LGA) causing extensive damage.

	Busbys Flat Road Fire	Myall Creek Road Fire
Destroyed Houses	44	18
Destroyed Outbuildings	81	84
Destroyed Facilities	7 (includes sawmill)	1 (tea tree distillery)
Damaged Houses	9	10
Damaged Outbuildings	31	31
Damaged Facilities	9	3

Council is working with the community, the NSW and Australian governments and a long list of service providers to facilitate and support the recovery of the community.



## FLOODING

There are effectively 3 flood Studies applying across the Richmond Valley LGA covering Casino township (1999), the Evans River (2014), and Mid-Richmond (2010) (with the later extending from Casino to Broadwater, inclusive of part of Lismore).

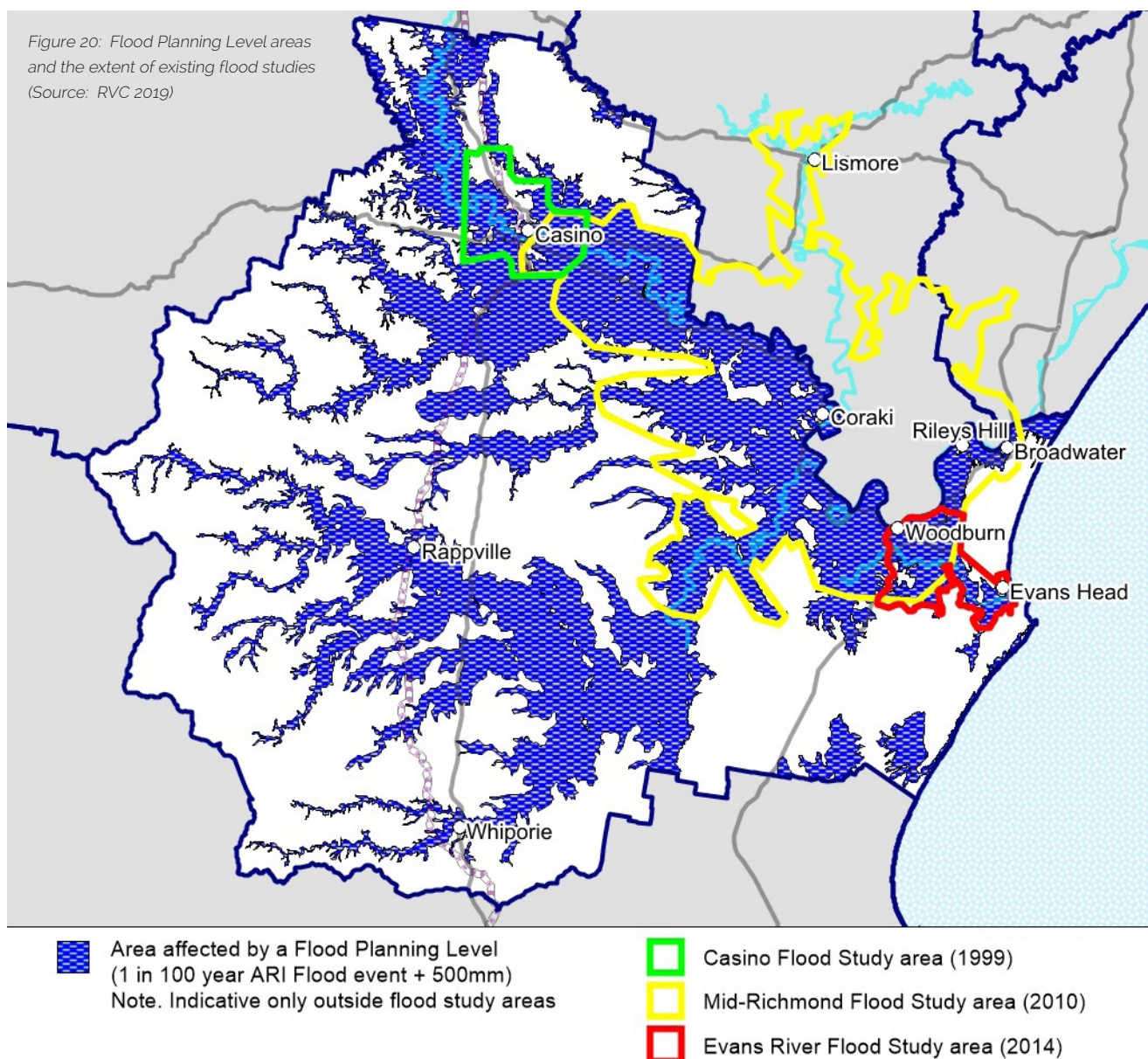
Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP) for Casino and the Mid-Richmond adopt the 1% design flood (a 1 in 100 year Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) flood event) as the benchmark for planning purposes. The FRMP also adopts flood hazard mapping which defines areas of low hazard (LH), high depth hazard (HDH), and floodway hazard (FH) across the modelled floodplain.

The FRMP contains a matrix of development standards which apply to development types when proposed in respective hazard areas. The matrix, along with Clause 6.5 of the LEP, adopt a Flood

Planning Level (FPL) being the 1% flood plus a 500mm freeboard to define things like the minimum habitable floor level for housing.

Additional flood studies/modelling are required to-

- incorporate climate change and adopt the Australian Rainfall and Runoff (2019) standards into all its flood studies
- update the Casino Model so it will run in modern flood modelling software
- merge existing models into a single consistent model across the Richmond River floodplain
- incorporate flood modelling from the Pacific Highway upgrades into main stream flood models
- increase the extent of modelling to capture the entire floodplain within the LGA





## LOCAL CLIMATE

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) receives weather observations from several stations within the LGA but receives automated half-hourly observations from stations at Casino and Evans Head. Historic weather observations are available on-line at:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/>

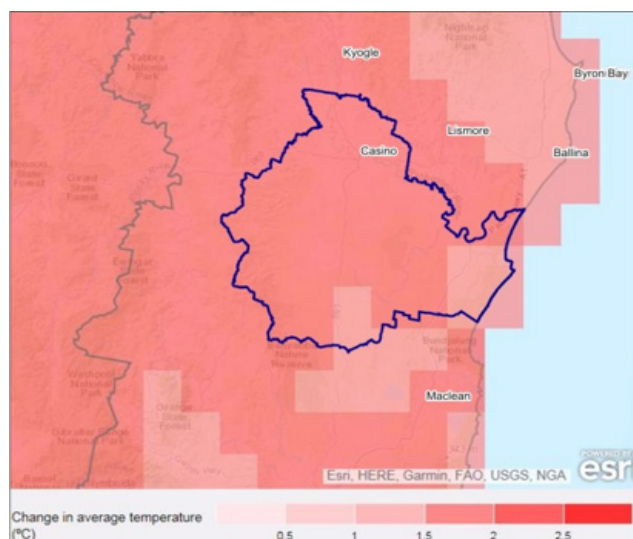
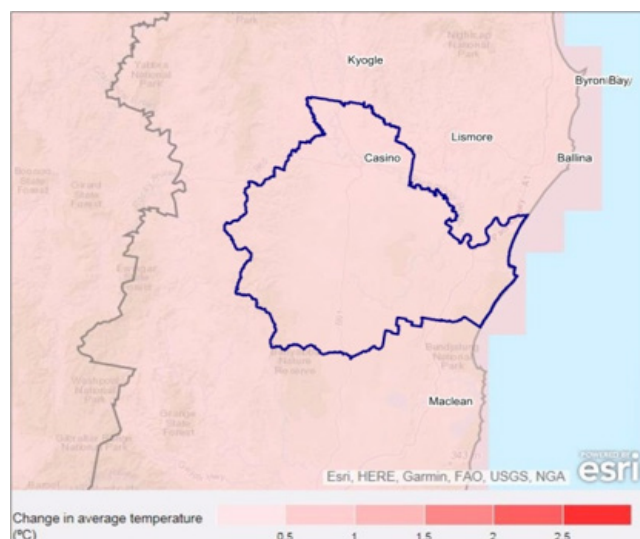
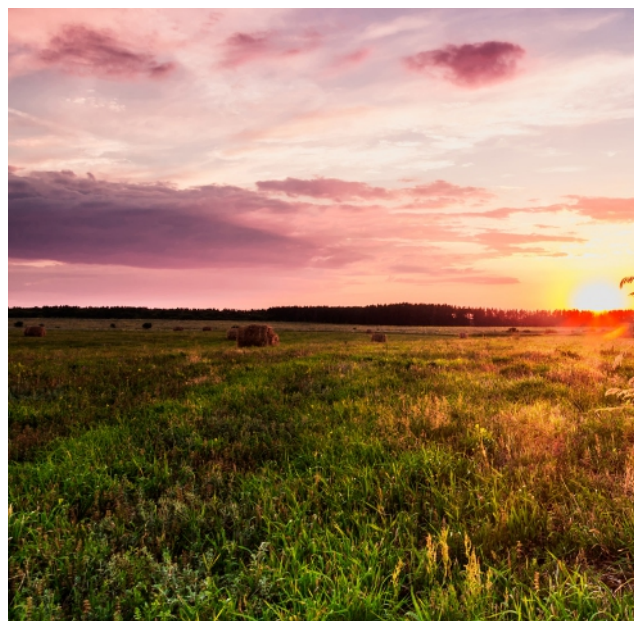
	Rainfall	Temperature			
	Average Annual (mm)	Average Annual Daily Minimum (°C)	Lowest Temp. Recorded (°C)	Average Annual Daily Maximum (°C)	Highest Temp. Recorded (°C)
Casino AWS	1032.7	13.3	-3.5	26.2	45.7
Evans Head RAAF AWS	1434.1	15.4	3.0	24.7	45.0

## CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECTIONS

In 2010, Council adopted a 900mm sea level rise and 10% increase in rainfall intensity as a Climate Change scenario to be incorporated into its planning framework. Adapt NSW provides interactive mapping for NSW Climate projections for the periods 2020-2036 and 2060-2079. The following slides have been adapted from the tool showing 2020-2036 (left) and 2060-2079 (right) for several climatic parameters.

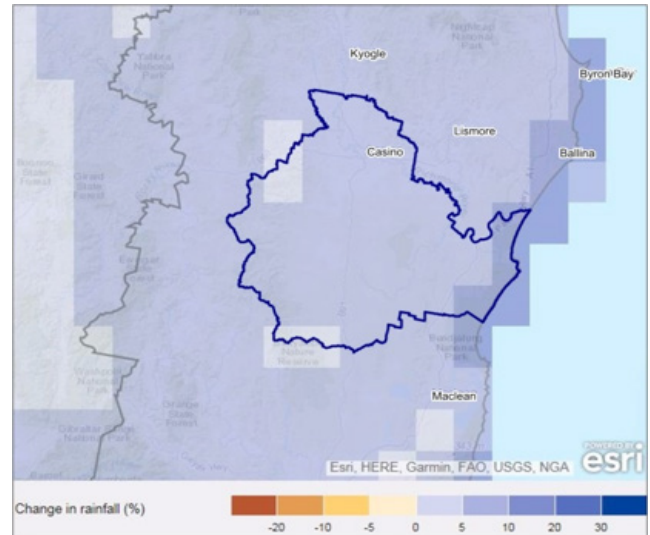
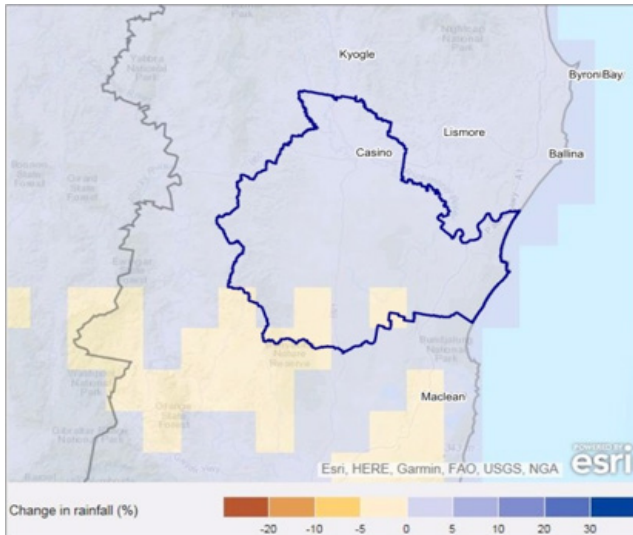
### Average Temperature (°C)

Mean daily temperatures are projected to rise by up to 10°C by 2030 and continue to rise by up to 2.0°C by 2070 (with the North Coast Region experiencing an average temperature +1.99°C—with Summer +2.16°C, Autumn +2.00°C, Winter +1.84°C & Spring +1.97°C).



## Rainfall (%)

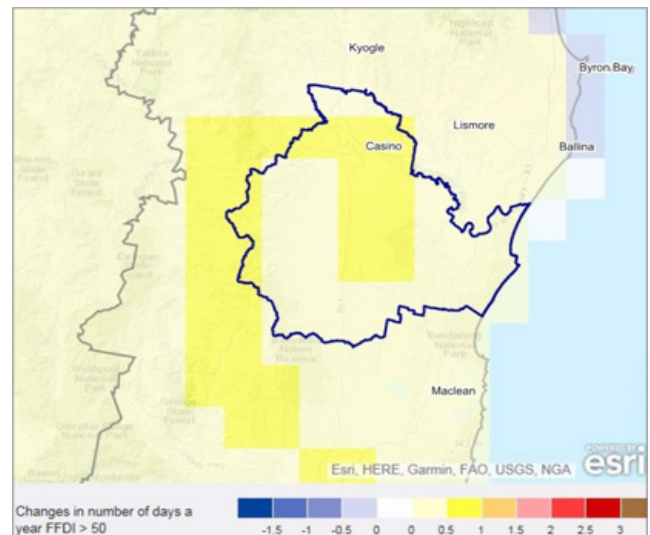
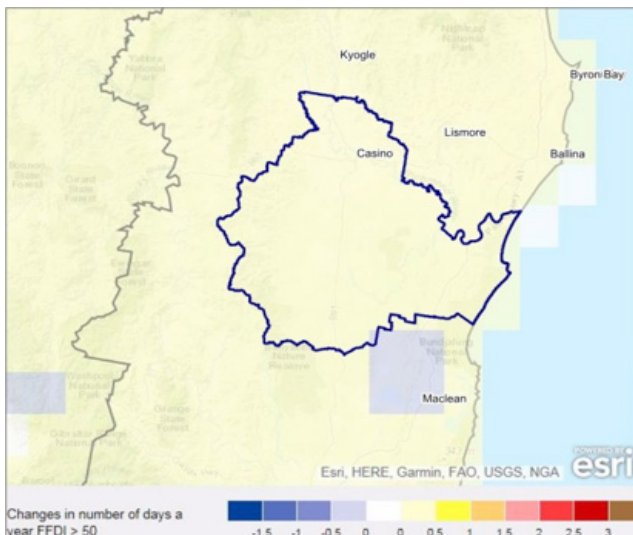
By 2030 there is expected to be little change in the annual rainfall across most of the LGA, although in the south-west of the LGA there may be up to a 5% decline. Seasonally, Summer and, more so, Winter are expected to have the greatest decreases in rainfall, with Spring and, more so, Autumn to experience the greatest increases.



