



TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL

ANNEXURES for ORDINARY COUNCIL AGENDA

16 DECEMBER 2025

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TAMWORTH REGIONAL STRUCTURE PLANS

Southern Gateway Activation Precinct

Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct

Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct

PREPARED FOR

TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL

27 NOVEMBER 2025

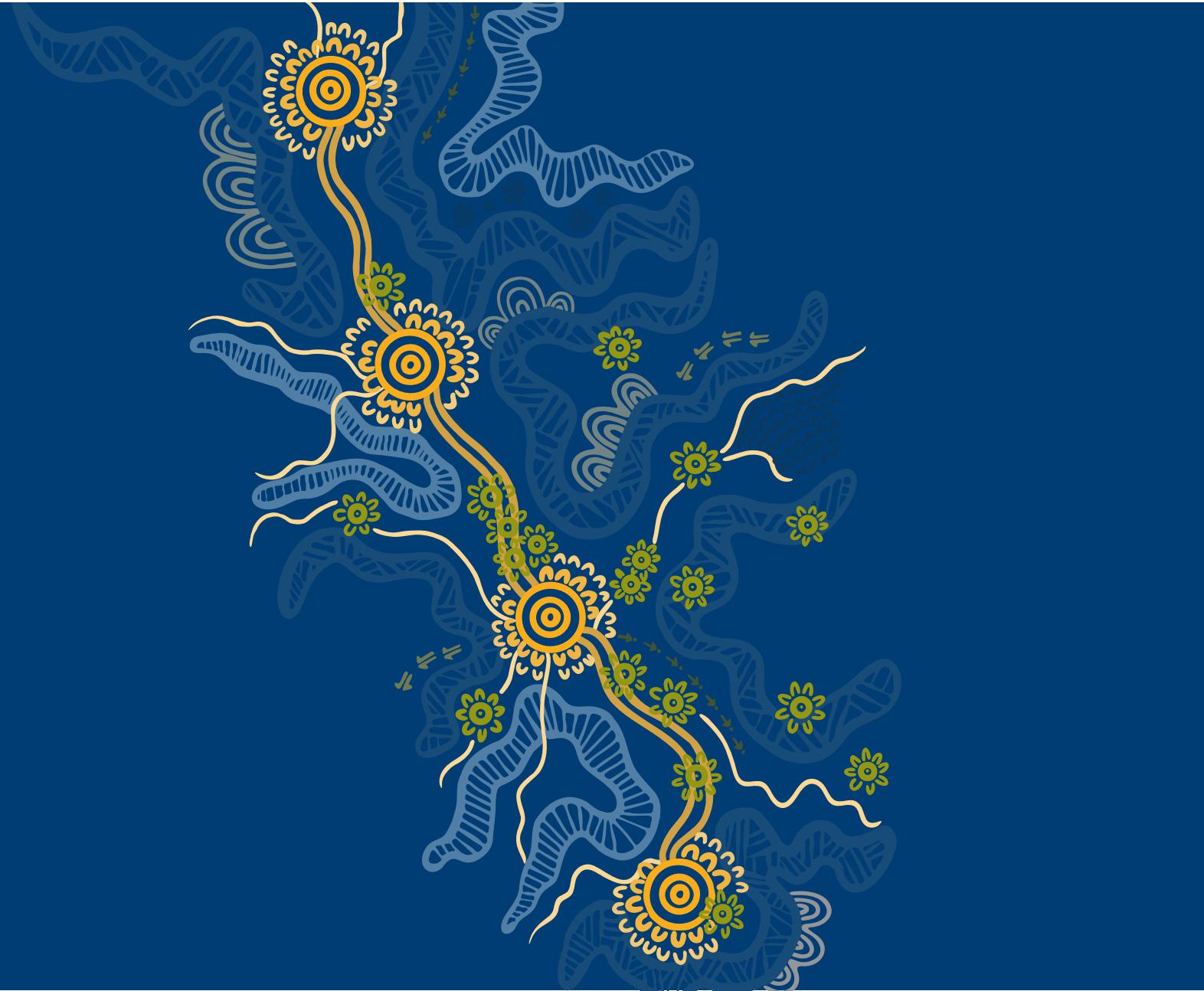
URBIS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Tamworth Regional Council would like to acknowledge the Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi people, who are the traditional custodians of this land. We would like to pay respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in and visiting our region.

The artwork on this page was created by Gomeroi artist Tess Reading. Her artwork was selected through an expression of interest where Aboriginal artists with a connection to the Kamilaroi/Gomeroi Nation were asked to create an artistic element for inclusion in Council's corporate brand.

Ms Reading describes her work as depicting the land and communities that spread across the Tamworth Regional Council footprint. Elements of the artwork will start to appear on Council's letterheads, business cards, signage and uniforms in 2025.



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INTRODUCTION

Urbis has been engaged by Tamworth Regional Council to prepare this Structure Plan Report to support the vision for three precincts which are known as:

- Precinct 1: Southern Gateway Activation Precinct;
- Precinct 2: Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct; and
- Precinct 3: Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct.

The structure plans seek to inform the community of the future direction and vision of the precincts over the next 20 years. The structure plans provide a high-level framework that is not intended to resolve all the issues. Therefore, the structure plans should be considered the first step, with technical studies, amendment to planning provisions and infrastructure upgrades required to facilitate the long-term vision for the precincts over a number of years.

The structure plans were prepared through a comprehensive urban design process. The structure plans for Precincts 1 and 2 prioritise housing diversity, accommodating a range of lot sizes and residential types to meet the evolving needs of the community. By safeguarding land for future residential development and integrating flexible planning controls, the plan ensures long-term adaptability and resilience.

The structure plan for Precinct 3 is designed to provide a diverse choice of housing and seamlessly integrate and support the established Tamworth Regional Sports and Entertainment precinct.

This report outlines the rationale of the proposed structure plan considering:

- The existing precinct conditions;
- The future character of the area;
- The natural features of the precinct including existing topography and vegetation; and
- Connectivity to local amenities, services and nearby facilities.

Workshops were held with Council, Government agencies and landowners to present the draft structure plan for feedback and help articulate ideas. In addition to the collaborative workshop process, Urbis has worked closely with Council staff across various divisions to ensure that the proposed structure plans are comprehensive, inclusive, and reflective of the aspirations and needs of all stakeholders, the future residents and the vision set out by Council.

The structure plans have been developed in response to key actions of the *New England North West Regional Plan 2041*, Council's *Blueprint 100: Part One and Blueprint 100: Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (Blueprint 100: Part 2 - LSPS 2020)* and Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024.

The Tamworth Regional Structure Plans will be forwarded to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure seeking endorsement. If endorsed, the structure plans become a key strategic document for future, more detailed land use planning, such as to amend the *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010*.

PURPOSE OF A STRUCTURE PLAN

A structure plan is a framework to guide the development of an area by defining the future development and land use patterns, areas of open space, the layout and nature of infrastructure, and other key features and constraints that influence how the effects of development are to be managed.

A structure plan seeks to inform the community of the future direction and vision for an area over the next 20 years. It is a high-level framework that is not intended to resolve all issues.

A structure plan does not amend planning controls. Instead, the outcomes of a structure plan will be implemented through planning proposals, development applications and site specific Development Control Plans.

Development proponents are encouraged to lodge group rezoning proposals and subdivision applications together by the relevant precinct. It is anticipated that this will enable a holistic assessment of the future development proposals, rather than on a piecemeal basis which may eventuate if individual proposals are lodged.

A number of technical studies will be required, relating to traffic, flooding, drainage, contamination, bushfire, ecology, infrastructure servicing and so on. Planning Proposals and Development Applications will need to be generally consistent with the structure plans. However, it is recognised that additional studies undertaken may require the structure plans to be varied.

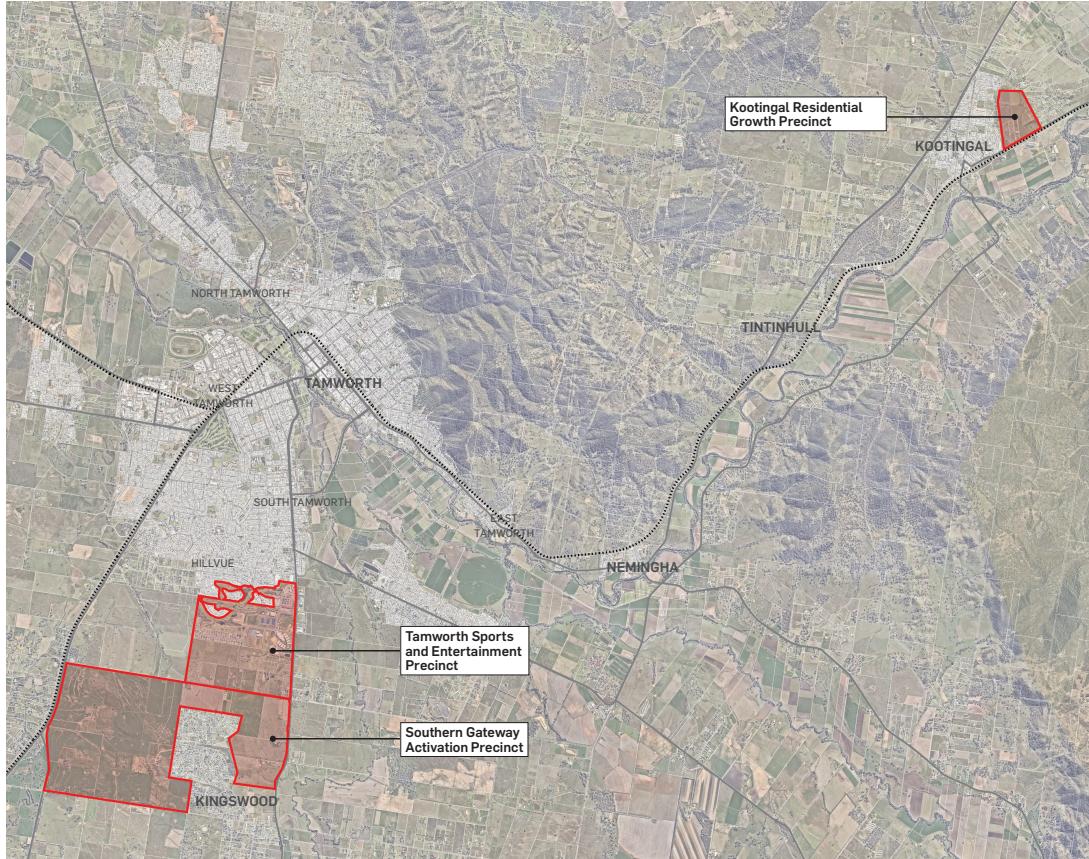
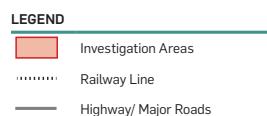
PRECINCTS LOCATION

Tamworth is the primary Regional City in the New England North West Region located approximately midway between Sydney and Brisbane on the New England Highway. The Tamworth Regional Local Government Area also comprises a number of regional communities, including Kootingal. Tamworth is well connected by road, rail and a regional airport.

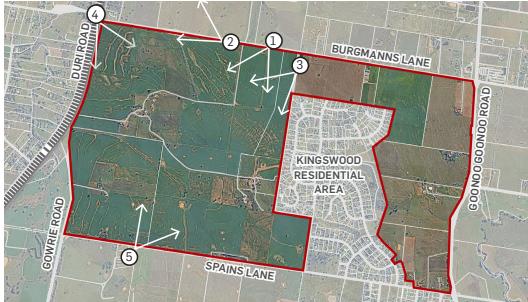
For the purposes of the Structure Plan, Council have identified three (3) investigation precinct, namely:

- Precinct 1: Southern Gateway Activation Precinct;
- Precinct 2: Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct; and
- Precinct 3: Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct.

The Southern Gateway Activation Precinct, Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct are located to the south of Tamworth CBD and the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct is located to the east of the Kootingal urban area.



SOUTHERN GATEWAY ACTIVATION PRECINCT



The Southern Gateway Activation Precinct is located on the southern fringe of Tamworth and has a combined area of approximately 757ha.

The precinct is legally described as:

- Part Lot 1 DP 755321
- Lot 102 DP 1288693
- Lot 101 DP 1288693
- Lot 12 DP 604603
- Lot 11 DP 604603
- Lot 2 DP 246292
- Lot 3 DP 246292
- Lot 11 DP 809304
- Lot 10 DP 809304
- Lot 62 DP 800714
- Lots 6100 and 6101 DP 1059416

It is bound by:

- Burgmanns Lane to the north;
- New England Highway to the east along with existing rural residential Kingswood Estate;
- Spains Lane to the south; and
- Duri Road and Gowrie Road to the west.

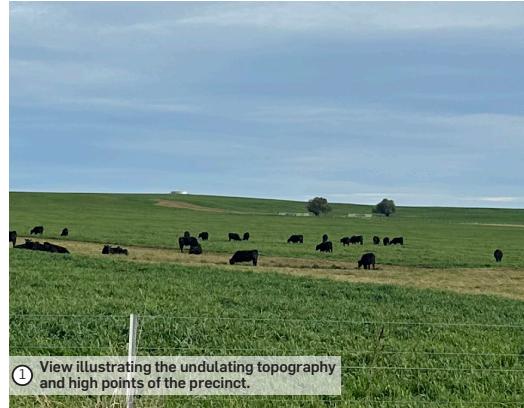
The precinct is an irregular shape with dimensions of 2,200m x 2,385m for the main part of the precinct and 1,980m x 1,800m for the north-east dogleg corner. The precinct wraps around the existing Kingswood residential estate.

The precinct contains varying topography with undulating hills in the western portion and gentle slopes in the eastern portion.

Current Use

The precinct currently utilised for cropping and livestock grazing and accommodates seven (7) residential dwellings spread across multiple lots.

4 Tamworth Regional Structure Plan Report



② View of Burgmanns Lane and the Arcadia development precinct to the north.



③ View from Burgmanns Lane looking southwest.



④ Intersection of Burgmanns Lane and Duri Road.



⑤ View from Spains Lane looking towards the precinct.

KOOTINGAL RESIDENTIAL GROWTH PRECINCT



The Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct has a combined area of approximately 54ha and is located to the west of the existing urban area.

The precinct is legally described as:

- Lot 1 DP 613897
- Lot 1 DP 1157800
- Lot A, 75 DP 375475
- Lot B, 75 DP 375475
- Lot C, 75 DP 375475

It is bound by:

- Limbri Road to the south;
- An existing rural residential estate to the east;
- State Heritage listed Moonby House to the north; and
- The existing Kootingal urban area to the west.

The precinct dimensions are 645m x 910m.

The precinct is situated on sloped land with intermediate high-points falling away from the north-east corner from RL470 to RL425.

Current Use

The precinct is currently utilised for rural residential living and hobby farming. It accommodates four (4) residential dwellings and associated infrastructure spread across four lots.



① View looking towards the precinct when viewed from Limbri Road.
Source: Google Street View



② State Heritage item - Moonby House located at the northern boundary.



③ View from the northern boundary looking towards the southwest.



④ View from the western boundary looking towards the east.

TAMWORTH SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT



The Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct occupies a combined area of approximately 341ha and is located to the south of the Tamworth Central Business District (CBD).

It is bound by:

- Existing Tamworth urban area to the north;
- Goonoo Goonoo Road to the east;
- Burgmanns Lane to the south; and
- Future Arcadia residential estate to the west.

The precinct comprises undulating topography which varies across the precinct.

Current Use

The precinct currently accommodates the Northern Inland Sporting Centre of Excellence (NICE), Australian Equine Livestock Events Centre (AELEC), Tamworth Regional Convention Conference Centre (TRECC), Longyard Golf Course, Longyard Commercial Centre and a mixture of large lot and urban residential areas.



① Tamworth Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre (TRECC).



② View of the transmission line running along the western boundary.



③ Sports Precinct and Sports Dome.



④ Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC).



⑤ View looking towards the existing 4,000m2 large residential lots.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Urbis has undertaken the review of the relevant strategic documents that set out the existing and future context for the development of Tamworth and the surrounds. This section details out the summary of the key planning directions for the three (3) precincts as set out in the identified relevant documents.



NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST REGIONAL PLAN 2041

The New England North West Regional Plan 2041 (Regional Plan 2041) sets a 20-year strategic land use planning framework for the region, aiming to provide a framework for decision-making that balances social, economic, and environmental objectives, guides detailed land use plans, development proposals, and infrastructure funding decisions.

The Regional Plan 2041 sets out 22 objectives and a series of supporting strategies and actions to guide the delivery of the plan's vision for "healthy and thriving communities, supported by a vibrant and dynamic economy that builds on the region's strengths."

The Regional Plan 2041 identifies structure plans should be prepared for new employment and housing growth areas to guide new development and infrastructure. Tamworth is expected to be home to 36.4% of the New England North West region residents by 2041. Therefore, a mix of housing types, well-planned infill, greenfield and rural residential developments will be essential.

The relevant Objectives of the Regional Plan 2041 include:

- Objective 1 – Coordinate land use planning for future growth, community need and regional economic development (Strategy 1.1.2,1.3)
- Objective 8 – Adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience (Strategy 8.3)
- Objective 11 – Sustainably manage and conserve water resources (Strategy 11.1)
- Objective 12 – Protect regional biodiversity and areas of high environmental value (Strategy 12.7)
- Objective 13 – Provide well located housing options to meet demand (Strategy 13.3)
- Objective 18 – Public spaces and green infrastructure support connected inclusive and healthy communities (Strategy 18.4);
- Objective 20 – Improve state and regional freight connectivity (Strategy 20.1)
- Objective 21 – Improve active and public transport networks (Strategy 21.1)

Tamworth Regional Council's priorities for the LGA, which are relevant, include promoting development that contributes to the unique character of Kootingal and expand tourism opportunities (sports and events).

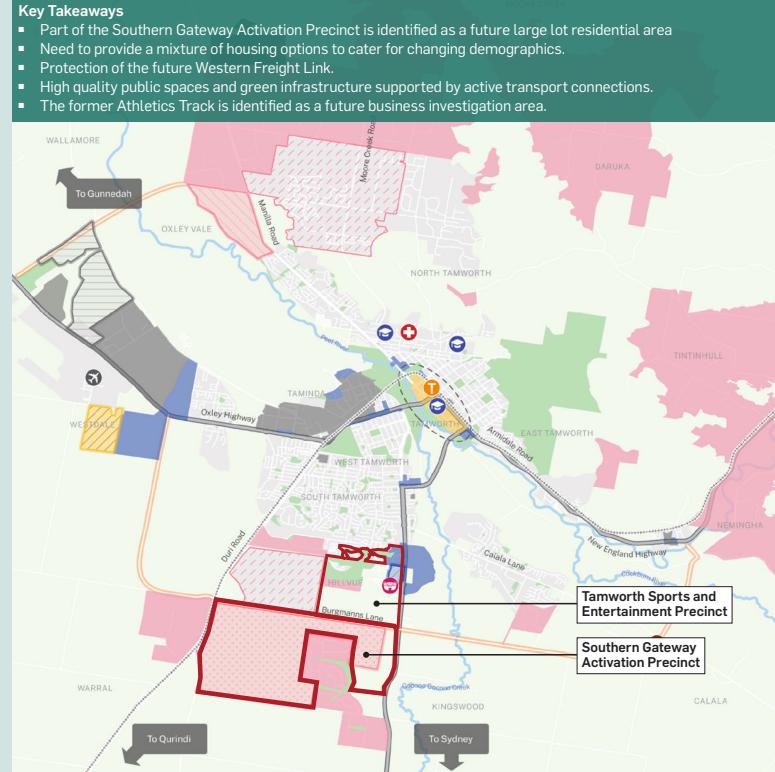


Figure 2 Local government narrative (Source: New England North West Regional Plan 2041)



BLUEPRINT 100: PART ONE

Published in May 2020, *Blueprint 100* is a series of plans and strategies developed to guide the Tamworth region towards its vision of a prosperous economy and high living standards with a population of 100,000 people.

Blueprint 100: Part One is an overarching policy that ties together all of Council's strategies and policies to guide the development of the Tamworth Regional LGA to 2041. This includes considering both 'business as usual' scenarios with a population of 80,000 by 2041 and the potential to stimulate growth to 100,000 population by 2041.

Blueprint 100: Part One identifies eight Priority Themes to support the realisation of the vision:

- Deliver durable infrastructure including raw water
- Facilitate smart growth and housing choices
- Create a prosperous region
- Build resilient communities
- Connect our region and its citizens
- Design with nature
- Celebrate our culture and heritage
- Strengthen our proud identity

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Parts of the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct and Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct are identified as preferred growth areas.
- Develop a Longyard town centre master plan which considers future housing growth, active transports, former Athletic Track and supporting development of an aquatic centre and equine uses adjoining the precinct (Actions 2.4.1 and 3.9.1 and Priority 5.5).
- Strengthen Tamworth's tourism opportunities and leverage off the Tamworth Country Music Festival (Priority 3.10 and Action 3.13.1).
- Support the Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC) by enabling equine activities in close proximity to the precinct (Action 3.11.1).
- Ensure future developments do not restrict the future development of the future Western Freight Link (Burgmanns Lane) (Action 5.2.2).



BLUEPRINT 100: PART 2 LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT 2020

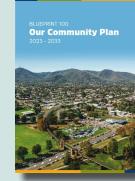
Blueprint 100: Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (Blueprint 100: Part 2 - LSPS 2020) gives effect to the *Regional Plan 2041*, implementing priorities and actions at a more local level in the Tamworth region. This is the primary strategic planning document for the next 20 years. It guides the character of our centres and neighbourhoods into the future.

Blueprint 100: Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (Blueprint 100: Part 2 - LSPS 2020) is set out under the same Priority Themes as *Blueprint 100: Part One*. The structure plans align with the *Blueprint 100: Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (Blueprint 100: Part 2 - LSPS 2020)* in consideration of the following:

- Part of the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct is identified as a preferred residential growth area;
- Develop a master plan for the overall Longyard area and identify land and zoning in order to facilitate businesses that support the equine activities, including veterinary services, at AELEC (Action PR5);
- Finalisation of precinct plan to take in the Northern Inland Sporting Centre of Excellence (NICSE) and AELEC including master plan of the former athletics track to promote tourism and underpin revised planning controls for the locality (Action RC6 and Action 2.4.1 of *Blueprint 100: Part One*);
- Identify and support growth in towns (Kootingal) by review of planning provisions (Action RC2);
- Work in partnership with Transport for NSW to prepare an integrated transport and land use plan that includes a review of the bus network and enhances the cycle network (Action CRC3);
- Require new greenfield areas to incorporate urban design principles and integrate blue/green corridors (Actions DN1 and DN5);
- Analysis of supply and demand for large lot residential identifies a shortfall of 4000m² lots (195 lots approx). The prospective expansion of the Kingswood Estate north to Burgmanns Lane is identified as a preferred location for additional 4000m² lots to assist in meeting ongoing market demand.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Part of the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct is identified as a future large lot residential area to meet the expected shortfall of 4000m² lots.
- Need to provide a mixture of housing options to cater for changing demographics.
- Protection of the future Western Freight Link.
- Facilitate business in the Longyard area that supports Australian Equine Livestock Events Centre (AELEC).
- Support growth in Kootingal.



BLUEPRINT 100: OUR COMMUNITY PLAN 2023-2033

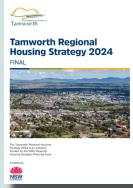
The Community Plan is used by council to plan the detailed actions needed to provide the services of the future. It is also used to advocate on behalf of the community at other levels of government.

Consistent with the wider *Blueprint 100* documents, the Community Plan lists nine strategic focus areas. The relevant Focus Areas of the Community Plan include:

- Focus Area 1 - Water security
- Focus Area 2 - A liveable built environment
- Focus Area 3 - Prosperity and innovation
- Focus Area 5 - Connect our region and its citizens
- Focus Area 6 - Working with and protecting our environment
- Focus Area 7 - Celebrate our cultures and heritage

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Encourage the development of diverse housing options.
- A more diverse and dense Longyard Local Centre.
- Manage growth by updating the strategic land use plans and the LEP, and ensure developments meet these requirements.
- Protection of the future Western Freight Link.
- Leverage the Country Music Festival and grow our signature, bespoke and business events.
- Activate our assets and precincts to maximise the potential for equine, sport, education and visitor economy.
- Ensure development controls and zoning protect the heritage significance of items and conservation areas.