By 2070, the average annual rainfall for most of the LGA is expected to have risen by up to 5%, although the coastal strip may experience up to a 10% increase. Seasonally Autumn is expected to have the greatest increase, with a decline in Winter rainfall (with the North Coast Region experiencing an average increase of 8.2%—with Summer +7.5%, Autumn +14.7%, Winter -4.0% & Spring +6.8%).

## Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI) Days where greater than 50

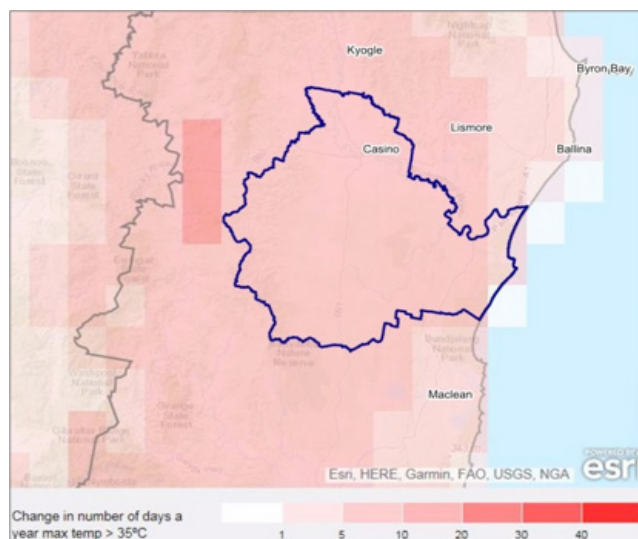
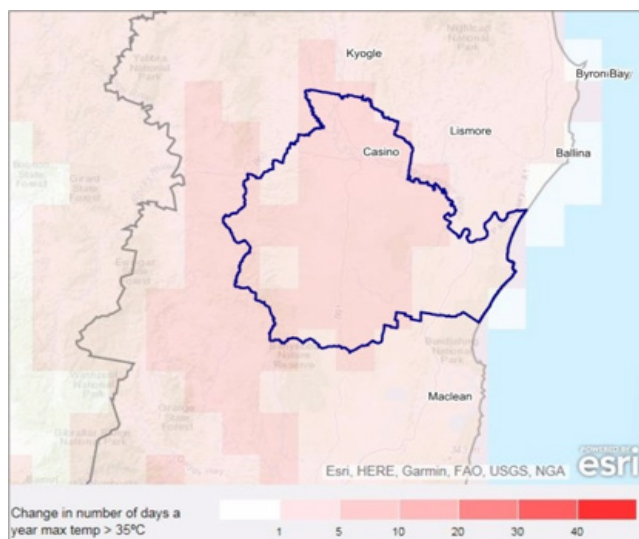
Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI) is used in NSW to quantify fire weather. The FFDI combines observations of temperature, humidity and wind speed. Fire weather is classified as severe when the FFDI is above 50. Severe fire weather is projected to have a slight increase (+0.1 days) across the North Coast region by 2030, and an increase (+0.3 days) by 2070 during the peak prescribed burning seasons (Spring +0.2 days) and peak fire risk season (Summer +0.1 days). Part of RVC LGA may experience higher than average FFDI by up to 1 additional day.





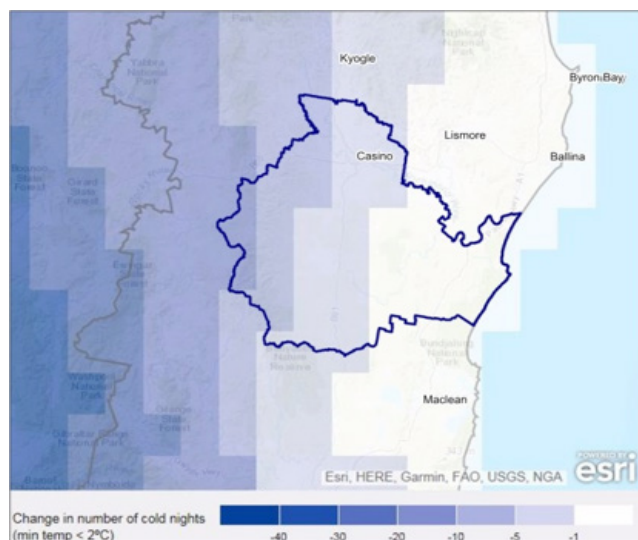
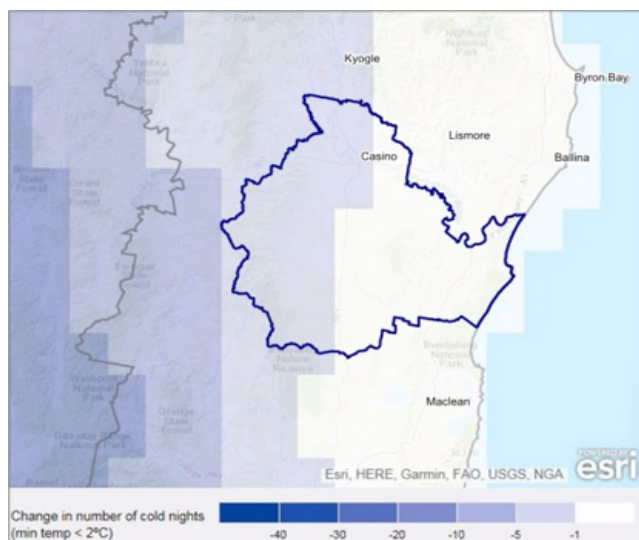
## Maximum Temperature Days above 35°C

By 2030 the North Coast is projected to experience an average of 3 more days above 35°C per year and continue to rise to 9 days per year by 2070 (Summer +5.7 days and Spring +3.0 days). The greatest increases in the region are seen to the west of RVC where there may be an additional 20 days per year above 35°C.



## Cold nights (days with min temp less than 2°C)

By 2030 the North Coast is projected to experience an average of 4 fewer nights below 2°C per year and continue to decrease by 8 nights per year by 2070. The greatest decreases are seen to the west of our region during Winter. These areas are projected to have over 30 fewer cold nights per year. Changes in cold nights can have considerable impacts on native ecosystems and agricultural crops reliant on cold winters. There is expected to be little change for the coastal region.



Adaptation to climate change is required across all functions of Council but also within the built environment, such as energy and thermally efficient housing.

## Mayoral Minute on Climate Change

In a mayoral minute tabled at the Council meeting of 17 December 2019, Cr Mustow noted that almost 50 percent of the Richmond Valley LGA had been affected by recent bushfires and Council is very concerned by the impacts of climate change. He has sought an increased commitment by our NSW and Federal governments to deal with this serious global issue.



“

*These fires have had a devastating impact on our community, with the recovery process likely to be measured in years rather than months or weeks.*

*We all know Australia is prone to bush fires, but we also know that predicted climate change means extreme events including drought, floods, and rising sea levels along our coast are likely to be more common.*

*Such disasters would not only put our community's safety at risk, but also increase the burden on Council of repairing or replacing damaged and destroyed property and infrastructure.*

*As a result, we are asking the Federal and State governments to take further steps to address the impacts of climate change, and urging our local Members of Parliament to lead and support our local communities in tackling these impacts.*

”

*As a responsible council, we want to work proactively with both governments to do this.*

**Mayor Robert Mustow**





## WATERWAYS AND COASTLINE

The coastline, estuaries and waterways of the Richmond Valley LGA are invaluable natural resources providing immense value from an ecological, social and economic perspective.

An Ecohealth Study (2014) monitored the health of the Richmond River and found the overall health of the estuarine and upper reaches of the river scored consistently poorly with an overall score of 'D-'. This poor score is reflective of pollution (high concentrations of nutrients and turbidity), bank instability & erosion, siltation & shoaling, weeds & pest infestations, algal blooms, black water events, low pH, etc.

Several programs are currently tackling river health including:

- Richmond River Estuary Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP)—due to be reviewed under the *Coastal Management Act 2016*, this Plan aims to monitor the health of the river and improve its condition through bank stabilisation and remediation; flood gate management; education; weed management; and stormwater management;
- Beach Watch—an initiative of the NSW EPA, this program monitors water quality at 5 swimming beaches in the Richmond Valley LGA including: Airforce Beach, Main Beach, Shark Bay, and 2 sites within the estuary at Evans Head;
- NSW Marine Estate Management Strategy 2018-2028—looking at, amongst other programs: improving fish passage by removing unnecessary weirs and other obstructions from waterways; improving water quality in the Richmond by stabilising river banks, managing flood gates and acidic water discharges; conducting fish friendly education programs; develop strategies to protect marine vegetation; management of private foreshores;
- Draft Evans Head Coastline and Evans River Estuary CZMP—this Plan was not endorsed by the Minister before commencement of the *Coastal Management Act 2016*. It must therefore be redrafted to meet new guidelines for a Coastal Management Program (CMP).
- Richmond River Governance and Funding Framework—is a collaborative approach between all councils of the Richmond River with the former Office of Environment and Heritage to tackle the river health issues with an integrated river basin management approach.

Council is committed to furthering these and other projects which can improve the health of our waterways.



## COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL CHARTER

Council's Environmental Charter was adopted in 2016 and reviewed in October 2019. It sets out Council's commitment to environmental sustainability in its operations and activities.



### RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL CHARTER

Richmond Valley Council is committed to the long-term care of the environment and acknowledges the impacts of climate change as a global issue to which Council needs to plan for.

Council acknowledges the community's desire for it to invest in Environmentally Sustainable Investments (ESI) through responsible actions and commitment. Council's Investment Policy addresses ESI considerations and processes.

Richmond Valley Council's activities are based on the principles of sustainability and regenerative practices, giving due consideration to the natural environment through the following:

- Efficient use of water, energy and other resources, minimising waste and emissions and strongly advocating and facilitating reuse and/or recycling of waste.
- Uptake of new and alternate technology opportunities such as renewable energy options, where they are shown to be economically viable into the future and compatible with this charter.
- Ensure there are procedures in place to monitor all Council operations, assess potential impacts on the environment and address unacceptable risks in specified timeframes prior to commencement of work to avoid any detrimental environmental impacts.
- Ensure that appropriate emergency management plans are in place and reviewed regularly for environmental emergencies, including but not limited to, floods, tsunamis, storms, extreme temperatures and fire.
- Council shall exercise due consideration for environmental impacts when planning Council works and assessing development applications and proposals by the broader community.
- Keeping abreast of environmental legislation and proposed changes and work effectively with environmental authorities to provide optimal outcomes for Council and the communities we serve.
- Ongoing training of employees and induction of contractors to provide understanding of their responsibilities and potential liabilities regarding the environment, including positive and negative impacts of their activities.
- Providing education opportunities to the Richmond Valley Community to foster understanding of environmental principles, with a view to minimising personal impacts and encouraging behaviours and habits which will lead to positive environmental outcomes at a local level.
- Report on our environmental objectives and compliance with the Environmental Charter in our annual report.

*(Richmond Valley Environmental Charter adopted 22 October 2019)*



## PLANNING PRIORITY 5

### CREATE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

#### ACTIONS:

5.1	Reduce risks to development and the environment from natural hazards, including projected effects of climate change, by identifying, avoiding and managing vulnerable areas and known hazards
5.2	Incorporate Climate Change considerations into Council's plans and strategies
5.3	Review and update bushfire hazard mapping
5.4	Review and expand on flood studies to ensure modelling is current, fit for purpose, and incorporate climate change, AR&R (2019), and significant changes to the floodplain such as construction of the Pacific Motorway





### ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Richmond Valley LGA is within the traditional home of the Bundjalung Aboriginal Nation.

The Bundjalung people have maintained a long and continuous relationship with the land, with complex social structures and interactions spanning thousands of years. The Bundjalung Nation is divided into separate tribal language groups as portrayed in figure 21).

Today parts of the LGA are represented by five Local Aboriginal Land Councils: Casino-Boolangle, Bogal, Jali, Birrigan Gargle, and an Unincorporated Local Aboriginal Land Council based around the Evans Head area.

At present, there are 196 Aboriginal sites registered on the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) (figure 22): with 62 sites, or about a third, occurring within National Park or State Forest Estate. Site types recorded include:

- Aboriginal Ceremony and Dreaming
- Resource and Gathering

- Burials
- Art
- Artefacts
- Grinding Grooves
- Shell
- Conflict Sites
- Modified Trees
- Stone Quarries
- Habitation Structures
- Potential Archaeological Deposits
- Ceremonial Rings
- Stone Arrangements
- Non-Human Bone and Organic Material
- Waterholes, and
- Potential Aboriginal Deposits.

There is one declared Aboriginal Place, the Casino Bora Ground Aboriginal Place, to the north of Casino.

The *Richmond Valley LEP 2012* is void of listed Aboriginal cultural heritage until an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study has been completed.