TAMWORTH REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2024

The Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024 (TRHS 2024) sets Council's vision for the future of land use and housing development in the Tamworth Regional LGA, setting a framework for where housing can be delivered to ensure that the needs of the community can be met now and in the future.

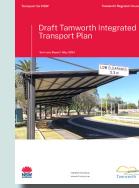
The TRHS 2024 identifies that the population of the Tamworth Regional LGA will increase from approximately 65,000 to 80,000 by 2041. The projections suggest that between 3,827 and 7,374 additional dwellings will be required in the Tamworth Regional LGA over the next 20 years. This includes providing a mixture of lot sizes and housing typologies to support the changing demographics of the region. The TRHS 2024 sets out that while the Tamworth Regional LGA has capacity under the existing urban land use planning controls to meet this demand, it is largely located around Tamworth with opportunity to provide additional housing in rural communities.

The TRHS 2024 sets out five (5) priorities to guide the future of housing in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

- Priority 1 – Provide for sustainable growth that is supported by infrastructure;
- Priority 2 – Increasing diversity and choice in housing;
- Priority 3 – Improve housing affordability and reduce housing cost;
- Priority 4 – Facilitate liveable communities;
- Priority 5 – Promote rural communities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The provision of alternative densities and smaller minimum lot sizes in greenfield and infill locations will encourage a wider range of housing choice.
- Upfront planning to ensure urban design, precinct character and infrastructure requirements are met.
- Greenfield sites provide adequate green infrastructure including parks, open space and street trees to create healthy and liveable environments and to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.
- The most prevalent household size in Tamworth is a two-person household (34.7%), however the predominant housing stock is 3-4 bedroom detached dwellings (90%).
- Identify opportunities for Council to lead actions to unlock potential land supply through preparation of structure plans in conjunction with landowners (Action 1.2).
- The Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct is identified as a future residential investigation area.
- The TRHS 2024 identifies sufficient capacity under existing urban land use planning controls to meet demand for the next 23 years.



TAMWORTH INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PLAN 2024

The Tamworth Integrated Transport Plan 2024 (ITIP 2024) aims to enhance the local transport network, aligning with Tamworth Regional Council's Blueprint 100 and Transport for NSW's Future Transport Strategy. It identifies priority projects to guide investment to meet the current and future transport needs of the community and visitors.

The vision is to strengthen the partnership between Transport for NSW and Council to enhance the transport network. This collaboration aims to support and drive key outcomes from the Plan, ensuring a financially sustainable and well-planned transport system. Given the high costs of large-scale infrastructure, the focus will be on optimising current assets to meet the needs of a growing population and increasing road usage.

The relevant priorities and priority projects identified include:

- Precinct improvements for the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct
- Western freight link to reduce travel times in urban areas and exploring alternate freight routes.
- Kootingal to Moonbi walking and cycling connection

KEY TAKEAWAY

- Burgmanns Lane will be used for the alignment of the proposed Western Freight Link, therefore, there will be limited access and intersections opportunities.

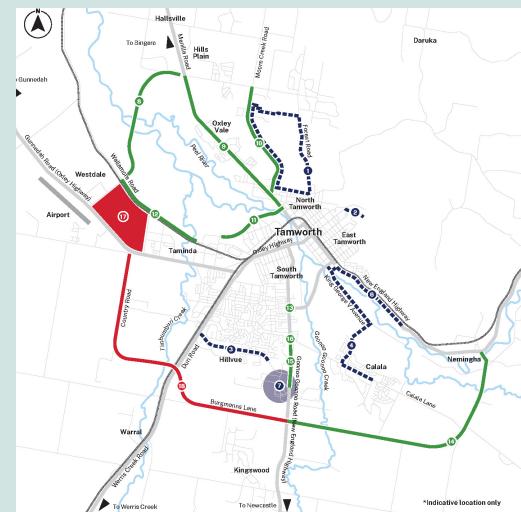


Figure 3 Location of Projects (Source: Tamworth Integrated Transport Plan)

Road projects

1. Hills Plains Walking and Cycling Loop
2. Tamworth Regional Skywalk
3. Warwick Road Walking and Cycling Connection
4. Calela to CBD Walking and Cycling Connection
5. Kootingal to Moonbi Walking and Cycling Connection
6. East Tamworth to CBD Walking and Cycling Connection
7. Tamworth Sports & Entertainment Precinct Transport Improvements
8. Northern Peel River Crossing
9. Manilla Road Upgrade
10. Moore Creek Road and Tribe Street Improvements
11. Jewry Street Upgrade
12. Wallamore Road Upgrade
13. Scott Road and Goonoo Goonoo Road Intersection Upgrade
14. Southern Access Route
15. Goonoo Goonoo Road Upgrade
16. Calela Lane and Goonoo Goonoo Road Intersection

Freight projects

17. Tamworth Global Gateway Park and Heavy Vehicle Rest Area
18. Western Freight Link

WORKSHOPS

The structure plan workshop is a critical step in the preparation of the structure plan and encourages collaboration and development of new ideas to ensure a holistic review is undertaken. The workshop involved collaboration between Council, Government agencies and landowners to gather insights, preferences, and aspirations from key stakeholders.

The ultimate goal of the workshop is to collaborate from the outset, ensuring that key stakeholders and their interests are respected and incorporated. This collaborative approach not only fosters trust and cooperation but also enhances the overall sustainability and success of the project.

SOUTHERN GATEWAY ACTIVATION PRECINCT

The key issues discussed during the process include:

- Staging of the development to enable larger lots to come online earlier and to support the cost for constructing the intersection onto Burgmanns Lane.
- Introduction of an active transport link in conjunction with landscaping treatment parallel to Burgmanns Lane to provide buffer.
- Rationalise the number of connections points onto Burgmanns Lane to protect the future Western Freight Link.
- Treatment of the interface of the transition zone between Stages 1 and 2.
- Re-location of the Civic Heart to avoid the strong winds and western sun.
- Inclusion of an additional connection point onto Burgmanns Lane further west of the Arcadia Estate access point.
- The proposed new quarry located in south-east corner of stage 2 is anticipated to operate for between 20 to 30 years. If the quarry is approved, it is not anticipated to significantly impact the long term vision for stage 2.
- Reduction of the number of on-site stormwater basins by potentially discharging directly into Timbumburi Creek.
- Provision of an active transport link into the Arcadia Estate.
- Water servicing constraints for lots above 431m contour.
- Inclusion of a large central park similar to Anzac Park in East Tamworth.
- Rationalise road layout to maximise solar access for future dwellings.
- The potential method for active transport connection across Burgmanns Lane.

KOOTINGAL RESIDENTIAL GROWTH PRECINCT

The key issues discussed during the process include:

- Limited access along Limbri Road, preferably with only one intersection.
- Retention and protection the vegetation cluster in the precinct.
- Investigation provision of two (2) 2,000sqm parks rather than just one big central park.
- Provision of at least two (2) storm water detention basins along the western boundary.
- Exploring opportunities to co-locate the open space with the detention basins.
- Active transport connections back into the Kootingal urban area.
- Potential for a future road connection and/or active transport link via Carol Drive.
- Significant upgrades to the Kootingal Sewer Treatment Plant to enable the development.

TAMWORTH SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT

The key issues discussed during the process include:

- Reinforce the need for an improved active transport network and an integrated transport hub within the precinct.
- Provision for medium density housing in the western portion of the Longyard Golf Course.
- Provision for a new clubhouse and tourist and visitor accommodation in the eastern portion of the Longyard Golf Course.
- The need for pedestrian activation, a high street, short-term accommodation and hotels.
- Agreement on the former athletics track being the site best placed for future land uses which support the AELEC.
- Potential for a stadium on the former athletics site. This use may conflict with AELEC and also lack of parking facilities to support a stadium.
- Investigation of uses and activities that will support and promote the growth of AELEC and the sports precinct.
- Ensure the adjoining land uses don't restrict the operation of AELEC.
- Create an indicative concept layout for the former athletics track which supports the AELEC and the objectives of the SP3 Tourist zone.
- Construct a road within Cartwheel Way to link Longyard Drive and Greg Norman Drive to alleviate traffic congestion of the road network.



Figure 4 Location Of Projects (Source: Tamworth Integrated Transport Plan)

KEY OUTCOMES

These structure plans were prepared to ensure the future housing needs are met as well as to enhance the tourism and recreation facilities of the region. The following section summarises the key outcomes.



HOUSING FOR EVERYONE

The Tamworth region has the potential to offer a diverse range of new homes, from more affordable, smaller-sized dwellings to spacious lifestyle homes on large blocks. The precincts are ideally situated to provide a mixture of housing types within proximity to Tamworth and Kootingal.



BEST PRACTICE DESIGN

Future residential areas have the potential to set a benchmark for quality neighbourhood design. The structure plans are crafted to respect the topography, key view corridors, surrounding character and natural landscape.

Local character will be further defined through thoughtfully designed streetscapes and high-quality architectural design.



ENHANCE SPORTS AND TOURISM

Support Tamworth's regional sporting facilities and entertainment venues by facilitating complementary land uses such as short-term accommodation, retail spaces, cafés, and food and beverage outlets. This initiative aims to boost local tourism, provide high-quality recreational facilities, and create a vibrant precinct.



SUPPORT AELEC

Support the AELEC by ensuring surrounding land uses are compatible and don't restrict the facility's operational integrity and safety, therefore maintaining its status as a premier venue for equine and livestock events.



IMPROVE PUBLIC DOMAIN

The three precincts provide opportunity to create new recreational open spaces including local parks, a hill-top and district park, vegetated blue -green corridors and tree retention. This will be seamlessly integrated into the overall open space network, allowing the community to engage with nature and enjoy green amenities.



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability initiatives can be incorporated in all three precincts to create a healthier and cooler community by prioritising green spaces, riparian corridors and biodiversity.



SOUTHERN GATEWAY ACTIVATION PRECINCT



VISION

The vision for the precinct is to cater for the future urban growth of Tamworth through a vibrant, inclusive community with diverse housing options, seamlessly integrated with the natural environment and surrounding areas including the adjoining Arcadia and Kingswood Residential Estates.

At the heart of this precinct will be a central Civic Hub featuring commercial spaces, community infrastructure, and open areas to meet the needs of future residents. In the short term, 4,000m² lots will be delivered in response to the existing urban fabric. Over the long term, lots ranging from 450m² to 2,000m² will be delivered to accommodate the varying housing needs of the future residents.

The plan prioritises active transport, with interconnected walking and cycling paths to promote a healthy, sustainable lifestyle. The vision aims to support a sustainable urban growth for Tamworth that will create a thriving and connected community.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 1 – Coordinate land use planning for future growth, community need and regional economic development (Strategy 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3);
- Objective 8 – Adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience (Strategy 8.3);
- Objective 12 – Protect regional biodiversity and areas of high environmental value (Strategy 12.1);
- Objective 13 – Provide well located housing options to meet demand (Strategy 13.2 and 13.3);
- Objective 18 – Public spaces and green infrastructure support connected, inclusive and healthy communities (Strategy 18.1);
- Objective 20 – Improve state and regional freight connectivity (Strategy 20.1); and
- Objective 21 – Improve active and public transport networks (Strategy 21.1).
- Tamworth Local Government Narratives identifies this precinct for future residential investigation.

Blueprint 100: Part One

- Priority Initiative 2.2 – Better manage rural residential development (Action 2.2.1 and 2.2.1);
- Planning Priority 2.6 – More diverse housing choices (Action 2.6.3);
- Priority Initiative 5.2 – More efficient road network (Action 5.2.2); and
- Priority Initiative 5.5 – Promote walking and cycling (Action 5.5.1).

Blueprint 100: Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (Blueprint 100: Part 2 - LSPS 2020)

- Planning Priority 1 – Facilitate smart growth and housing choices (Action SG5);
- Planning Priority 2 – Create a prosperous region (Action PR8);
- Planning Priority 4 – Connect our regions and its citizens;
- Planning Priority 5 – Design with nature (Action DN5); and
- Planning Priority 7 – Deliver durable infrastructure (Action DD2).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 1 – Provide for sustainable growth that is supported by infrastructure (Action 1.2); and
- Priority 2.2 – Encourage a diverse range of housing.

UNDERSTANDING PLACE

The local place characteristics of the precinct are defined by five (5) key elements including: surrounding land use zones, access and movement, edge interface, open space and flooding.