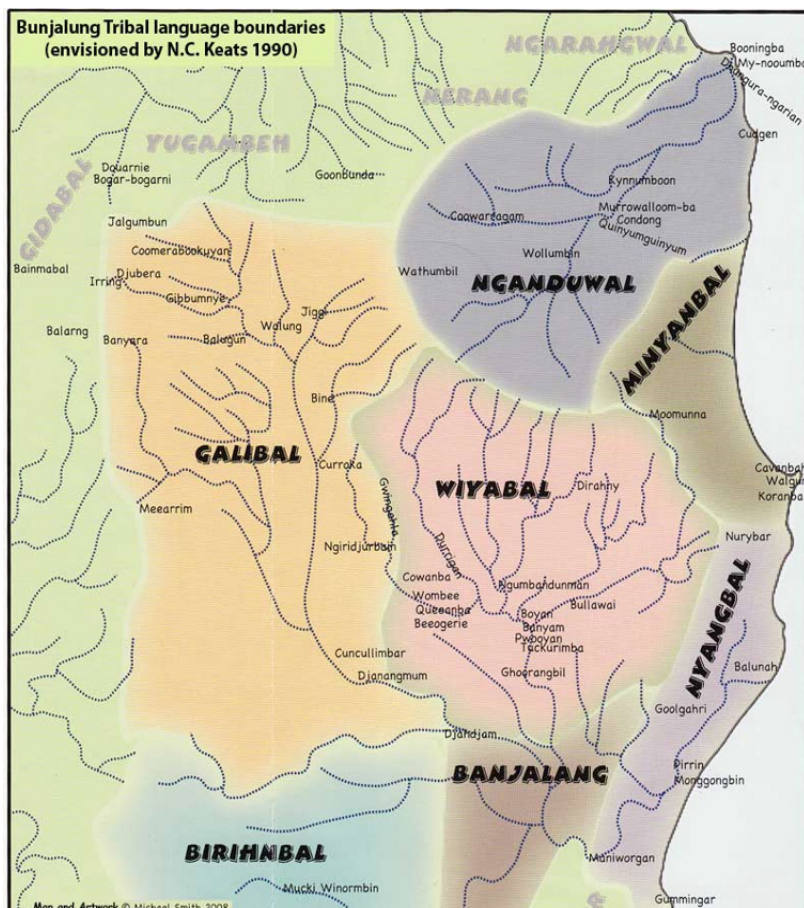


Figure 21: Bundjalung Tribal Language group boundaries (Source: Arakwal adapted from NC Keats 1990)



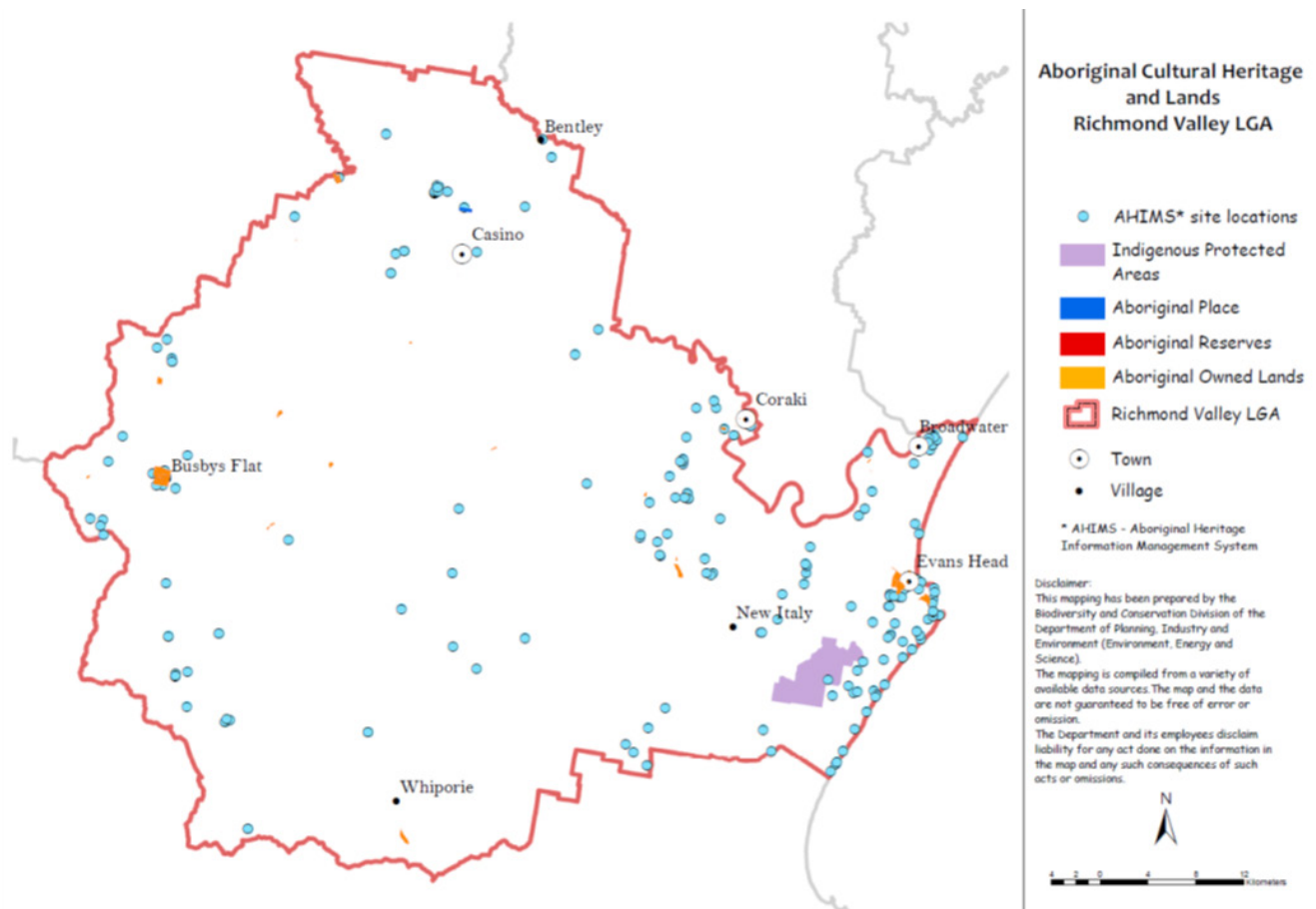


Figure 22: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sites within Richmond Valley LGA  
(Source: Biodiversity and Conservation Division of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2020)



## NATIVE TITLE

Native Title has been determined to exist (non-exclusive) within the LGA, predominantly over National Park, State Forest Estate and Public places for the Bandjalang People and the Western Bundjalung People (figure 23).

There is currently one Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) for the Western Bundjalung which exists over parts of National Park Estate in the west of the LGA.

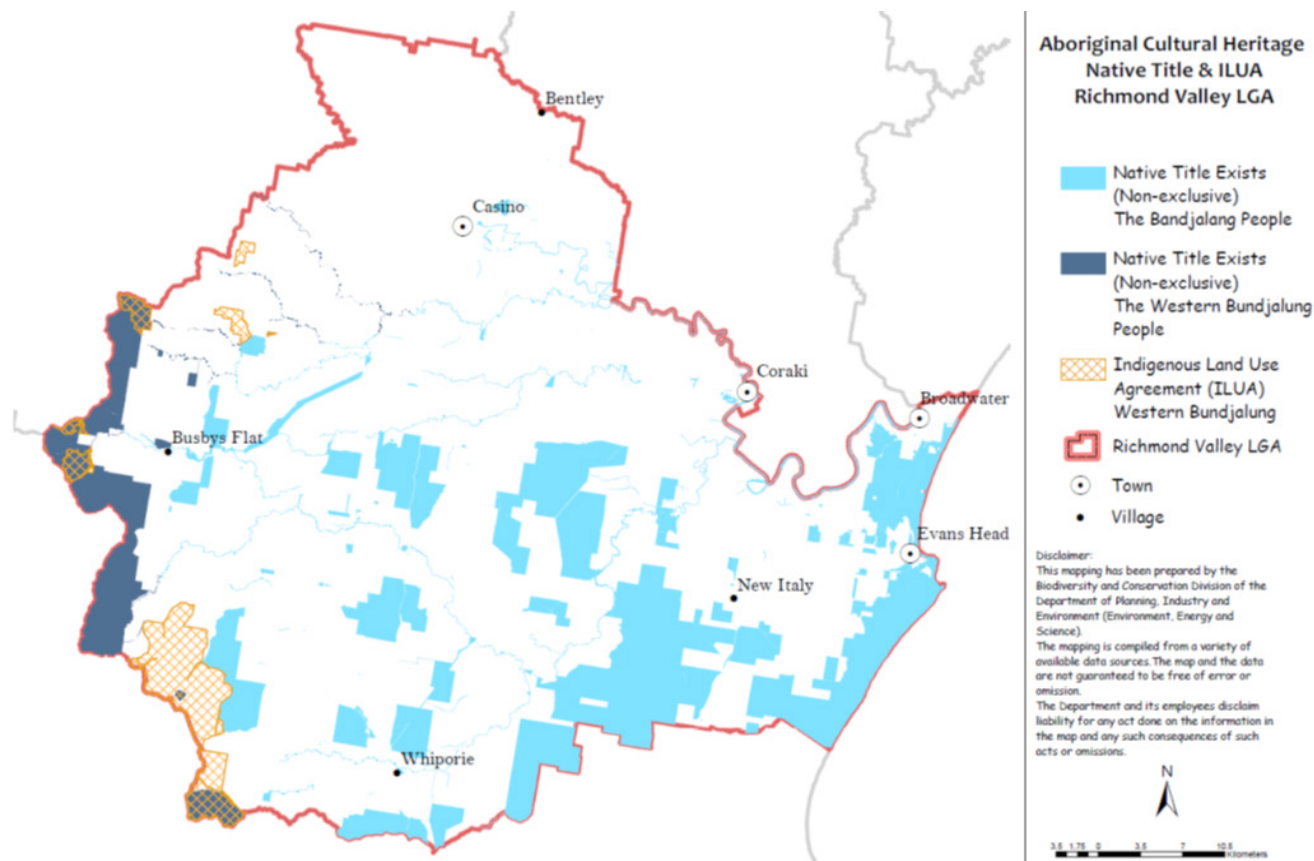


Figure 23: Land subject to Native Title determination within Richmond Valley LGA

(Source: Biodiversity and Conservation Division of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, 2020)

## POST EUROPEAN HERITAGE

Heritage studies for the former Copmanhurst Shire (2004) and Richmond Valley Council (2008) identified sites having potential heritage significance to the community. To assist this process, thematic histories were also prepared to focus the studies towards relevant historic themes across the area. These studies culminated in listing 179 items, 9 archaeological sites, and 1 conservation area within Schedule 5 of the *Richmond Valley LEP 2012*.

The Casino Central Business District Conservation Area includes one of the best Art Deco streetscapes

in Australia. A Main Street study is under preparation which aims to encourage appropriate conservation and maintenance work for aging historic fabric. This could in turn generate tourism for the town and has the potential to become a focal point for a future festival.

Information on listed items is maintained in a WebApp hosted the NSW Heritage Branch. Council continues to maintain the currency of this information which is published on the NSW Heritage Branch website.



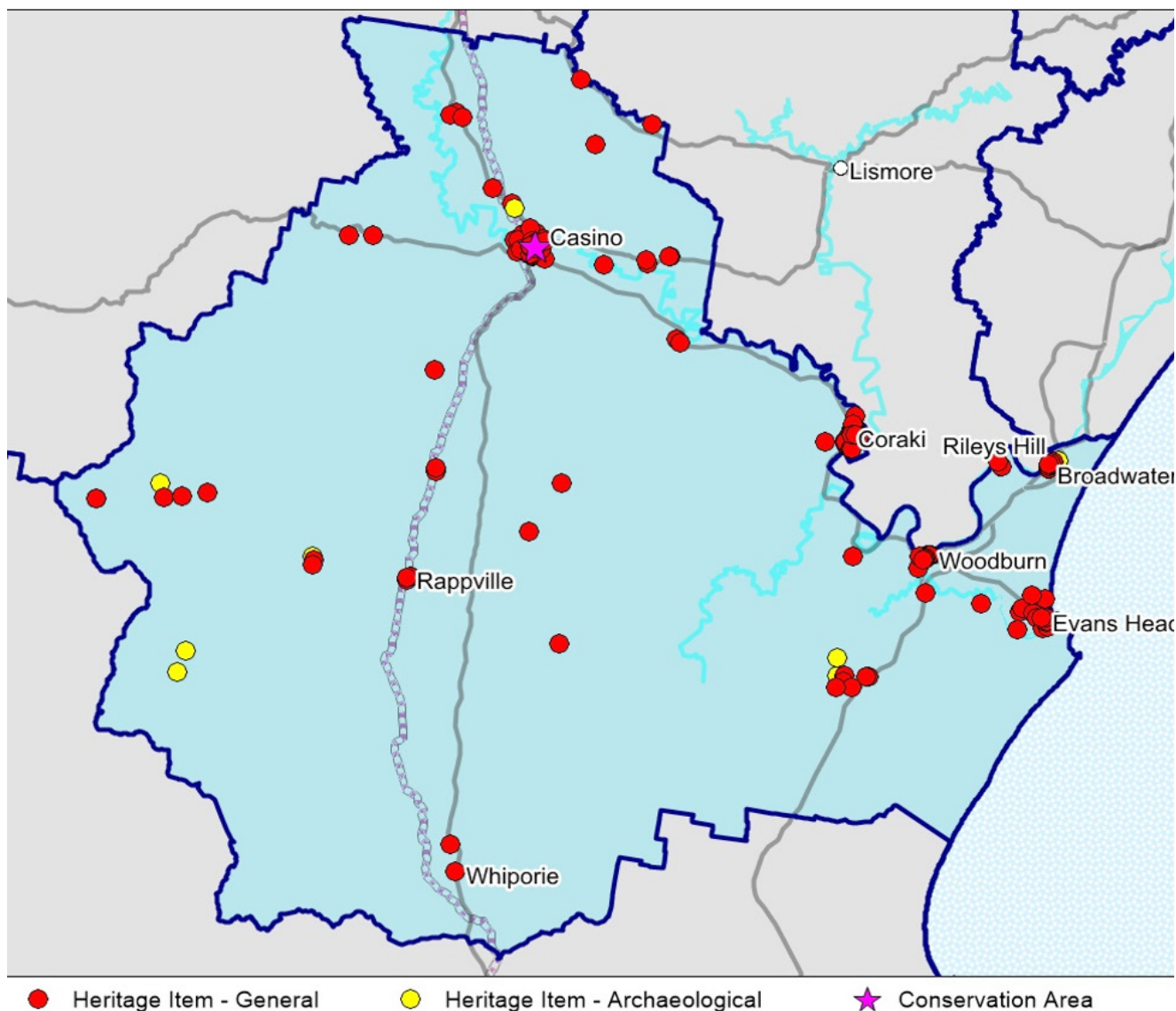


Figure 24: Heritage listed items within Schedule 5 of the LEP (Source: adapted from RVLEP12)

## HERITAGE INCENTIVES PROGRAM

Council's Heritage Incentives policy provides:

- free heritage advice from an independent Heritage Consultant (part funded by the NSW Heritage Branch)
- an annual Local Heritage Grants Scheme (part funded by the NSW Heritage Branch); and
- reduced DA fees (for DAs triggered solely by clause 5.10 of the LEP).