SURROUNDING LAND USE ZONES



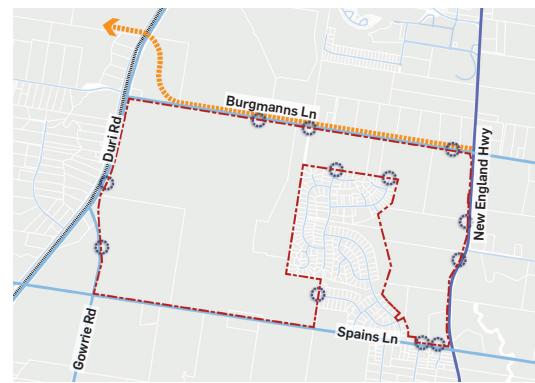
LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

SURROUNDING LAND USE ZONES

R1 - General Residential Zone
R2 - Low Density Residential Zone
R5 - Large Lot Residential Zone
RU4 - Primary Production Small Lots Zone
RE2 - Private Recreation Zone (Longyard Golf Course)
SP3 - Tourist (Tamworth Regional Sports and Entertainment Precinct)
E1 - Local Centre
E3 - Productivity Support

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT



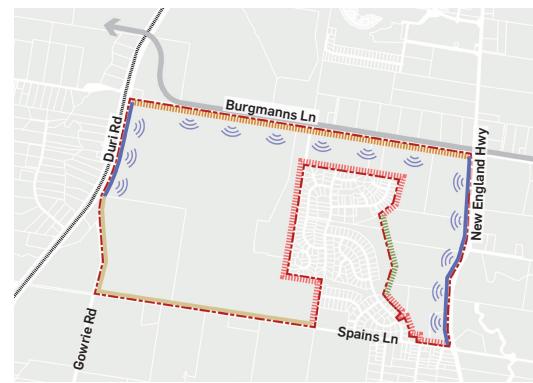
LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

Railway
Future Western Freight Link
Burgmanns Lane runs along the northern boundary of the precinct and is identified as the future Western Freight Link.
Major Road
New England Highway runs along the eastern boundary of the precinct.
Existing Local and Regional Roads
Duri Road and Gowrie Road runs along the western boundary. Spains Lane runs along the southern boundary. Burgmanns Lane runs along the northern boundary.
Existing Access to the Precinct
Multiple driveways are located off the New England Highway, Burgmanns Lane, Duri Road and Gowrie Road.

EDGE INTERFACE



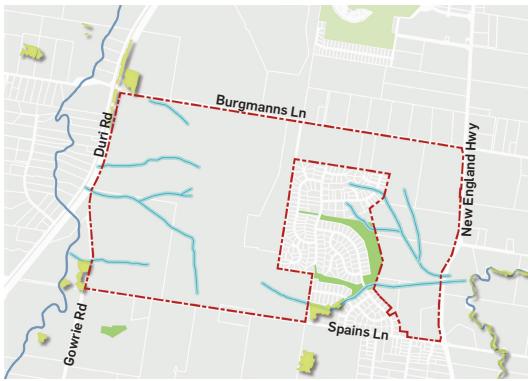
LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

EDGE INTERFACE

Railway
Future Western Freight Link
Interface with Future Western Freight Link
Interface with Highway / Railway
Interface with Residential Lots
Interface with Drainage Reserve (Restricted Access)
Interface with Rural Land
Interface with Transport Corridors
Noise and air pollution impact from the interfaces with highway / railway / freight line should be considered.

OPEN SPACE



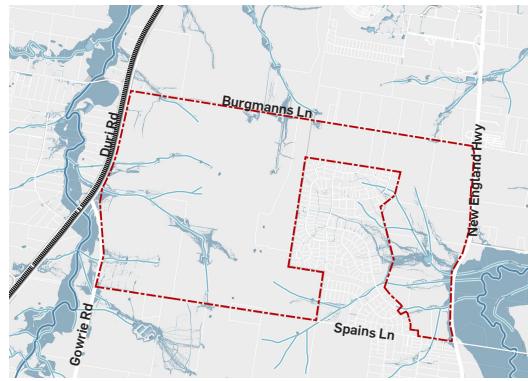
LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

OPEN SPACE AND BIODIVERSITY

- Existing Plant Communities
- Existing Open Space
- Golf Course
- Creeks
- Ephemeral Drainage Line

FLOODING



LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

FLOODING

- Creeks
- Ephemeral Drainage Line
- Flooding Affected Area
Indicative extent of flood affected area along the creeks in the low elevation area.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Integrate with the existing large lot residential area (Kingswood Estate)
- Integrate and enhance the ephemeral drainage lines within future development.
- Minimise access points onto Burgmanns Lane (Future Western Freight Link).
- Provide connections to Gowrie Road, Spains Lane and Duri Road.
- Avoid connections onto the New England Highway.
- Incorporate landscape buffers along Burgmanns Lane and New England Highway.
- Exclude the developable areas from the flood-affected zone.

FUTURE TECHNICAL STUDIES

This structure plan has been informed by a high-level assessment of existing characteristics within each precinct. To progress to the next stage, a series of technical studies will be required to validate the feasibility of future developments, identify other constraints, and shape effective management strategies. These studies include, but are not limited to:

- Flood and Water Management Study
- Traffic, Transport and Access Impact Study
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR)
- Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
- Social Impact Assessment
- Infrastructure and Utilities Plan
- Bushfire Assessment
- Ecological Assessment
- Crime Risk Assessment (CPTED)

TOPOGRAPHY

The precinct features a diverse and dynamic topography. The landscape is characterised by gentle rolling hills, providing a mix of elevated and low-lying areas. This varied terrain offers opportunities for scenic views and diverse housing options, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the community.

Elevated areas and ridgelines offer panoramic views of the surrounding countryside and the city of Tamworth. These high points are ideal for landmark developments, such as open space, which can serve as community focal points and recreational destinations.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Optimise the distant views to the hills from the high points.
- Create view corridors from the high points to low points through street and open space orientation.
- Leverage the ridgelines within the precinct for primary street corridors.
- Optimise the developable area within the flatter areas and include larger lots development within the areas of steep slopes.

LEGEND (Refer to Page 21)

- Precinct Boundary
- Surrounding Cadastre
- Existing Road Network
- View Corridors

ELEVATION (M)



TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDFORM

- 1m/10m Contours

The precinct is characterised by an undulating topography that varies in RL by over 65m.

Local High Points

- Local high points are located along the ridgelines that varies in RL 423-465m.
- Highest point situated in the mid-south of the precinct.

Local Low Points

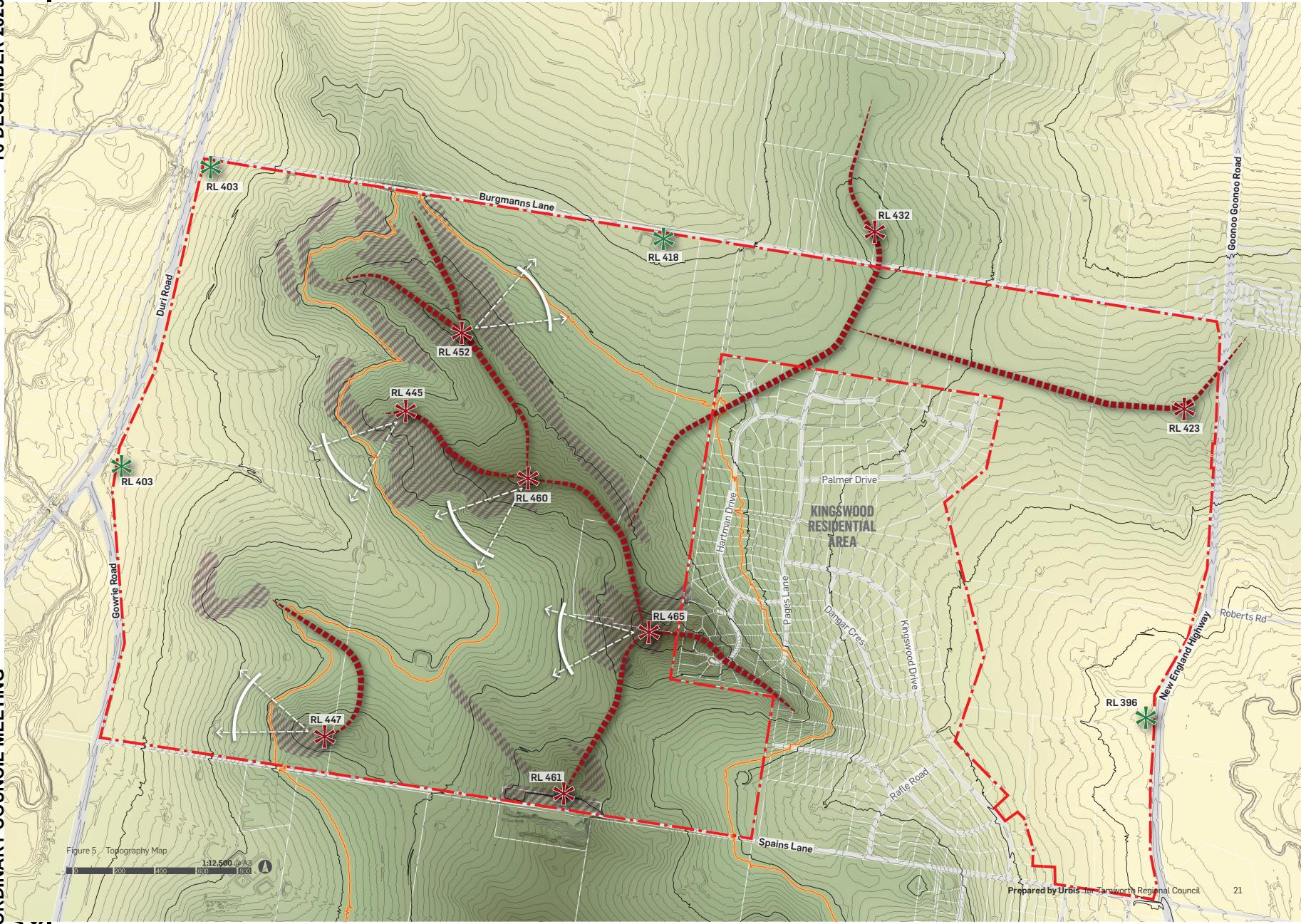
- Local low points are located along the precinct boundary in the west, north, and southeast that varies in RL 396-418m.
- Lowest point situated in the southern-east corner of the precinct.

Ridgeline

One main ridgeline runs north-south along the precinct's east, with one spur extending to the east and a few more extending to the west.

Indicative Steep Area (Slope > 10%)

Steep slopes within the precinct are predominantly situated in the northeast and south portion of the precinct, along the ridgelines and major high points.



IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

ARCADIA ESTATE

Situated on the southern side of Tamworth, Arcadia Estate is a master planned subdivision offering a range of housing options to cater to various lifestyles and family requirements.

Arcadia Estate will accommodate up to 2,350 dwellings and include a local centre.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Opportunity to expand on the urban design principles established within Arcadia Estate.
- Provide active transport linkage between the precinct and Arcadia Estate via Burkes Gully.
- Consolidate intersections on Burgmanns Lane such as locating SGAP and Arcadia Estate entrances opposite each other.

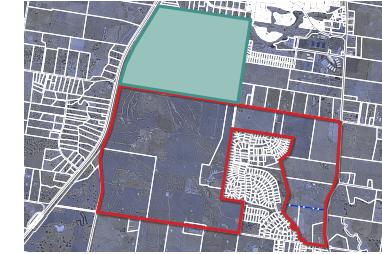


Figure 6 Key Map

KINGSWOOD ESTATE

The Kingswood Estate is an established rural residential estate located on the southern fringe of Tamworth. The Kingswood Estate offers a harmonious blend of contemporary housing and green spaces with a predominant lot size of 4,000m².

KEY INSIGHTS

- Opportunity to continue and respect the urban grain established within the Kingswood Estate.



Figure 9 Aerial Map of Kingswood Estate

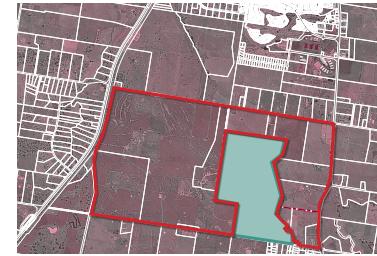


Figure 8 Key Map



Figure 10 Detached Residential Dwellings in Kingswood

CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A detailed precinct analysis was undertaken to understand the opportunities and constraints of the precinct and identify the potential challenges and unique features to inform the structure plan. The findings are summarised below and shown in Figure 11.

CONSTRAINTS

Future Western Freight Link and Restricted Access

Burgmanns Lane is proposed to form part of the future Western Freight Link. A key outcome is to restrict access points onto Burgmanns Lane to protect the future Western Freight Link. The establishment of the future Western Freight Link will require land dedication for road widening.

New England Highway

The New England Highway runs along the eastern boundary, which results in limited access and acoustic impacts along this boundary.

Interface to Existing Residential Developments

Carefully consider the interface to the existing residential developments to reduce and mitigate amenity impacts.

Servicing

This precinct will need significant infrastructure upgrades, including a new water reservoir, trunk mains, trunk gravity sewer mains, sewage pumping stations and rising mains.

OPPORTUNITIES

Staging

The size of the precinct facilitates the delivery of a staged structure plan which will comprise:

- Stage 1 – Large lot residential (4000m²) which will be serviced with reticulated water and On-site Sewerage Management System (OSSM); and
- Stage 2 – Full urban residential (450m² – 2000m²) and potential civic centre which will be serviced with reticulated water and sewer.

Connection to Surroundings

Extension of Pages Lane, Palmer Drive and Worboys Road in Kingswood as part of Stage 1

Active Transport

Utilise Burgmanns Lane, New England Highway and Yules Road to provide an active transport network that connects to the broader Tamworth active transport network.

Civic Heart

Stage 2 provides the opportunity to locate the civic heart / local centre that is centrally located within the medium density precinct and in proximity to the blue-green corridor.

Open Space

The flatter terrain towards the centre of Stage 2 proves to be an ideal location to locate the future open space.

Existing Tree Lines (Wind Breaks)

Utilise the wind breaks to orient roads and active transport networks which will assist in reducing wind resistance and potentially shield users from harsh weather conditions.

Blue/Green Corridors

Opportunity to enhance the natural landscape of the precinct with the provision of active transport and landscape features along this corridor.

LEGEND (Refer to Page 25)

 Precinct Boundary

 Roads

 Ephemeral Drainage Line

 Railway

 Ridgeline

 RL 431

CONSTRAINTS

 Flooding Zone

 Existing Quarry

 Residential Interface

 Future Western Freight Link

 Restricted Access Interface

 Constrained Access

OPPORTUNITIES

 Potential Staging Boundary

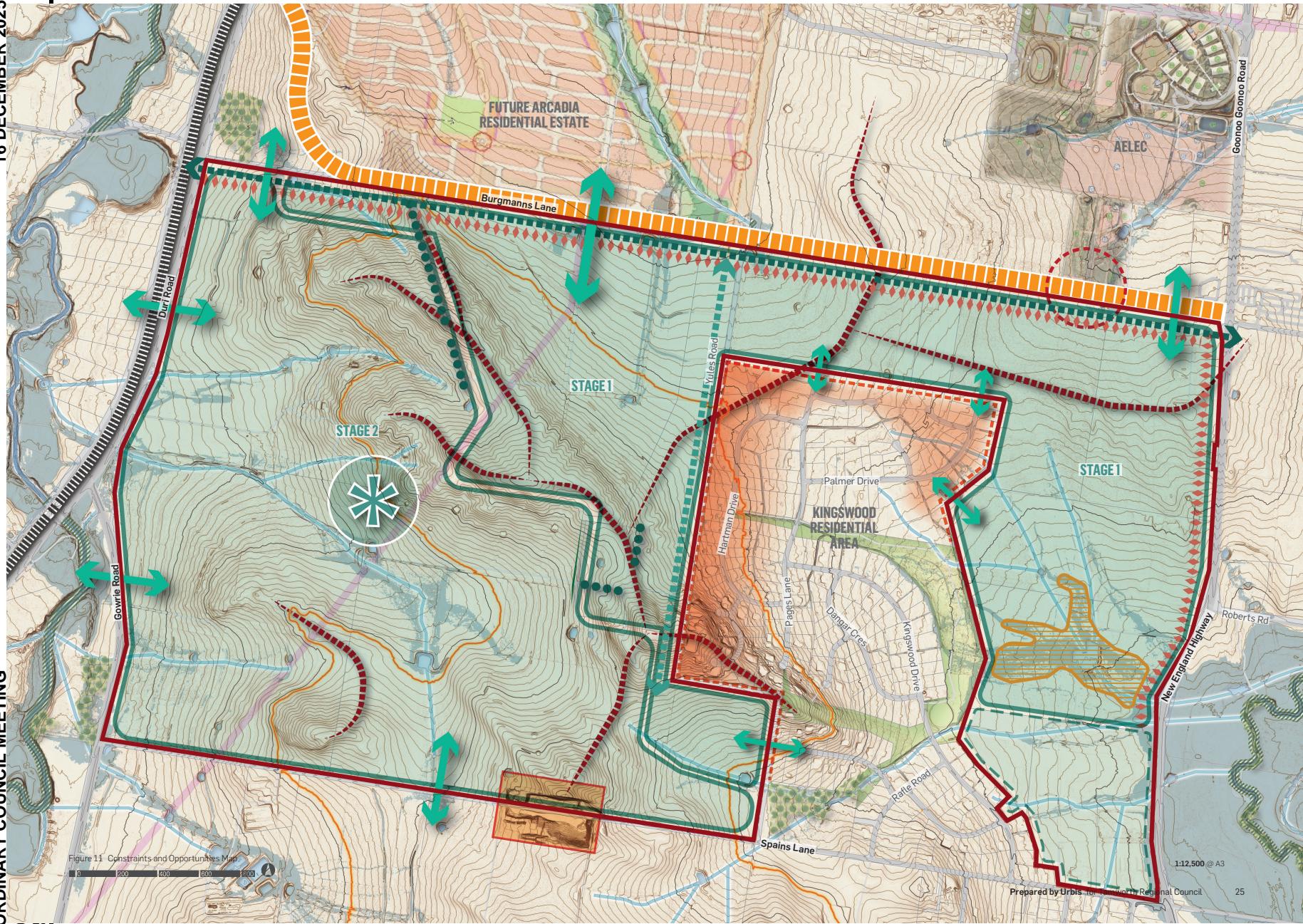
 Potential Future Investigation Areas

 Open Space Location

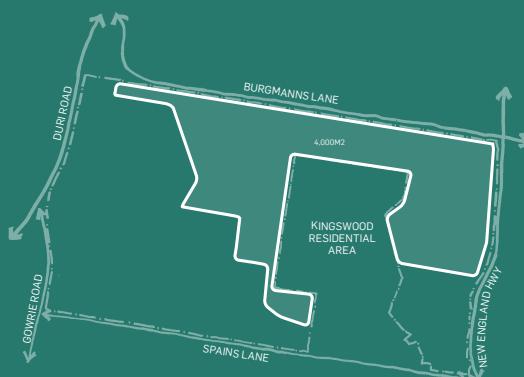
 Access Points

 Potential Active Transport Link

 Existing Tree Lines (Wind Breaks)



KEY CONSIDERATIONS



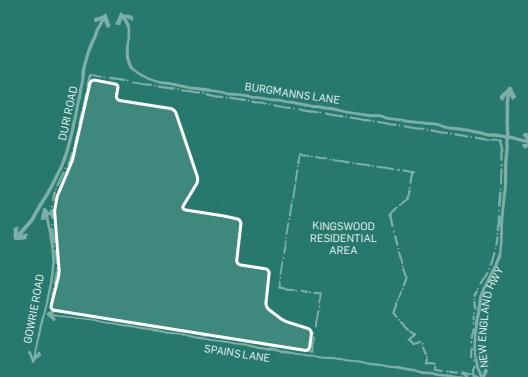
CHARACTER RESPONSE - STAGE 1

Respond to the existing Kingswood Estate by continuing the existing large lot residential lot size (minimum lot size of 4,000m²) along Burgmanns Lane to the ridgeline. Introduce transitional lots of 2,000m² to the north along Burgmanns Lane. This ensures the existing visual character will be maintained and provides a clear delineation between Stages 1 and 2.

This approach ensures continuity with the existing neighbourhood character, offering spacious living options while integrating seamlessly with the surrounding area. This approach respects the established lot size, fostering a cohesive community aesthetic and maintaining the area's appeal.

The provision for additional 4,000m² lots is consistent with Council's Blueprint Part 2: LSPS 2020 which identifies the area north of Kingswood Estate as a preferred location for additional 4,000m² lots.

The identified land parcel will form part of Stage 1 of the structure plan. It is expected Stage 1 will be coming online in the next 2-5 years.



FUTURE PROOF - STAGE 2

Future proof the remainder of the precinct to protect this strategically important piece of land to cater for the long term future growth of Tamworth. It is envisaged the identified land parcel will provide a mixture of lots sizes (450 m² - 2,000 m²) and housing typologies, multi-use green spaces, utilities, and active transport networks. This approach ensures the precinct can evolve with changing demographics and housing demands, maintaining a sustainable and resilient community in Tamworth.

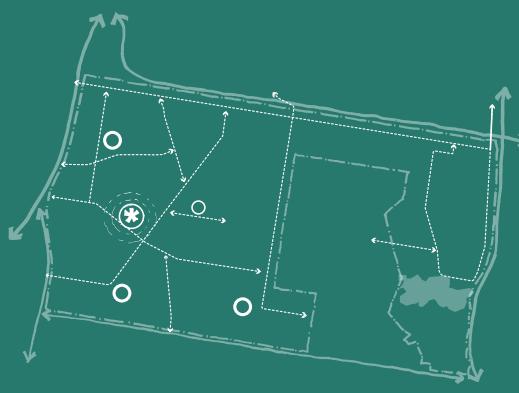
Council's Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024 identifies that Tamworth has capacity under the existing urban land use planning controls to meet demand for the next 23 years, therefore Stage 2 will be protected as the long term growth area to meet the future demand for urban residential land.



ROAD NETWORK

Develop an interconnected road network that enhances connectivity within the precinct and to the Kingswood residential area. A primary thoroughfare will serve as the backbone of the development connecting Burgmanns Lane to Gowrie Road.

This network will feature a hierarchy of roads, including a primary arterial road for efficient traffic flow and secondary streets that promote local access and circulation. The design will align with the natural blue/green corridor, incorporating green buffers and wind breakers through strategic tree planting, enhancing environmental sustainability and aesthetic appeal.

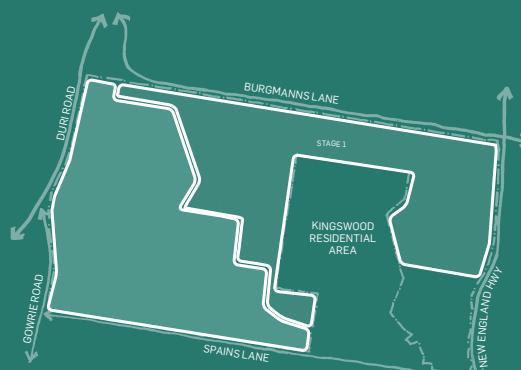


ACTIVE TRANSPORT AND OPEN SPACES

Provide an interconnected network of walking and cycling paths that seamlessly integrate with both the blue/green corridors and the established road network.

These paths will follow the natural contours of the waterways, providing scenic, shaded routes that encourage walking and cycling, while strategically intersecting with the main and secondary roads to ensure connectivity. This cohesive approach creates an attractive and functional environment. The proposed active transport network will connect to the broader Tamworth active transport network.

Create a diverse network of recreational areas integrated with the natural landscape to support the future residents of the precinct. Stage 2 includes a District Park, Neighbourhoods Parks and Local Park. All open space areas should be embellished to a standard consistent with Councils Open Space Management Strategy. Drainage reserve should also be utilised for passive recreation to provide linkages to the wider active transport network and open space.



HOUSING DIVERSITY

Provide a range of housing options to meet various needs and preferences of future residents, whilst addressing both immediate shortages and long-term demands. The structure plan responds by incorporating large lots (minimum lot size of 4,000m²) as part of Stage 1, and 2,000m² lots as part of Stage 1A along Burgmanns Lane. A variety of standard urban lots (450m² - 2,000m²) and medium-density development in Stage 2 to cater for long term future demand. This is consistent with *Blueprint 100: Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (Blueprint 100: Part 2 - LSPS 2020)* and the *Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024*.