The Local Heritage Grants Scheme offers annual grants to eligible projects to undertake conservation or reinstatement work on heritage listed items.



## PLANNING PRIORITY 6

### CELEBRATE OUR HERITAGE

#### ACTIONS:

6.1	Ensure Aboriginal objects and places are protected, managed and respected in accordance with legislative requirements and the wishes of Aboriginal communities
6.2	Collaborate with local Aboriginal communities to undertake a Local Aboriginal Heritage Study, and adopt appropriate measures from the study into planning strategies and local plans to protect Aboriginal heritage
6.3	Promote heritage through a range of educational and incentives schemes – including Heritage Advisory services, Local Heritage Grants, Main Street Studies, promotion of Casino's Art Deco architecture
6.4	Prepare a study of Casino's CBD Heritage Conservation Area, and promote the town's Art Deco architecture
6.5	Maintain a register of Heritage listed items within the LGA and regularly review listings under the <i>Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012</i> and the information delivered to the community via the Heritage NSW Webapp
6.6	Encourage the active use of heritage items and support compatible adaptive reuse





## THEME 3 —OUR ECONOMY

### GROWING OUR ECONOMY

#### ECONOMIC OUTPUT

**\$1.75 B** IN 2017/18

#### EMPLOYMENT

**8,414** JOBS

WITH

#### MANUFACTURING

OUTPUT **\$711.7 m**

**2,176** JOBS

LARGEST SECTOR -

**Food production**

**\$603.9 m**



#### AGRICULTURE/FISHING/FORESTRY

OUTPUT **\$124.2 m** | **684** JOBS

LARGEST SECTORS-

- **Livestock Slaughterings \$64.6 m**
- **Cropping \$13.9 m**
- **Milk \$10.0 m**
- **Forestry \$11.9 m**



#### TOURISM

OUTPUT **\$50.3 m**

**2,176** JOBS



#### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

**5.7%** @ JUNE 2019

**National Rate 5.1%**



The economy of the Far North Coast (FNC) in 2017/18 had a total Output of \$19.2B, with the Richmond Valley LGA contributing \$1.75B (9.1%). The stand out contributor to RVC's economy was manufacturing (figure 25) which produced \$711.7m of Output (40.7% of the LGA's total Output and a third of the Far North Coast's total manufacturing output) (figure 26). As a comparison, manufacturing contributed 10.5% to the total output for Regional NSW.

Other large contributors to RVC's economy were rental/hiring/real estate (\$152.2m), agriculture/forestry/fishing (\$124.2m) and construction (\$120.5m).

While "Output" is a gross measure of the total sales for each industry sector, "Value Added" is a measure of business productivity, showing how each sector increases the value of its inputs. Figure 25 compares each sectors "Output" to "Value Added" with manufacturing not surprisingly the strongest performer.

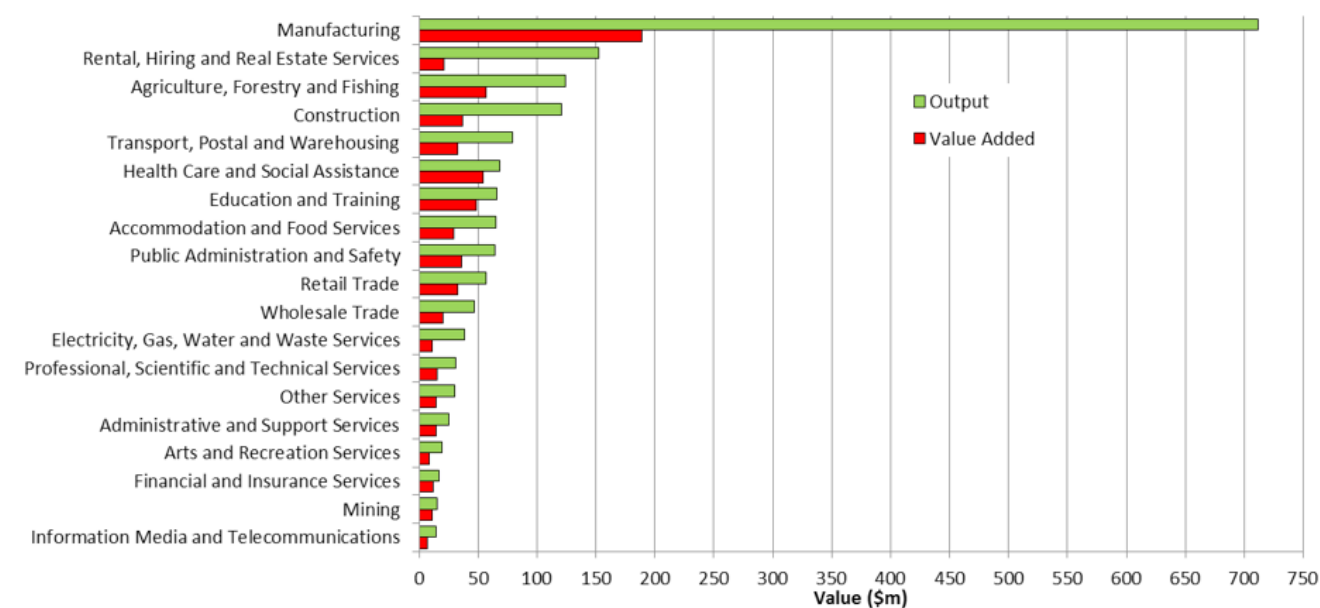


Figure 25: Economic Output and Productivity for by Industry Sector for RVC  
(Source: RVC adapted from .ideconomy using NIEIR data 2018)

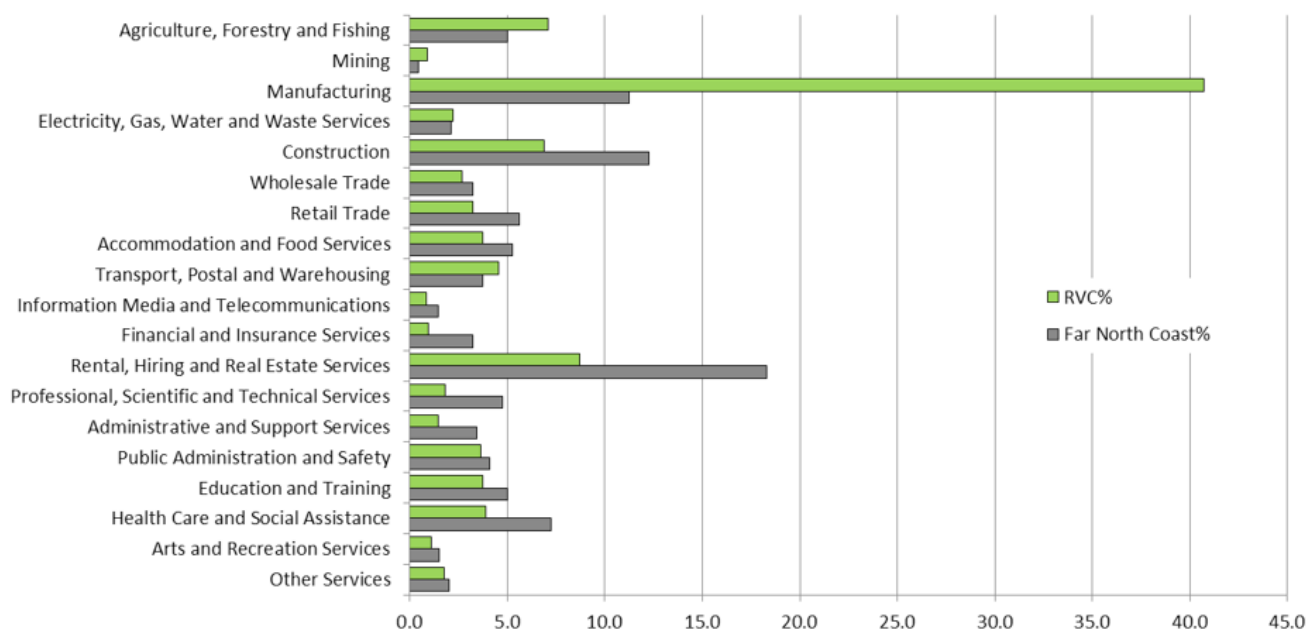


Figure 26: Percentage of Economic Output by Industry Sector for RVC compared to Far North Coast  
(Source: RVC adapted from .ideconomy using NIEIR data 2018)





Changes to RVC's economy over the last 10 years saw manufacturing also stand out as a sector of growth for both Output and productivity: increasing by \$261.8m (representing a 36.8% increase) and \$59m, respectively. Agriculture/forestry/farming along with construction were large contributors to RVC's economic Output during 2017/18 but were also sectors which experienced the largest declines in output (figure 27).

Surprisingly agriculture/forestry/fishing maintained their level of productivity despite the decline in Output. Construction also saw a decline in both output and productivity most like a result of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2010, however, the construction sector has strengthened over the last 4 years.

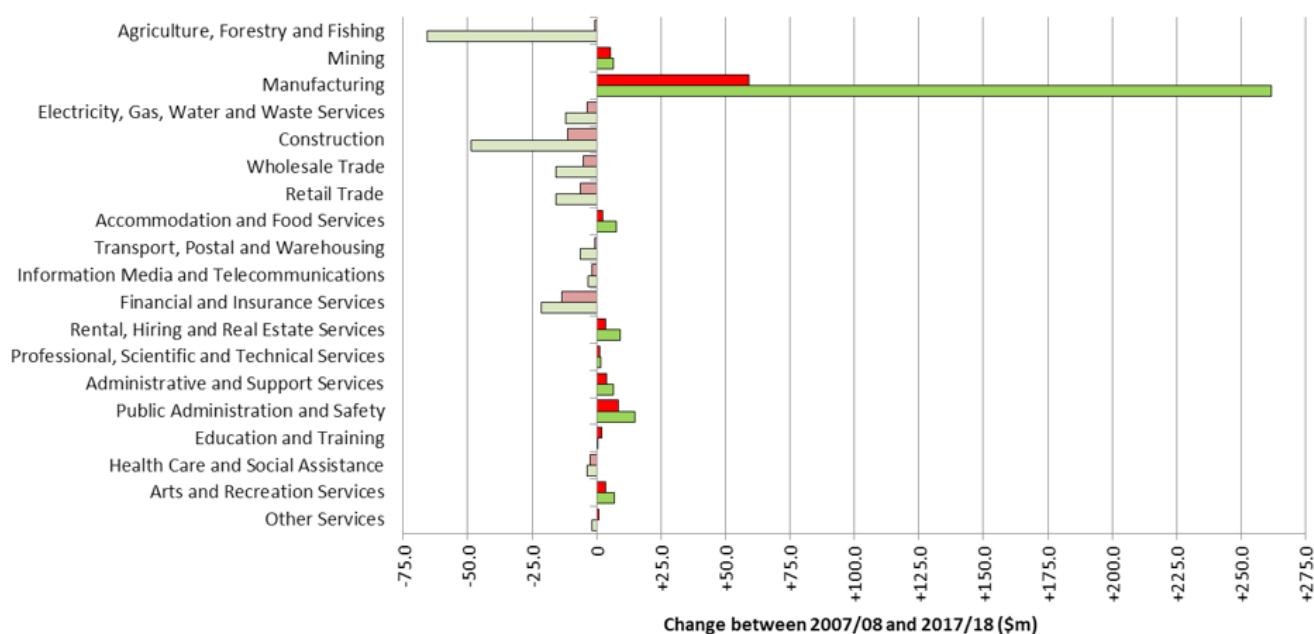


Figure 27: Change in RVC's Economic Output and Productivity for Industry Sectors between 2007/08 and 2017/18  
(Source: RVC adapted from .ideconomy using NIEIR data 2018)



## PLANNING PRIORITY 7



### PROTECT PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURE LAND & SIGNIFICANT RESOURCES

#### MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Richmond Valley LGA's economic base is strongly rooted to the manufacturing sector which is heavily weighted towards food production, followed by leather manufacturing, and wood products.

The total economic Output (and Value Added) for RVC's Manufacturing Sector was \$711.7m (\$188.7m) in 2017/18, comprising of-

- ▶ Food production Manufacturing—\$603.9m (\$153.1m)—major contributors being:
  - Northern Cooperative Meat Company, Casino
  - Richmond Dairies, Casino
  - Sunshine Sugar, Broadwater
  - New World Foods
- ▶ Leather production—\$30.1m (\$12m)—mainly attributable to:
  - Cassino Hide Tannery, Casino

- ▶ Wood products—\$21.6m (\$7.5m)—from various timber mills in the area
- ▶ Basic chemical and chemical products—\$17.1m (\$4.6m)—mainly attributable to:
  - Tea Tree Oil Distillation facilities throughout the LGA.

Manufacturing is also a major employer in the LGA (see Planning Priority 8 for further information).

While food production manufacturing is a major GRP contributor and employer in the LGA, diversification in this sector is needed to support economic growth and to future proof the community's employment base.

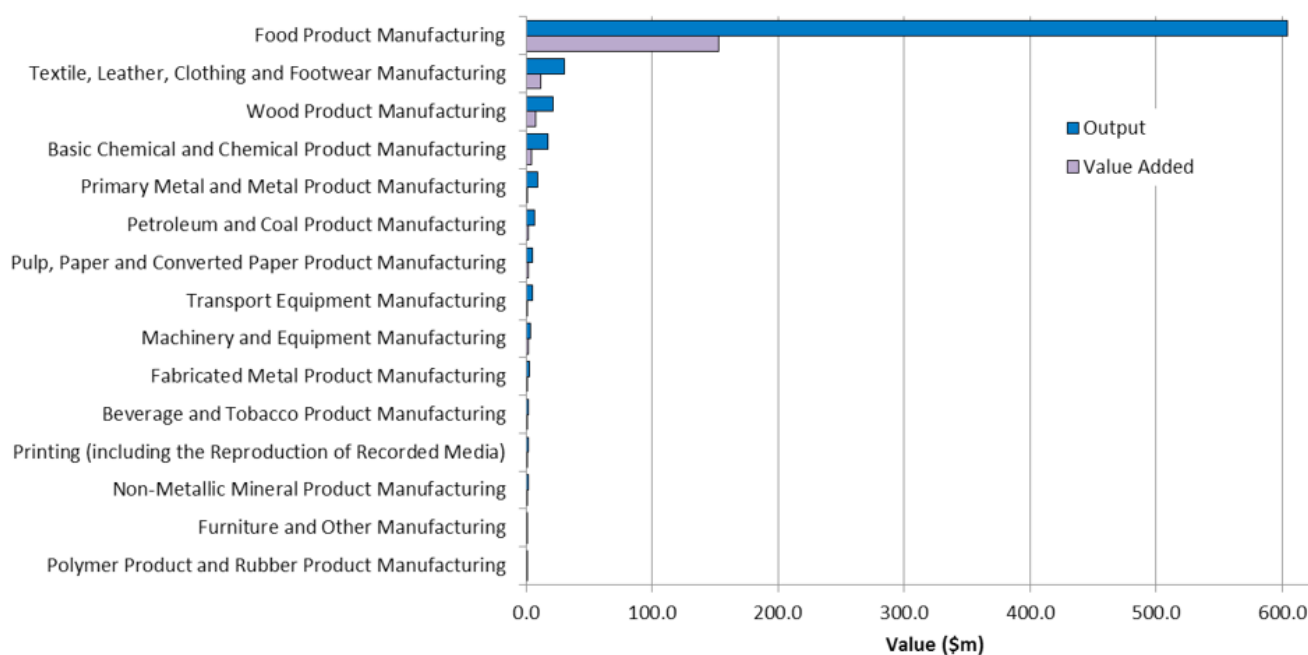


Figure 28: Economic Output and Productivity for Manufacturing Sector in RVC (Source: RVC adapted from .ideconomy using NIEIR data 2018)



## AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY/FISHING SECTOR

Agriculture/forestry/fishing contributed an Output (and Value Added) total of \$124.2m (\$56.6m) to the Richmond Valley economy in 2017/18, however the total gross value of agricultural production was \$92.5m, with livestock slaughterings being the largest commodity produced accounting for 69.9% of the total agricultural output in terms of value (.id Economy 2019).

The value of various agricultural/forestry/fishing commodities was as follows-

- ▶ Livestock slaughterings—\$64.6m, including
  - Poultry—\$33.1m
  - Cattle—\$26.6m
  - Pigs—\$4.9m
- ▶ Other broad acre crops—\$13.9m, including
  - Sugar cane—\$9.9m
  - Other oilseeds (primarily Soy Bean)—\$3.8m
- ▶ Milk—\$10.0m
- ▶ Forestry and logging—\$11.9m
- ▶ Agriculture, forestry and fishing support services—\$19.7m



(Source: .idcommunity from NIEIR data)

Note: Tea Tree Oil distillation is coded by ABS to manufacturing

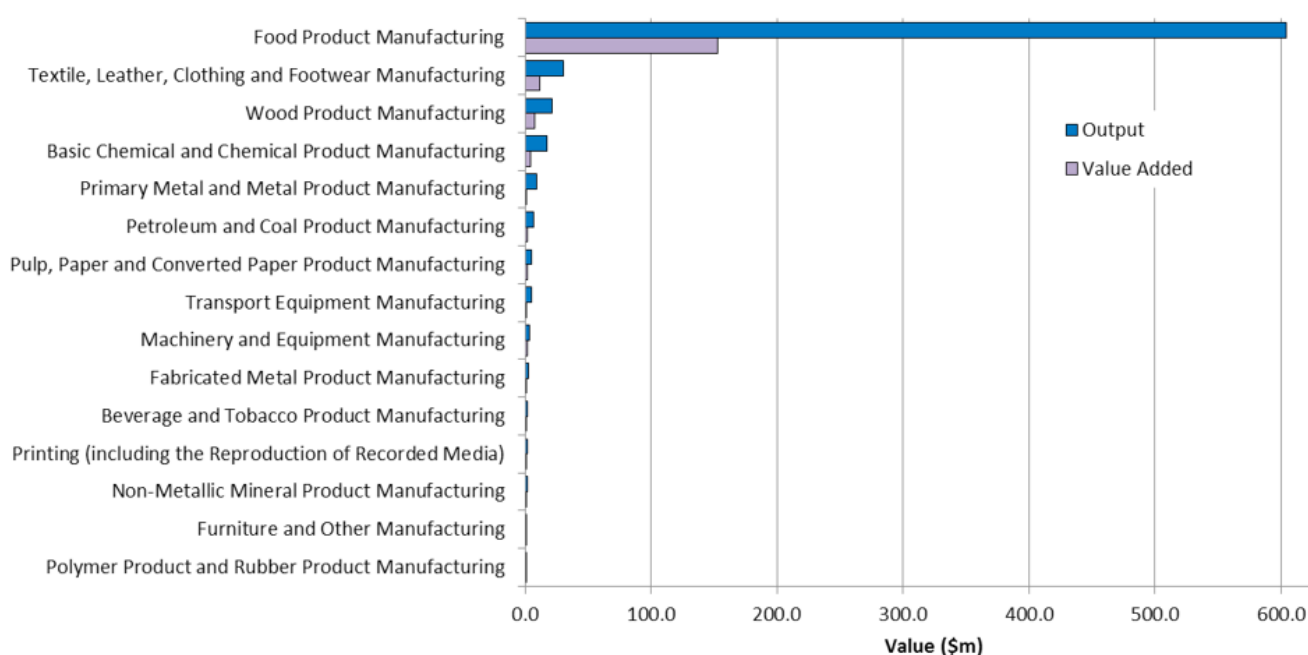


Figure 29: Value of Agriculture by commodity type 2017/18 (Source: RVC adapted from .ideconomy using NIEIR data 2018)

## IMPORTANT FARMLAND

To support long term agricultural production, the most important farmland on the North Coast has been mapped within the North Coast Regional Plan.

This mapping was derived from a study conducted in 2005 by the Department of Planning and Department of Primary Industries-Agriculture to identifying Regional and State Significant Farmland from 1:100,000 scale soil and landscape attributes. It should be noted that areas outside identified important farmland areas are also valuable local agriculture lands including extensive areas of pasture and forestry which contribute significantly towards the LGA's economy.

The accuracy of the important farmland mapping (see figure 30) is underpinned by the scale and accuracy of the underlying soil landscape data, and the capture of isolated areas of land with diminished agricultural viability. It is for these reasons DPIE has included Important Farmland Interim Variation Criteria in the NCRP.

Council supports the protection of important farmland due to its importance to the economy but encourages a level of common sense and flexibility when relying upon the mapping.

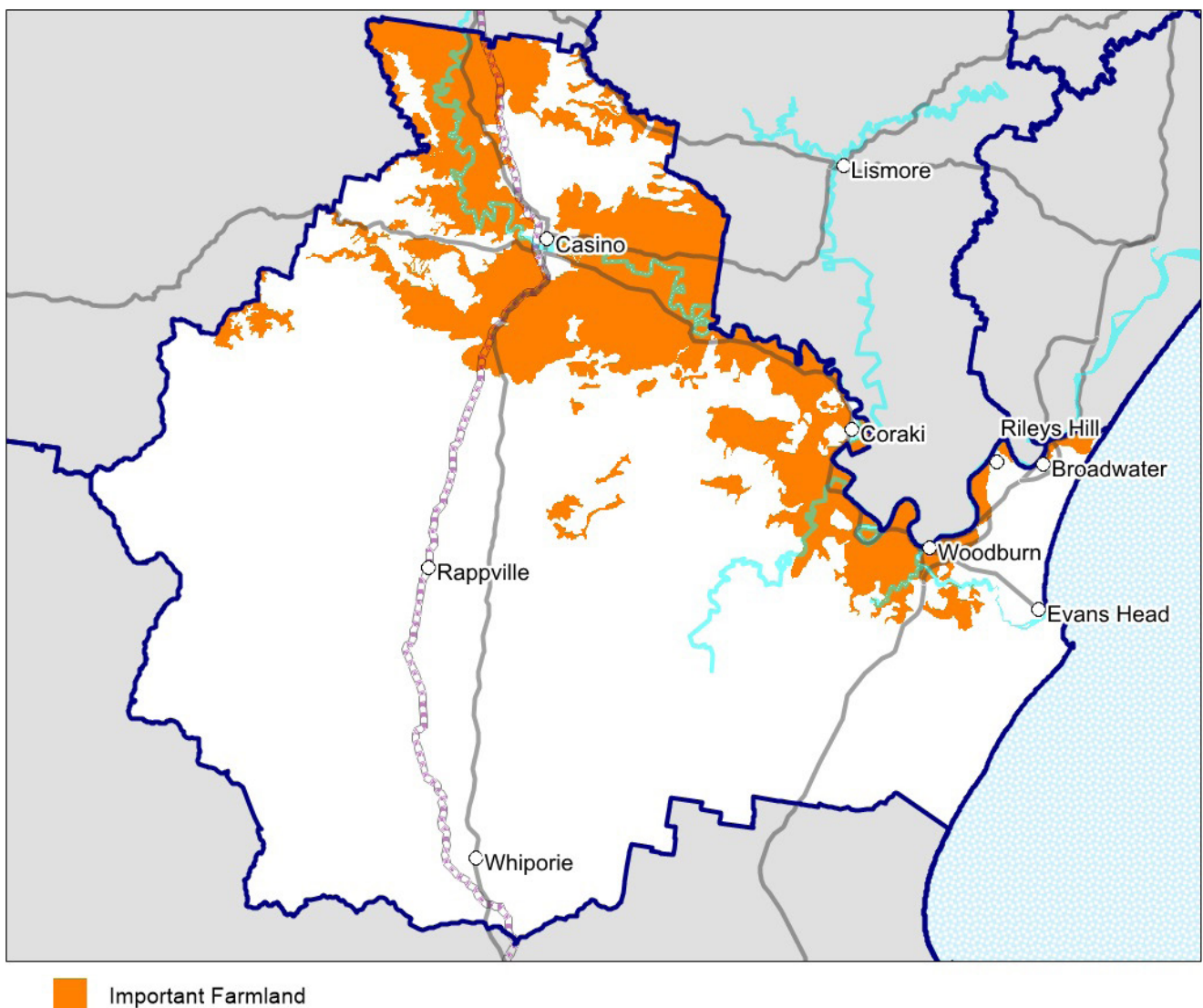


Figure 30: Important Farmland (Source: Adapted by RVC from DPIE data)



## MINERAL AND EXTRACTIVE RESOURCES

Richmond Valley LGA has a range of mineral resources, particularly extractive resources suitable for construction applications as well as large potential for clay/shale. Mineral and extractive resources are important to the sustained growth of the region with strategically important resources being identified in figure 31. These significant resources are the subject of a Ministerial Section 9.1 Direction to protect them from potentially incompatible land uses which may prohibit or restrict their development. All future development and urban growth must consider the continued long term viability of the identified, and potentially new, extractive and mineral resources.