FUTURE INVESTIGATION AREA

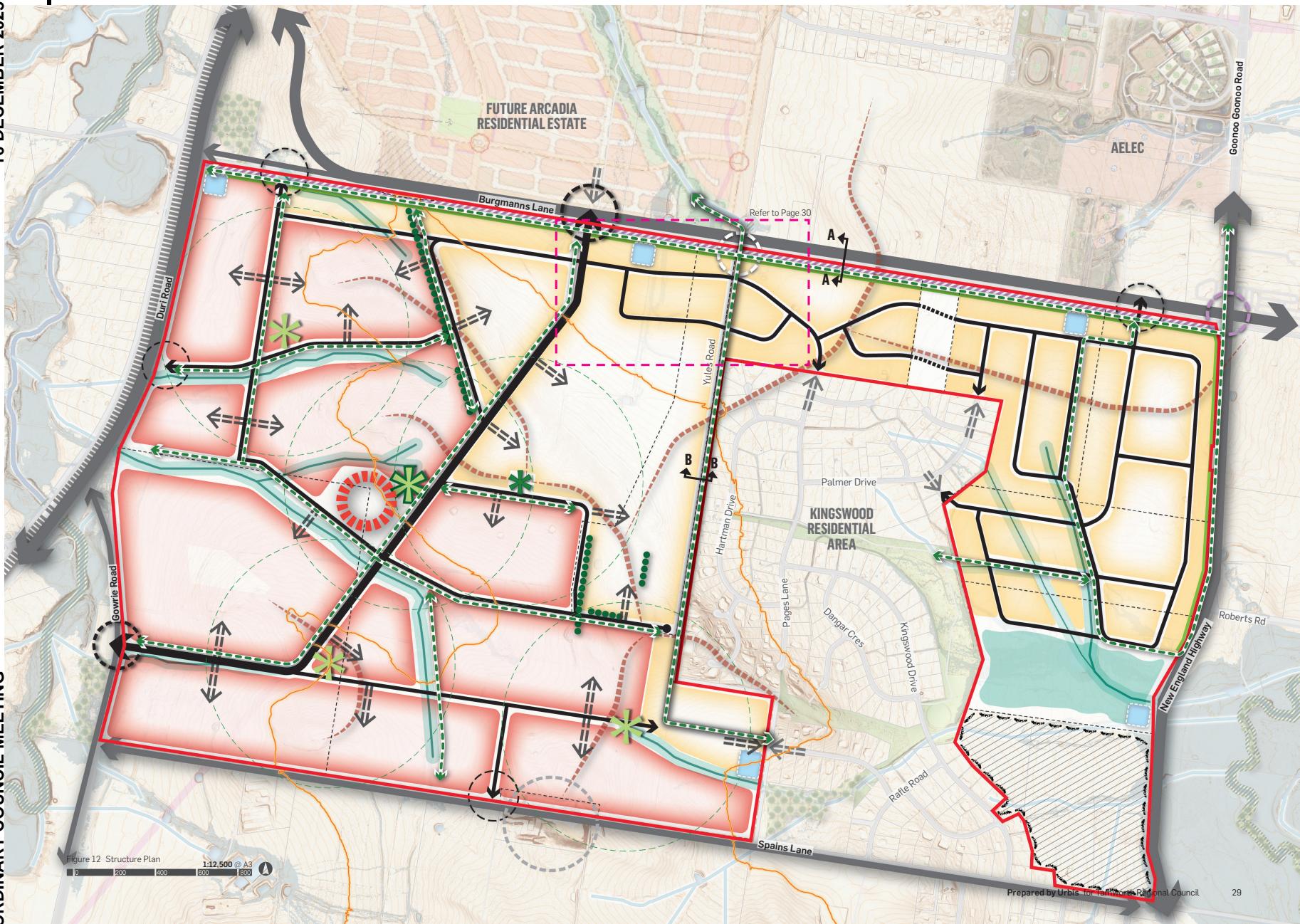
Identify the existing RU4 (Primary Production Small Lots) lots in the south-east corner of the precinct for future investigation to potentially accommodate both large lot residential (4,000m²) and tourism land uses. Key considerations include access, flooding and infrastructure service.

STRUCTURE PLAN

LEGEND (Refer to Page 29)

 Precinct Boundary
 Lot Boundaries
 Future Residential Area Stage 1 Large lots with a minimum lot size of 4,000m ² located adjacent to the existing Kingswood residential area.
 Future Residential Area Stage 2 Mixture of lot typology ranging from 450-2000m ² to provide housing choice and increase residential density for the future population.
 Potential Detention Basins A number of detention basins are distributed within the precinct to facilitate with efficient drainage and water flows.
 Drainage Reserve A secondary open space leveraging incorporating the flood prone zone with landscape elements and the use of native plant species.
 Future Investigation Area Investigate for future large lot residential (4000m ²) and tourism related land uses.
 Civic Heart Proposed civic heart along the Blue-Green corridor and main road with the potential to incorporate community infrastructure and retail / commercial uses i.e. small supermarket, restaurants and medical centre co-located with a local park.
 Proposed Intersections Three on Burgmanns Lane and one each on Duri Road, Gowrie Road and Spains Lane.
 Intersection Upgrade Long term upgrade of the New England Highway and Burgmanns Lane (Future Western Freight Link)

 Potential Temporary Access Proposed temporary access along Burgmanns Lane from Yules Road to facilitate development for the eastern lots.
 Existing Quarries Existing road side quarries located in the Spains Lane road reserve.
 400m Radius from Open Space Radius demonstrating the accessibility of open spaces within a 5 minute walking distance.
 Potential Hill Top Park A passive recreational park co-located with likely future water reservoir.
 District Park Co-location of a district park with the Civic heart to improve the amenity provisions for the community and should be embellished to a high standard and accommodate multi purpose lawn, playground, BBQ facilities, parking and footpaths.
 Neighbourhood Parks Indicative open space/park locations within Stage 2 of the structure plan, evenly distributed across the precinct, accommodating multi purpose lawn, playground, BBQ facilities and footpaths.
 20m Land Dedication for Western Freight Link Indicative open space/park locations within Stage 2 of the structure plan, evenly distributed across the precinct and include playground, parking and footpaths.
 Existing Tree Lines (Wind Breaks) Retain the existing trees and utilise it to guide road, active transport and lot alignments.
 Blue-Green Corridor Establish a Vegetated Blue-Green Zone along the creek corridors for passive recreation and to revitalise the existing corridors.
 Main Road Network A well-integrated and legible main road network to balance the movement and place outcomes of the precinct.
 Active Transport Shared pedestrian and cycleway routes along main roads, local roads, drainage reserve and green corridors, linking the neighbourhood to key surrounding areas. Also establish a link to the Arcadia precinct.
 Potential Secondary Road Connections Opportunity to introduce secondary internal roads to increase connectivity of the precinct.
 Ridgeline Alignment of roads and placement of open spaces in response to the existing topography.
 Acoustic Treatment along New England Highway 5-10m acoustic buffer from the main roads to reduce noise impacts to the future developments.
 Water Servicing Constraint 431 AHD Where elevations approach or goes beyond the existing level of the reservoir (431 AHD approx.), options will need to be investigated to service these lots for Council considerations as part of a future servicing strategy.



INDICATIVE STAGE 1 SUBDIVISION

The indicative subdivision plan illustrates the indicative road and lot layout for Stage 1 of the precinct. The lot pattern responds to the established character of Kingswood and are designed to be fairly regular in shape to maximise the usability and efficiency of the land.

LEGEND

- Precinct Boundary
- Lot Boundaries
- Indicative Sub-Division Layout

Indicative 4,000m² lot layout within Stage 1 to demonstrate layout options and lot distribution.
- Future Residential Area Stage 1

Large lots of 4,000m² located adjacent to the existing Kingswood residential area.
- Potential Detention Basins

A number of detention basins are distributed within the precinct to facilitate with efficient drainage and water flows.
- ↔ Active Transport

Shared pedestrian and cycleway routes along main roads, local roads, drainage reserve and green corridors, linking the neighbourhood to key surrounding areas. Also establish a link to the Arcadia precinct and wider Tamworth active transport network.

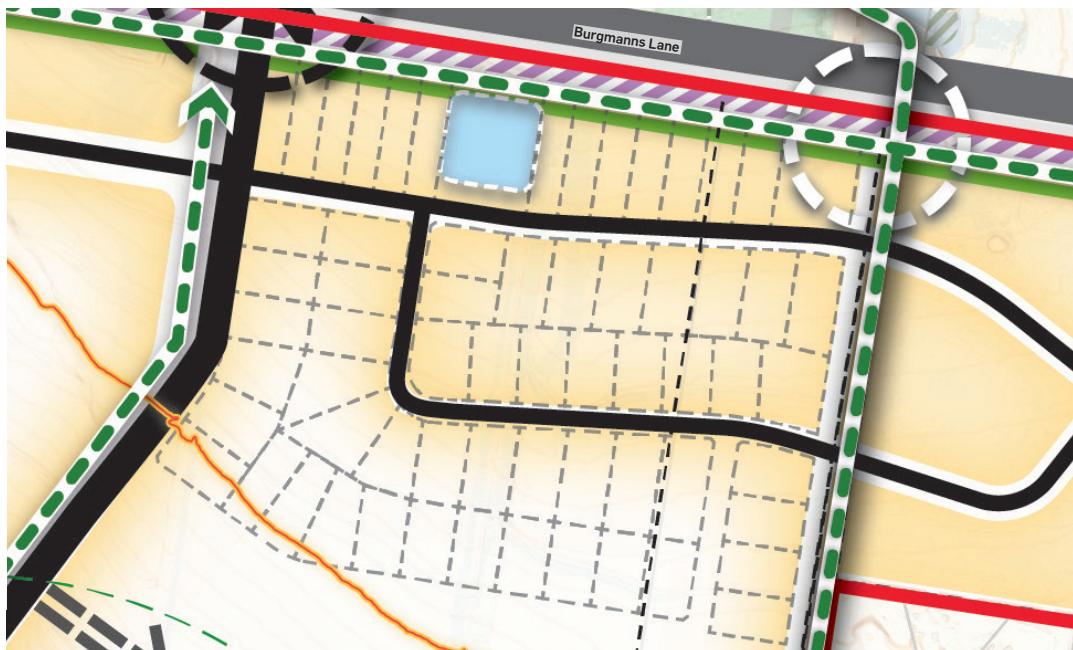


Figure 13 Indicative Subdivision Plan

INDICATIVE STREET SECTIONS

The indicative street sections below demonstrate the interface with Burgmanns Lane and Yules Road.

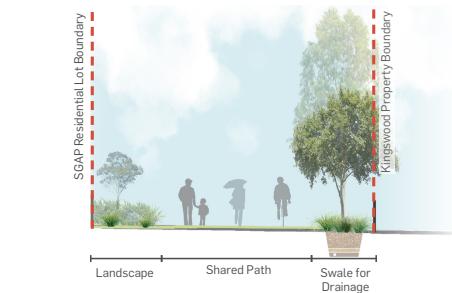
SECTION A-A

BURGMANNS LANE



SECTION B-B

YULES ROAD



INFRASTRUCTURE OUTCOMES

Transport

Additional roads will be required to accommodate population growth within the precinct. This structure plan identifies the approximate location for suitable future major road connections, based on future residential growth, as well as the impacts of this growth on the existing road network and traffic flows. The provision of additional road connections and upgrades to the existing network is critical to facilitating future development. The following road connections are proposed:

- Burgmanns Lane - Construction of two new intersections on Burgmanns Lane as part of Stage 1. This road will form part of the future Western Freight Link which will be delivered by Transport for NSW. While early investigations are ongoing no set timeframe has been placed on the delivery of the Western Freight Link. Nonetheless, an important consideration as part of this structure plan is the protection of this key future freight transport route. Road connections along the Western Freight Link have been restricted to two and located in manner to compliment the future Arcadia Estate and future New England Highway and Burgmanns Lane intersection upgrade works.
- Burgmanns Lane, Duri Road, Gowrie Road and Spains Lane - Construction of new road connections on Burgmanns Lane, Duri Road, Gowrie Road and Spains Lane as part of Stage 2.
- Pages Lane, Palmer Drive and Worboys Road – Extension of Pages Lane, Palmer Drive and Worboys Road as part of Stage 1.

Temporary road connections onto Burgmanns Lane will only be considered in exceptional circumstance and should be avoided. Any proposed temporary road connection will be considered in consultation with Transport for NSW.