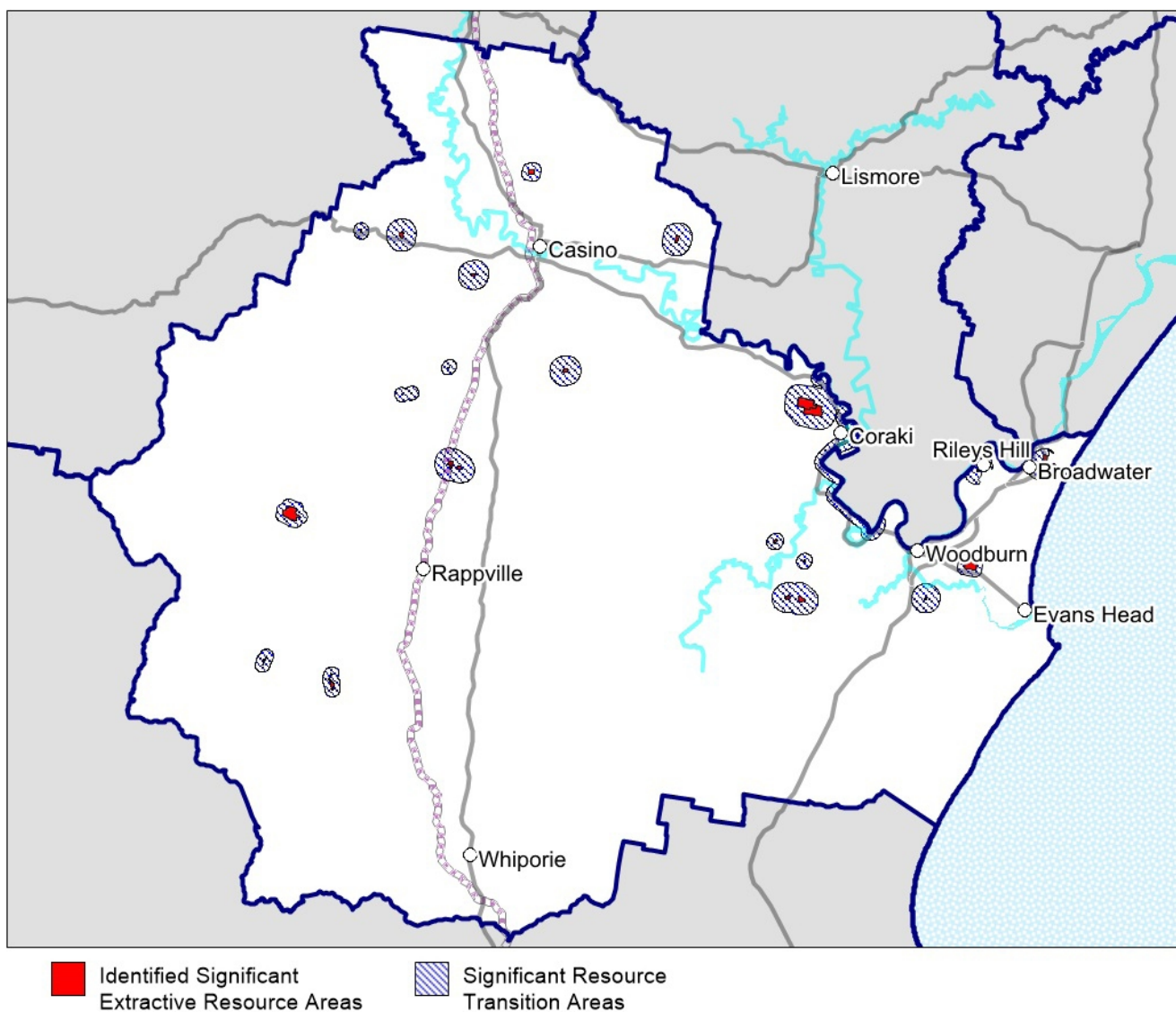


Figure 31: Identified Significant Mineral and Extractive Resources in RVC, and potential Landslip Risk  
(Source: RVC including adapted data from NSW Dept. Minerals)





## PLANNING PRIORITY 7

### PROTECT PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURE LAND & SIGNIFICANT RESOURCES

#### ACTIONS:

7.1	Ensure Council's planning provisions accommodate the changing needs for agriculture, manufacturing and emerging agribusiness & agritourism opportunities
7.2	Work with DPIE-Agriculture to map and protect significant agricultural farmland from inappropriate and conflicting land uses, and fragmentation
7.3	Avoid creating land use conflict which could impact upon the future viability of productive rural lands, including significant farmland, and significant mineral & extractive resources
7.4	Partner with the State government to support the local agricultural sector and associated value-adding food processing/production industries





## PLANNING PRIORITY 8



### DIVERSIFY THE RANGE OF SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

#### EMPLOYMENT

Richmond Valley LGA provided 8,414 jobs during 2017/18, or 8.24% of all jobs provided on the Far North Coast (figure 32).

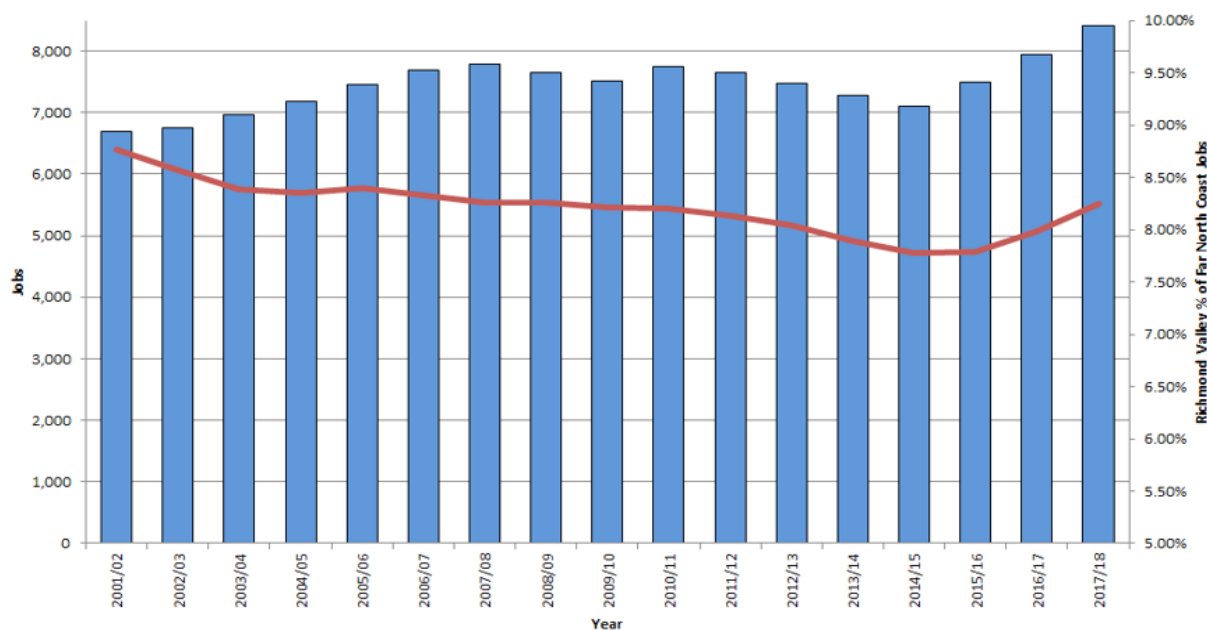


Figure 32: Time Series Employment figures for Richmond Valley LGA, and the proportion of jobs compared to the Far North Coast (Source: RVC derived from .idcommunity from NIEIR data)

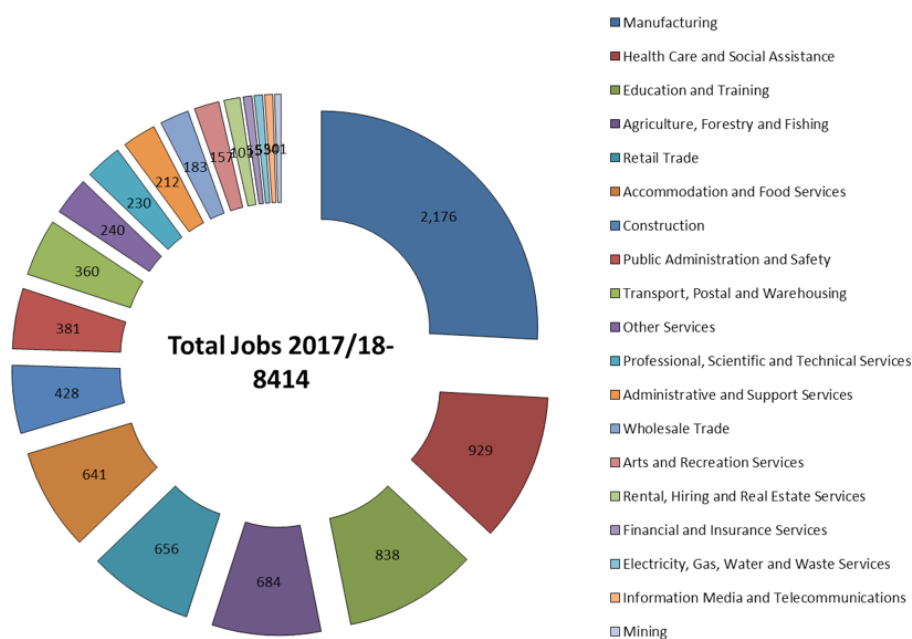


Figure 33: Jobs provided within Richmond Valley LGA for each industry sector in 2017/18 (Source: RVC derived from .idcommunity from NIEIR data)

Of the jobs provided within the LGA, 69.1% were held by residents of the LGA (job containment), with 30.3% held by residents living elsewhere on the Far North Coast.

Not surprisingly manufacturing and the agricultural/forestry/fishing sectors were amongst the highest employers: providing 2,176 (or 25.9%) and 684 (or 8.1%) jobs respectively (.idcommunity from NIEIR data) (figure 33) both being proportionally higher than for Regional NSW (figure 34).

The manufacturing sector also showed strong jobs growth in Richmond Valley LGA, between 2007/08 and 2017/18, where an additional 837 jobs were provided (or an increase of 62.5%) (figure 35). This growth was in stark contrast to Regional NSW where manufacturing represented only 6.8% of the employment stock (in 2017/18) shrinking from 9.2% in 2007/08 (figure 36).

The retail and wholesale trade sectors showed declines in Richmond Valley LGA, as they did elsewhere on the Far North Coast.

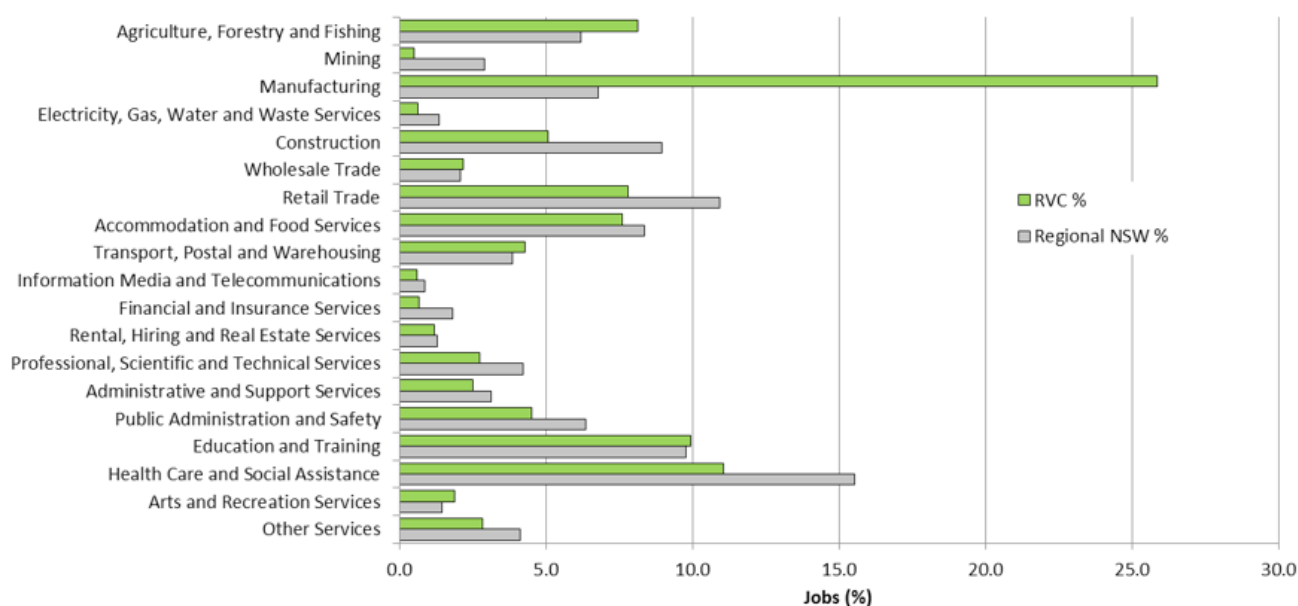


Figure 34: RVC jobs provided by Industry Sector proportional to Regional NSW (Source: RVC derived from .id Economic from NIEIR data)

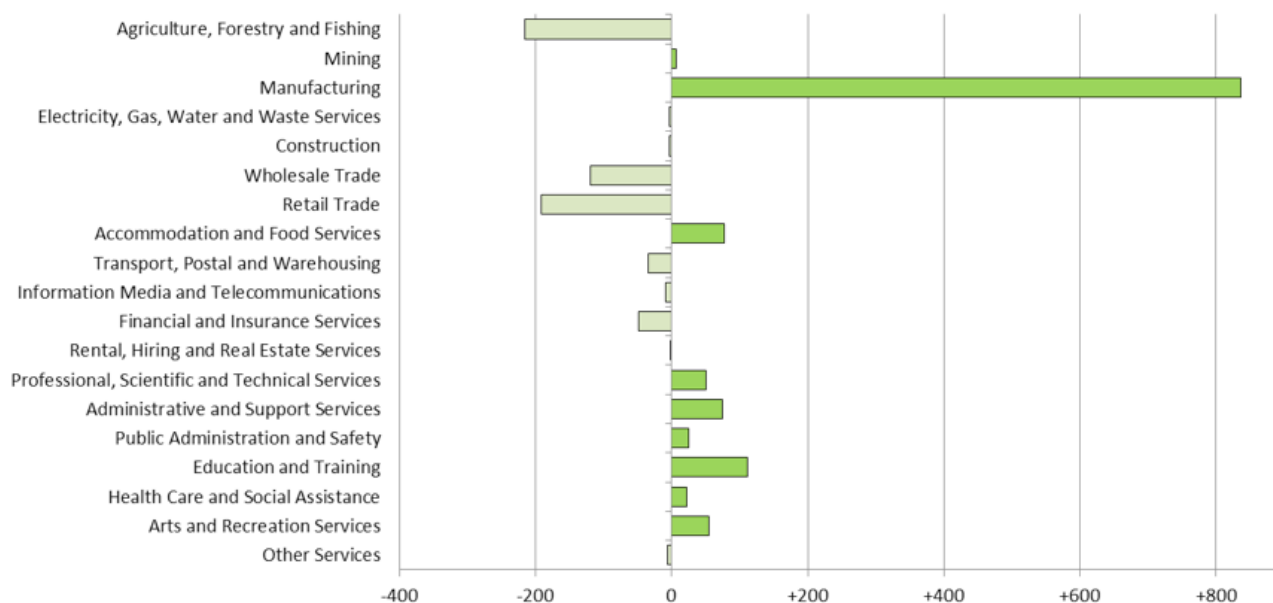


Figure 35: Change in the job numbers by Industry Sector for RVC between 2007/08 & 2017/18 (Source: Adapted by RVC from ideconomic data)