A road connection to the New England Highway is not supported. Furthermore, all lots must be serviced by an internal public road. Direct lot access onto New England Highway, Burgmanns Lane, Duri Road, Gowrie Road or Spains Lane will not be supported.

The road network within the precinct must be designed in consideration of influencing driver behaviour and reducing vehicle speeds. This may include traffic calming measures, road hierarchy and/or minimising the length of straight roads.

Water

The existing Kingswood reservoir can service the majority of Stage 1. Where elevations approach or goes beyond the existing level of the reservoir, or head loss within the reticulation system governs pressure drops, options will need to be investigated to service these lots for Council considerations as part of the Stage 1 rezoning process. A servicing strategy would need to be developed for Council consideration, which would form part of the Stage 1 rezoning process.

The development of Stage 2 will require a combination of trunk water mains and a new water reservoir. An servicing strategy must be prepared as part of any future rezoning of Stage 2 to detail how water infrastructure will be delivered to Stage 2.

The provision of reticulated water to the precinct is currently not in a Council delivery plan with the focus on the long term (20+ years) delivery for existing zoned growth areas.

Sewer

All lots located in Stage 1 will be serviced via On-site Sewerage Management System (OSSM).

Infrastructure required to service Stage 2 will comprise a combination of new trunk gravity mains, new sewage pumping stations and new rising mains. An servicing strategy must be prepared as part of any future rezoning of Stage 2 to detail how sewer infrastructure will be delivered to the precinct.

The provision of reticulated sewer to the precinct is currently not in a Council delivery plan with the focus on the long term (20+ years) delivery for existing zoned growth areas.

Stormwater Drainage

This structure plan recommends that overland flow paths/ephemeral drainage lines be retained as part of future developments within this area. However, some overland flow paths will be required to be redesigned through the development process.

This structure plan nominates the indicative location of onsite detention basins. Council's preference is for a regional solution for the management of stormwater given the multiple ownership pattern.

Individual detention basin/s which service a single development will only be considered in exceptional circumstance and should be avoided.

Open Space and Recreation

This structure plan identifies that a number of new parks will be required as part of future developments. Whilst the total area of these parks is yet to be determined, the structure plan identifies one (1) hilltop and three (3) local parks and one (1) district park in Stage 2. The parks have been located to ensure future occupants are within 400m radius of open space. No parks are proposed for Stage 1 given this will be large lot residential (4000m²). It is proposed to integrate the flood liable land in the south-east portion of Stage 1 into the existing drainage reserve which serves Kingswood Estate to provide opportunities for passive recreation.

It is considered the dedication and embellishment of the public parks will form part of a future Development Contributions Plan for the precinct.

Active Transport

This structure plan recommends a number of new shared pathways, with the aim to improve pedestrian and cyclist connections between both existing and future residential areas and the main internal and external attractors.

These proposed connections will be important components in ensuring that the growing community has ease of access to local community facilities, as well as sporting grounds and playgrounds and include:

- Repurposing of Yules Road from an unsealed road to a new shared pathway providing a north-south connection from the study area to the Arcadia Estate.
- A new shared pathway along Burgmanns Lane.
- Two new shared pathways to the north connecting to the wider Tamworth active transport network. One will connect directly into the Arcadia Estate along Burkes Gully while the second will connect in the proximity to the Burgmanns Lane/New England Highway intersection. These connections will be dependent on the extension of the existing active transport network out to the precinct.
- Intersections will improve the safety of this crossing and encourage increased usage by the community.

A key consideration is the crossing of Burgmanns Lane to connect the precinct to the wider external active transport network. The type of crossing could take many forms (overpass, underpass or level crossing etc.) and it is considered continued dialogue between Council, Transport for NSW and stakeholders will be necessary to determine the most appropriate pedestrian crossing.

Community

This structure plan identifies a new district level multi-purpose Civic Hub as part of Stage 2. It is envisaged this hub may include community infrastructure and commercial uses i.e. small supermarket, restaurants and medical centre co-located with a local park. The exact nature of the Civic Hub will be determined in the future and will be driven by population growth and surrounding commercial areas.

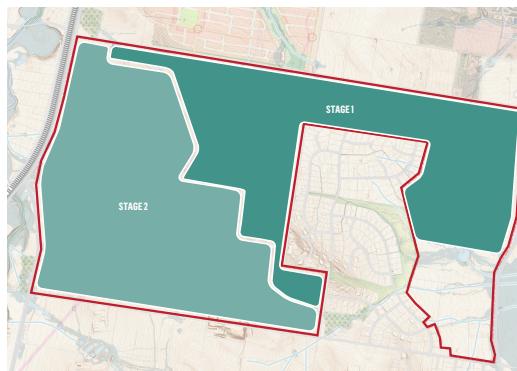
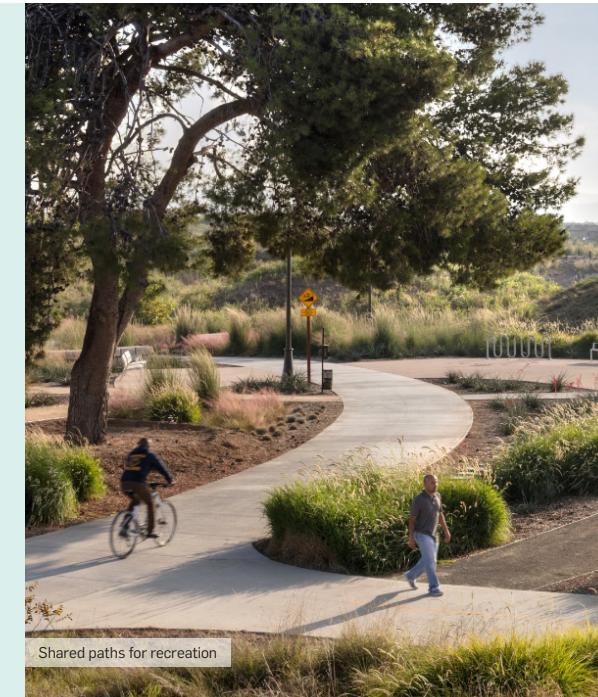


Figure 14 Indicative Project Staging

PRECEDENT IMAGERY







KOOTINGAL RESIDENTIAL GROWTH PRECINCT

VISION

The vision for Kootingal is to extend the urban footprint, improve housing diversity and ensure sustainable growth while preserving the town's unique character.

This plan is designed to integrate new developments with the existing heritage item, Moonby House, and its surrounding large lots and tree clusters.

The Blue-Green corridor is maintained to enhance the ecological balance and community well-being. The aim is provide a seamless connection between urban and natural environments.

A key component of the vision is the creation of a safe and connected pedestrian network. This will enhance the active transport options available to residents, encouraging walking and cycling.



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 1 – Coordinate land use planning for future growth, community need and regional economic development (Strategy 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3);
- Objective 8 – Adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience (Strategy 8.3);
- Objective 12 – Protect regional biodiversity and areas of high environmental value (Strategy 12.1);
- Objective 13 – Provide well located housing options to meet demand (Strategy 13.2 and 13.3);
- Objective 18 – Public spaces and green infrastructure support connected, inclusive and healthy communities (Strategy 18.1); and
- Objective 21 – Improve active and public transport networks (Strategy 21.1).

Blueprint 100: Part One

- Priority Initiative 2.2 – Better manage rural residential development (Action 2.2.1 and 2.2.1);
- Planning Priority 2.6 – More diverse housing choices (Action 2.6.3);
- Priority Initiative 5.2 – More efficient road network (Action 5.2.2); and
- Priority Initiative 5.5 – Promote walking and cycling (Action 5.5.1).

Blueprint 100: Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (Blueprint 100: Part 2 - LSPS 2020)

- Planning Priority 1 – Facilitate smart growth and housing choices (Action SG5);
- Planning Priority 2 – Create a prosperous region (Action PR8);
- Planning Priority 3 – Build resilient communities (Actions RC1 and RC2);
- Planning Priority 5 - Design with nature (Action DN5); and
- Planning Priority 7 – Deliver durable infrastructure (Action DD2).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 1 – Provide for sustainable growth that is supported by infrastructure (Action 1.2); and
- Priority 2.2 – Encourage a diverse range of housing.

UNDERSTANDING PLACE

The local place characteristics of the precinct are defined by five (5) key elements including: surrounding land use zones, access and movement, edge interface, open space and flooding.

SURROUNDING LAND USE ZONES



LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

SURROUNDING LAND USE ZONES

- R1 - General Residential Zone
- R5 - Large Lot Residential Zone
- RU1 - Primary Production
- RU4 - Primary Production Small Lots Zone
- RE1 - Public Recreation

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT



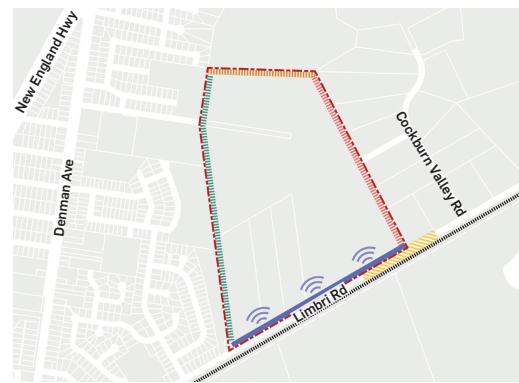
LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

- Railway
- Major Road
 - Limbri Road runs along the southern boundary.
 - Existing Access to the Precinct**
 - The existing access points to the precinct are situated along the southern boundary off Limbri Road.

EDGE INTERFACE



LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

EDGE INTERFACE

- Interface with Road / Railway
- Interface with State Heritage listed Moonby House
- Interface with existing Large Lot Residential
- Interface with Blue-Green Corridor (Restricted Access)
- Gradient Zone along Limbri Road
- Interface with Transport Corridors
 - Noise and air pollution impact from the interfaces with road / railway should be considered.

OPEN SPACE



LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

OPEN SPACE AND BIODIVERSITY

Existing Plant Communities

Significant tree cluster is situated to southeast corner of the precinct with potential biodiversity value.

Existing Open Space

Open Space along Blue-Green Corridor

Indicative Blue-Green Corridor

FLOODING



LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

FLOODING

Ephemeral Drainage Line

Flooding Affected Area

Indicative extent of flooding affected area along the creeks in the low elevation area.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Respond and integrate with the existing and varied land uses which surround the precinct.
- Retain and enhance the existing vegetation within the precinct.
- Minimise intersections on Limbri Road.
- Provide active transport connections back into the Kootingal urban area.

FUTURE TECHNICAL STUDIES

This structure plan has been informed by a high-level assessment of existing characteristics within each precinct. To progress to the next stage, a series of technical studies will be required to validate the feasibility of future developments, identify other constraints, and shape effective management strategies. These studies include, but are not limited to:

- Flood and Water Management Study
- Traffic, Transport and Access Impact Study
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR)
- Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment
- Social Impact Assessment
- Infrastructure and Utilities Plan
- Bushfire Assessment
- Ecological Assessment
- Crime Risk Assessment (CPTED)

TOPOGRAPHY

The precinct features a combination of flat to gently sloping land, which is suitable for residential uses. The surrounding landscape includes rolling hills and valleys, contributing to the scenic vistas and natural beauty of the area.

The topography gently slopes in a northeast to southwest direction, with the highest point in the northeast corner at RL 470 and the lowest in the southwest corner at RL 425.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Orient street and view corridors to maximise view opportunities to the hills.
- Take advantage of the gradual slope and locate the basins at the low points of the precinct to assist with efficient water flow.

LEGEND (Refer to Page 41)

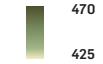
 Precinct Boundary

 Surrounding Cadastre

 Existing Road Network

 View Corridors

ELEVATION (M)



TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDFORM

 1m/10m Contours

The precinct is characterised by an undulating topography that varies in RL by 45m.

 Local High Points

Local High point is located along the ridgelines at RL 470. The highest point situated in the north-west corner of the precinct.

 Local Low Points

Local low points is located at RL 425 at the south-west corner of the precinct.

 Ridgeline

One main ridgeline runs north-south along the precinct's east side.



IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

KOOTINGAL RESIDENTIAL AREA

The Kootingal residential area is an established residential estate. The residents have access to open spaces, local shops, a school and a swimming pool. The lots reflect the urban growth of the region with the predominant lot size varying from 600m² - 750m².