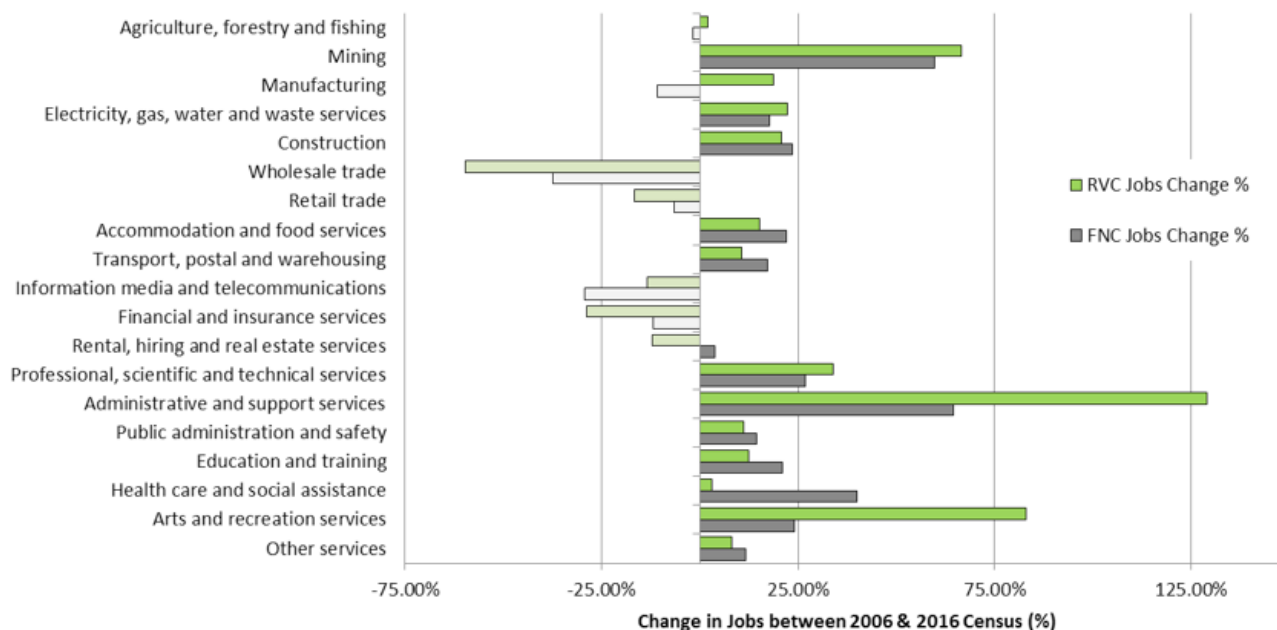


Figure 36: Proportional (%) change in job numbers for Industry Sectors between 2006 & 2016: Comparing RVC to the Far North Coast  
(Source: Adapted by RVC from ABS.Stat Census 2006 & 2016 Employment data)

The Locational Quotient (LQ) is a simple way to see what the main industries in an area are, relative to the wider region. Where LQ=1, that industry is exactly as prevalent as in the wider region; an LQ > 1.2 indicates a significant specialisation of the industry and > 2 is a major specialisation; while a LQ < 0.8 indicates an industry is more significant in the region than in the local area.

From figure 37, agriculture/forestry/fishing and the arts/recreation are significantly specialised for RVC compared to Regional NSW, however, manufacturing was extremely specialised having an LQ greater than 3.

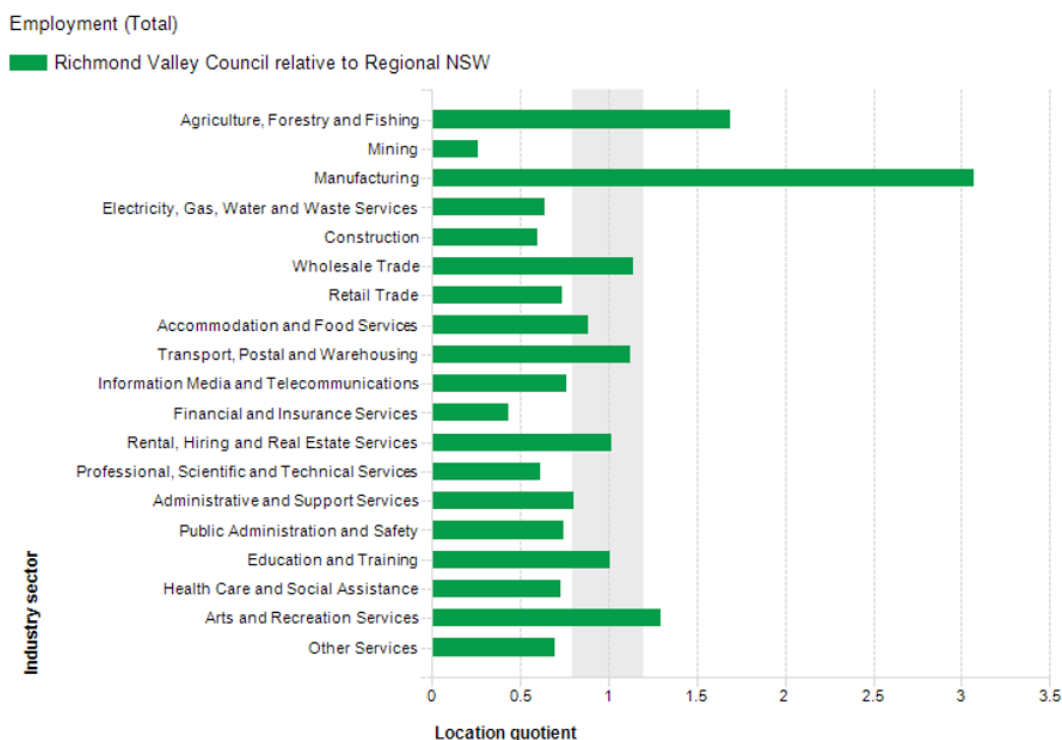


Figure 37: Location Quotient for RVC compared to Regional NSW in 2018/19 (Source: .idEconomy)

## UNDER-EMPLOYMENT

The Commonwealth Department of Employment, Skills Small and Family Business release quarterly unemployment figures for Australia by LGA. Unemployment figures for Richmond Valley LGA, between Dec 2010 and June 2019 (figure 38) showed unemployment rates for the LGA had been declining since September 2015 but are still higher than the National average.

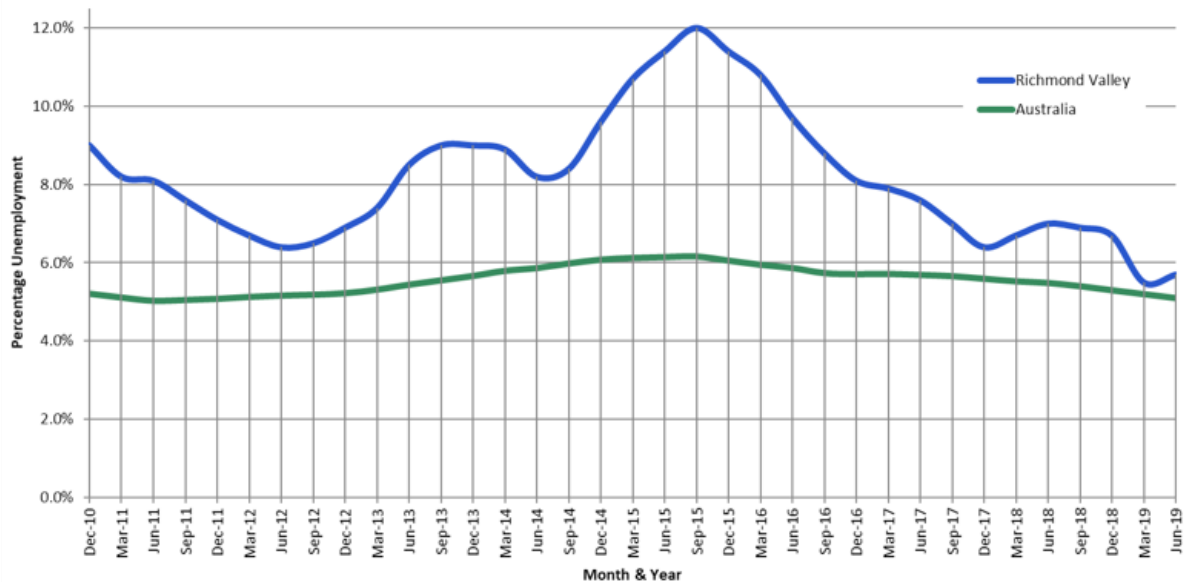


Figure 38: Unsmoothed Unemployment figures for Richmond Valley LGA & Australia  
(Source: RVC adapted from Department of Jobs and Small Business Sept 2018)

## TRANSPORT LINKS

Richmond Valley LGA is uniquely positioned along the routes, and at the cross roads, of several transport modes. This strategically positions the LGA to capitalise on freight distribution opportunities via a multitude of transport and freight modes from the region to within easy reach of Brisbane and South-East Queensland, the New England Tablelands, and to the south towards Sydney.

### Highways

The LGA is traversed by the Pacific Highway providing a major transport route between Brisbane/Gold Coast to Sydney/Newcastle. The Highway is currently undergoing a divided dual carriageway upgrade, scheduled to open in 2020, which will bypass the villages of Woodburn and Broadwater and provide improved access to South-East Queensland.

Other main road linkages through the LGA include the Summerland Way and Bruxner Highway.

The Summerland Way runs north-south from the Pacific Highway at Grafton through Casino and Kyogle towards the Scenic Rim region of South-East Queensland.

The Bruxner Highway provides an east-west linkage through the LGA, starting at the Pacific Highway at Ballina travelling through Lismore and Casino then westerly to the New England Highway at Tenterfield.

Each of these connection routes is undergoing upgrades to strength freight transport linkages including major bridge reconstructions at Grafton and Tabulam.

### Rail

The LGA is located on the North Coast Rail line which is a nationally significant part of the National Land Transport Network between Brisbane and Sydney/Newcastle. Significant investment is being injected into upgrading this corridor to increase freight and passenger capacity, such as lengthening passing loops to handle longer trains, automating signaling systems, and improving the safety of level crossings to facilitate increased train speeds. This corridor enables development of intermodal and rail freight opportunities to support agricultural and manufacturing sectors in the region.



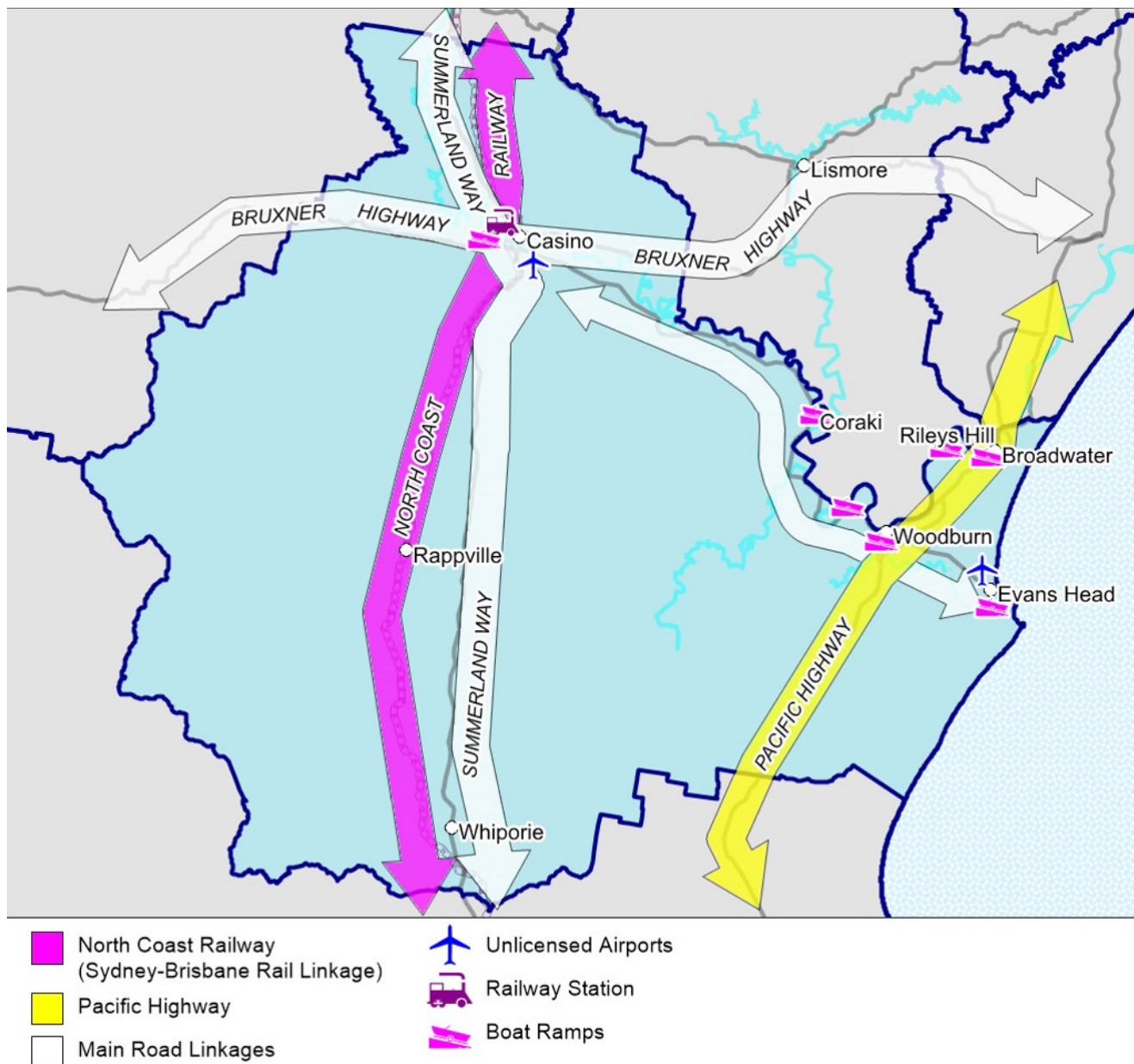


Figure 39: Major transport links through RVC and locations of Transport Infrastructure

## TOURISM SECTOR

The ABS don't report specifically on tourism and hospitality as an industry sector, however, .id Economy has produced a custom report estimating in 2017/18 tourism had an Output value of \$50.3m in the LGA, with a total Value Added of \$25.5m. This report also identifies on average (based on a 5 year average between 2012/13 to 2017/18) there were 143,283 annual tourist visitors to Richmond Valley LGA, staying a total 572,480 visitor nights (or an average 4 days per stay) (.id from NIEIR and Tourism Research Australia data). The sector also supported 377 jobs when measured in 2016/17.





Understanding the full economic potential from tourism should be further researched, especially given the Pacific Highway upgrades will increase accessibility to South-East Queensland and Byron tourist markets.

## FUTURE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Richmond Valley Council continues to support established businesses, showcasing the assets of the region, and encouraging new business investment. Agriculture and manufacturing currently feature strongly in the LGA and the future is ripe for Agribusiness opportunities to flourish through use of new technologies, value adding with small scale cottage industries, and increased farm tourism.

Manufacturing also should feature heavily on the LGAs economic future with local refining and value adding to primary produce grown locally.

Council's Economic Development Unit is also engaged with proponents looking:

- to build on the growing interest in medicinal cannabis
- at the production of energy from waste
- into freight transport opportunities from being at the crossroads of major roads and the Sydney-Brisbane rail corridor
- tourism opportunities from South-East Queensland with the extension of the Pacific Highway dual carriageway

## COMMERCIAL/RETAIL LAND DEMAND

There is 32.1ha of land (excluding road) Zoned for commercial purposes as B1, B2 or B3 under the *Richmond Valley LEP 2012*. Of this area 63% is occupied by a commercial activity with 27% occupied by either non-commercial land uses or is vacant.

Within the B Zones, there is 10.28ha of commercial floor area having an average Floor Space Ratio of 0.51, and represents an average of 4.4m<sup>2</sup>/capita. The projected population increase of 2,950 implies a need for an additional 12,980m<sup>2</sup> of commercial floor area, or 2.6 ha of land (assuming a FSR of 0.51).

Based on this estimate, there is an abundant area of existing B Zoned land to meet a doubling of the population.

None of the B Zones currently permit residential accommodation, other than shop-top housing. Any flexibility to permit housing at ground level behind commercial floor space has been dismissed by the Courts as a literal interpretation of the Shop-top Housing definition has been taken for it to be provided 'above' the commercial floor space.

A review of the B Zones has determined several options-

- ▶ Dezone part of the B Zones which is surplus to future urban growth needs.
- ▶ Change part of the B3 Zone by shrinking it to apply only to the Casino CBD area, with the remaining part of the B3 to be Zoned B2 or a mixed use zone. Plus amend the Land Use table for Zones B1 & B2 to permit a wider range of land uses such including all forms of residential accommodation.
- ▶ Combination of 1 & 2.





## PLANNING PRIORITY 8

### DIVERSIFY THE RANGE OF SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

#### ACTIONS:

8.1	Undertake an LEP Health Check, including a review of Land Use permissibilities, to support the growth of a diverse regional economy and to facilitate new economic activity
8.2	Prepare a Local Growth Management Strategy for future commercial and industrial areas, including opportunities to capitalise on freight and logistics transport routes in the area
8.3	Investigate options for mixed land uses (including residential accommodation) in the Business Zones
8.4	Investigate opportunities to expand nature-based, adventure and cultural tourism places and enhanced visitor experiences
8.5	Encourage the establishment of new manufacturing and rural industries to support local processing of primary products and to diversify the employment market
8.6	Implement Council's <i>Imagine-2020 and beyond-Supporting progress in the Mid Richmond Plan</i> as a Pacific Highway bypass management strategy aimed at stimulating tourism and business interests in Mid Richmond localities
8.7	Partner with the State government to grow agricultural and freight links along the Pacific Highway, Summerland Way, Bruxner Highway, and North Coast Railway, including an intermodal freight facility at Casino
8.8	Partner with key stakeholders to deliver new and diversified employment opportunities, and employment lands

# ACTION PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION

This Statement describes the long-term land use strategy for the LGA. This Statement is intended to be a living document and will have ongoing revisions concurrently with the preparation of each new Council Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Preparation of the next CSP is scheduled to commence in 2020 for completion in 2021. The LSPS will feature in CSP community engagement processes to ensure the LSPS reflects the community's social, environmental and economic needs.

Council will monitor and report on the delivery of LSPS priorities, actions and outcomes in its annual reporting process. This will inform adjustments to the LSPS to ensure local planning policy is effective, responsive and delivering on local community aspirations.



## TIMEFRAMES

- ▶ Short Term = 0-5 years
- ▶ Medium Term = 6-10 years
- ▶ Long Term = 11-20 years

## THEME 1 – OUR COMMUNITY

Priorities & Actions		Timeframe	NCRP	CSP
PLANNING PRIORITY 1 - HAVE WELL PLANNED AND DESIGNED SPACE TO GROW				
1.1	Prepare Local Growth Management Strategies to sustainably grow the region's population, and investigate new and innovative ways to accommodate projected population growth	Short	1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 2.1; 13.1; 16.2; 23.2; 24.1	EC1
1.2	Deliver sustainable, well planned, safe, healthy and efficient housing and settlement areas through healthy urban design and hazard avoidance/management	Ongoing	3.1; 13.1; 15.4; 15.5; 20.1; 24.2; Narr	PP1; EH2
1.3	Monitor the supply and demand for housing and zoned urban land to gauge how Council is tracking against projected future demand	Ongoing	6.7; 22.3	EC1
1.4	Review Council's planning scheme to encourage delivery of a diverse range of housing options (including low-medium density housing, affordable housing & Seniors Living), and improve the functionality and quality of housing delivered	Short	3.1; 13.1; 15.4; 15.5; 20.1; 23.1; 23.2; 24.2; 25.1; Narr	EC1
1.5	Deliver robust and accessible towns and communities with well planned, maintained and functional public spaces	Ongoing	15.1; 15.2	PP1
1.6	Prepare a bushfire recovery Master Plan for Rappville	Short	-	PP3; EC1; EH1; CS1



Priorities & Actions		Timeframe	NCRP	CSP
<b>PLANNING PRIORITY 2 - ALIGN DEVELOPMENT, GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b>				
2.1	Partner with the State government and developers to deliver local infrastructure in a timely manner to meet the demands of future projected growth	Ongoing	21.1	EH1; CS1
2.2	Review Council's Developer Contributions Plans	Short; Medium & Long	-	EC1
2.3	Implement the <i>Facilities Needs Review</i> including the reclassification of identified surplus and underutilised public lands from 'Community Land' to 'Operational Land'	Medium	-	PP1
2.4	Update Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy (IWCM) to ensure the community is serviced with a reliable long term drinking water supply	Short	21.2	EH1
2.5	Develop and implement strategies to reduce Land Use Conflict with essential infrastructure, significant extractive resources, agricultural lands, and road & rail networks	Ongoing	6.5; 9.2; 9.3; 10.3; 11.1; 11.3; 12.4; 13.1	EH1
2.6	Endorse the State's Highway Service Centre Policy and discourage inappropriate development adjoining or intersecting with the Pacific Highway	Ongoing	9.2; 9.3	EC1
2.7	Further the design and construction of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail including integrating it with the cycleway/pedestrian network	Short & Medium	15.2	PP2; EH1
2.8	Provide a safe integrated traffic, cycle and pedestrian network	Ongoing	10.2; 10.5; 15.1; 15.2	PP2; EH1
2.9	Provide clean and well-maintained public recreational and sporting facilities, and outdoor spaces which are accessible and safe, as well as encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle	Ongoing	-	EC1

<b>PLANNING PRIORITY 3 – IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF PLANNING SERVICES</b>				
3.1	Integrate the <i>Community Participation Plan</i> (CPP) into the <i>Richmond Valley Council Community Engagement Strategy</i>	Medium	-	PP3; CS2
3.2	Continuously improve the efficiency and effective delivery of Council planning services, especially through its Development Concierge Service and delivery of fact sheets	Ongoing	-	PP3; EC1; CS1; CS2
3.3	Develop engagement protocols in collaboration with the Aboriginal community to ensure appropriate engagement is done with knowledge holders during planning processes	Medium	16.1; 16.2	PP3; CS2
3.4	Implement ePlanning services to streamline the Development assessment system and offer the community an on-line application lodgement option	Short	-	PP3; EC1; CS2
3.5	Establish an on-line mapping system to deliver digital geographic information to the community	Short	-	PP; CS2

## THEME 2 – OUR ENVIRONMENT

Priorities & Actions		Timeframe	NCRP	CSP
PLANNING PRIORITY 4 – LOOK AFTER OUR ENVIRONMENT				
4.1	Work collaboratively in partnership with the community, State and local governments to improve the health of the Richmond Valley environment	Ongoing	2.1	EH2
4.2	Participate in the preparation of a new <i>Richmond River Catchment Management Program</i> (CMP) and the <i>Richmond River Governance and Funding Framework</i>	Short	3.2	EH2
4.3	Prepare a Catchment Management Program (CMP) for the Evans River and Evans Coastline	Short	3.2	EH2
4.4	Engage with the State government to have environmental protection zones from the <i>Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012</i> included on the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> Biodiversity Values Map	Short	-	EC1; EH2
4.5	Review the <i>Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012</i> Environmental Overlay Maps and provisions to ensure they are current, and effective given new legislation such as the <i>Coastal Management Act</i> and <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act</i> may have created duplicate development assessment processes	Short	-	EC1; EH2

PLANNING PRIORITY 5 – CREATE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES				
5.1	Reduce risks to development and the environment from natural hazards, including projected effects of climate change, by identifying, avoiding and managing vulnerable areas and known hazards	Ongoing	3.1; 3.3	EC1; EH2
5.2	Incorporate Climate Change considerations into Council's plans and strategies	Short	3.3	EC1; EH2
5.3	Review and update bushfire hazard mapping	Short; Medium & Long	3.2; 3.3	EC1; EH2
5.4	Review and expand on flood studies to ensure modelling is current, fit for purpose, and incorporate climate change, AR&R (2019), and significant changes to the floodplain such as construction of the Pacific Motorway	Ongoing	3.2	EC1; EH2

PLANNING PRIORITY 6 – CELEBRATE OUR HERITAGE				
6.1	Ensure Aboriginal objects and places are protected, managed and respected in accordance with legislative requirements and the wishes of Aboriginal communities	Ongoing	18.1; 18.2; 19.2	EC1; EH2
6.2	Collaborate with local Aboriginal communities to undertake a Local Aboriginal Heritage Study, and adopt appropriate measures from the study into planning strategies and local plans to protect Aboriginal heritage	Medium	18.3; 19.2	PP3; EC1; EH2
6.3	Promote heritage through a range of educational and incentives schemes – including Heritage Advisory services, Local Heritage Grants, Main Street Studies, promotion of Casino's Art Deco architecture	Short; Medium & Long	-	PP3; EC1; EH2
6.4	Prepare a study of Casino's CBD Heritage Conservation Area, and promote the town's Art Deco architecture	Medium	6.3	PP3; EC1
6.5	Maintain a register of Heritage listed items within the LGA and regularly review listings under the <i>Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012</i> and the information delivered to the community via the Heritage NSW Webapp	Ongoing	19.1; 19.2	PP3; EC1
6.6	Encourage the active use of heritage items and support compatible adaptive reuse	Ongoing	19.3	PP3; EC1



## THEME 3 – OUR ECONOMY

Priorities & Actions		Timeframe	NCRP	CSP
<b>PLANNING PRIORITY 7 - PROTECT PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURE LAND &amp; SIGNIFICANT RESOURCES</b>				
7.1	Ensure Council's planning provisions accommodate the changing needs for agriculture, manufacturing and emerging agribusiness & agritourism opportunities	Short	6.5; 11.4; 11.5	EC1; EH2
7.2	Work with DPIE-Agriculture to map and protect significant agricultural farmland from inappropriate and conflicting land uses, and fragmentation	Medium	11.1; 11.2; 11.3; 11.4; Narr	EC1
7.3	Avoid creating land use conflict which could impact upon the future viability of productive rural lands, including significant farmland, and significant mineral & extractive resources	Ongoing	13.2	EC1
7.4	Partner with the State government to support the local agricultural sector and associated value-adding food processing/production industries	Short	Narr	EC1

<b>PLANNING PRIORITY 8 – DIVERSIFY THE RANGE OF SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS</b>				
8.1	Undertake an LEP Health Check, including a review of Land Use permissibilities, to support the growth of a diverse regional economy and to facilitate new economic activity	Short	6.1; 14.1	EC1
8.2	Prepare a Local Growth Management Strategy for future commercial and industrial areas, including opportunities to capitalise on freight and logistics transport routes in the area	Short	6.2; 6.6; 12.1	EC1
8.3	Investigate options for mixed land uses (including residential accommodation) in the Business Zones	Short	6.3; 6.4; 6.6	EC1
8.4	Investigate opportunities to expand nature-based, adventure and cultural tourism places and enhanced visitor experiences	Long	8.2; 9.1; Narr	EC1
8.5	Encourage the establishment of new manufacturing and rural industries to support local processing of primary products and to diversify the employment market	Ongoing	12.2; 12.4	EC1
8.6	Implement Council's <i>Imagine-2020 and beyond-Supporting progress in the Mid Richmond Plan</i> as a Pacific Highway bypass management strategy aimed at stimulating tourism and business interests in Mid Richmond localities	Short	9.1; 14.1	EC1
8.7	Partner with the State government to grow agricultural and freight links along the Pacific Highway, Summerland Way, Bruxner Highway, and North Coast Railway, including an intermodal freight facility at Casino	Medium	5.1; 5.2; 9.1; 9.3; 10.3; Narr	EC1
8.8	Partner with key stakeholders to deliver new and diversified employment opportunities, and employment lands	Ongoing	5.1; Narr	EC1



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**Richmond  
Valley  
Council**

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## **Local Strategic Planning Statement: Beyond 20-20 Vision**

20 Year Planning Vision for the  
Richmond Valley Local Government Area

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May 2020

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