KEY INSIGHTS

- Opportunity to continue and respect the urban grain established within Kootingal.



Figure 17 Aerial Map of Kootingal Residential Area



Figure 16 Key Map



Figure 18 Detached Residential Dwellings in Kootingal

KOOTINGAL LARGE LOTS

The Kootingal Large lots are primarily concentrated along Cockburn Valley Road with a predominant lot size of 2ha.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Opportunity to provide a transition to the large lots.



Figure 20 Aerial Map of Kootingal Large Lots



Figure 19 Key Map

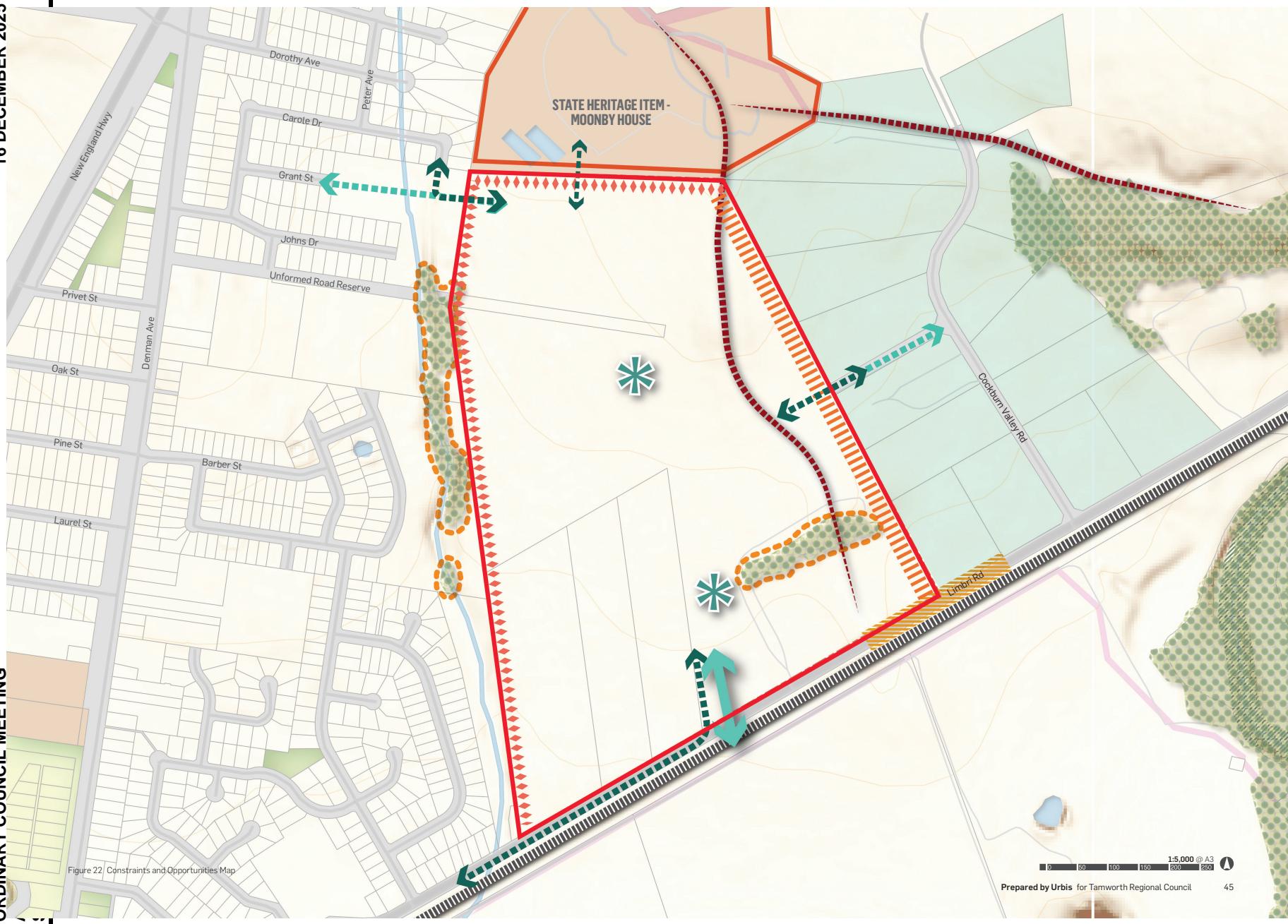


Figure 21 Large Lots in Kootingal

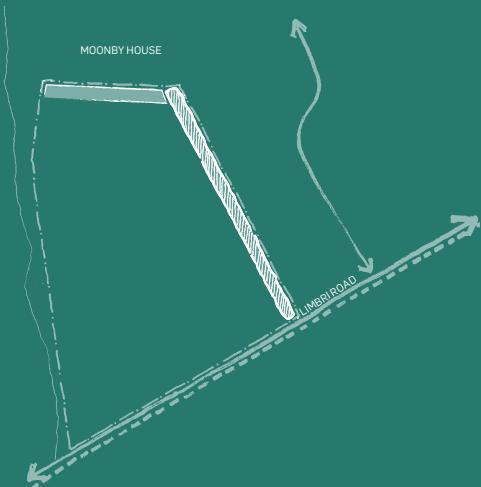
CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A detailed precinct analysis was undertaken to understand the opportunities and constraints of the precinct and identify the potential challenges and unique features to inform the structure plan. The findings are summarised below and shown in Figure 17.

CONSTRAINTS	OPPORTUNITIES	LEGEND (Refer to Page 45)
<p>State Heritage Item Moonby House, is a State Heritage listed item that now functions as a retirement village. The interface to this item should be designed with careful consideration.</p> <p>Limbri Road Gradient Ensure the new access onto Limbri Road is located in consideration of the road gradient.</p> <p>Sewer Servicing The precinct is required to be connected to Council reticulated sewer infrastructure. Any rezoning or intensification of land use will trigger a significant upgrade of the existing Kootingal Sewer Treatment Plant (KTSP).</p>	<p>Open Space Provide two new open space areas adjoining the existing vegetation cluster and central within the development to service the future residents.</p> <p>Access Establish a single access point to the precinct from Limbri Road to enhance connectivity and minimise additional intersections.</p> <p>Active Transport The location of the precinct provides an opportunity to create an active transport loop that connects to the existing passive recreation area, open space, State Heritage item and wider network of Kootingal.</p> <p>Topography The gently sloping topography of the precinct supports the development of mixture of urban residential lots.</p> <p>Interfaces Opportunity to provide larger residential lots along the eastern boundary to provide a transition from the existing 2ha large lots and minimise potential amenity impacts.</p> <p>Vegetation Clusters Minimise and protect the tree cluster located in the south-east corner of the precinct. The cluster should be protected to enhanced and maintain the biodiversity of the area.</p>	<p>CONSTRAINTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing State Heritage Item Restricted Access Transition Residential Zone Tree Clusters Limbri Road Gradient <p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Open Space Locations Access Point Potential Future Connection Potential Active Transport Links



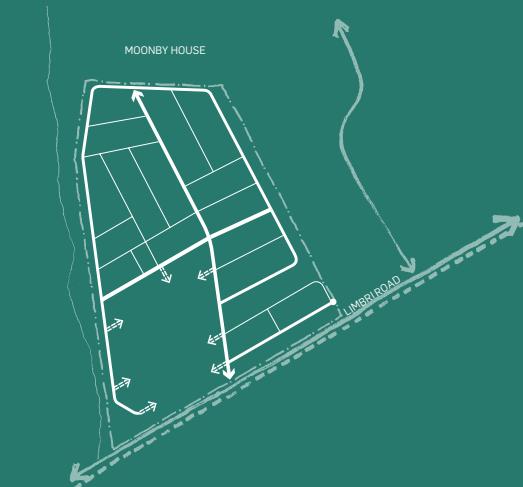
KEY CONSIDERATIONS



INTERFACE

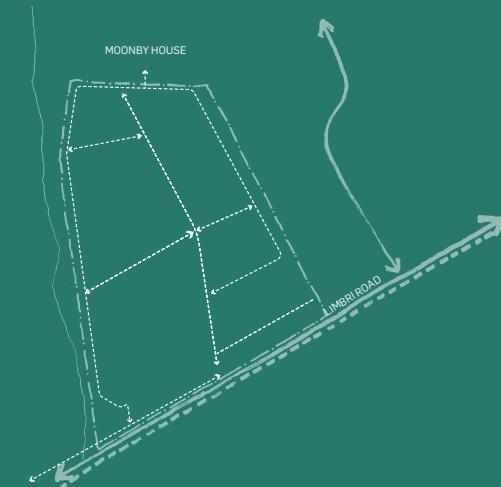
Provide a transition between the existing 2-hectare large lots to the east and new residential developments, with the introduction of a transition zone featuring large residential lots. These spacious lots will serve as a gradient, maintaining the character while accommodating new growth.

Respect the existing heritage item (Moonby House) to the north and provide an increased setback to minimise amenity and privacy impacts through the provision of an internal road along the northern boundary.



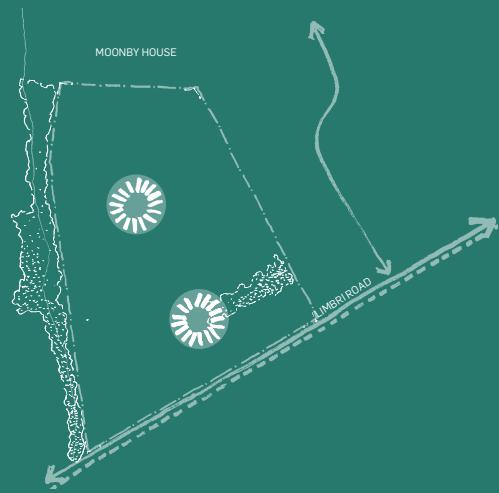
CONNECTIVITY

Ensure seamless connectivity and enhance the overall functionality of the new residential community with a well integrated road network that aligns with the existing urban fabric.



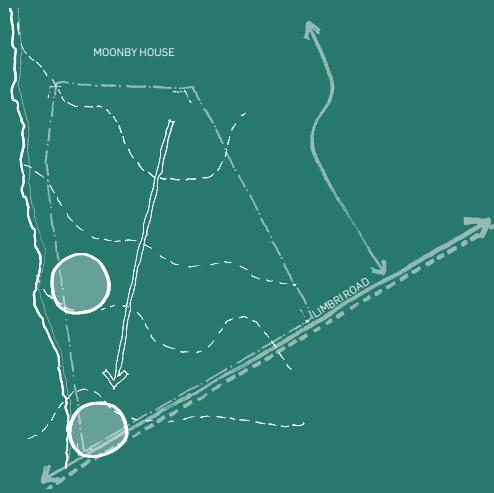
ACTIVE TRANSPORT

Create an active transport network that seamlessly connects roads, surrounding areas, and existing passive recreation/open space, promoting safe, accessible, and sustainable mobility. The network will integrate with the wider shared path network of Kootingal.



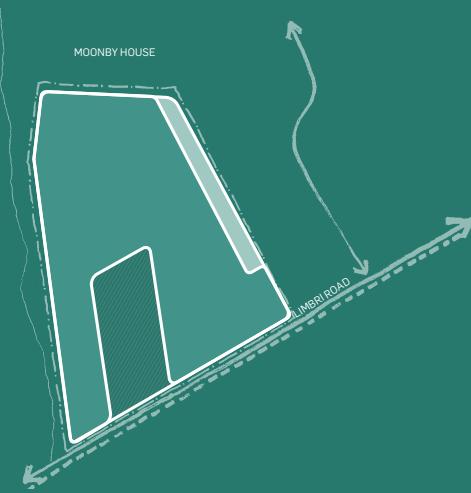
OPEN SPACES

Integrate an local park with the existing vegetation cluster, enhancing ecological value and a neighbourhood park centrally located within the precinct.



STORMWATER DETENTION BASINS

Locate drainage basins that respond to the natural topography, enhancing water management, environmental sustainability, and community integration. Stormwater basin located adjacent to existing passive recreation opportunities along the ephemeral drainage line.



HOUSING DIVERSITY

Offer a mix of housing lots that respects the varying character of the surrounding area. The structure plan responds by incorporating larger lots (1000m²) along the western boundary and standard urban lots (450m² – 800m²) for the balance of the precinct. An increase in housing options encourages a diverse mixture of people which contributes to greater social equity and long-term sustainability for Kootingal.

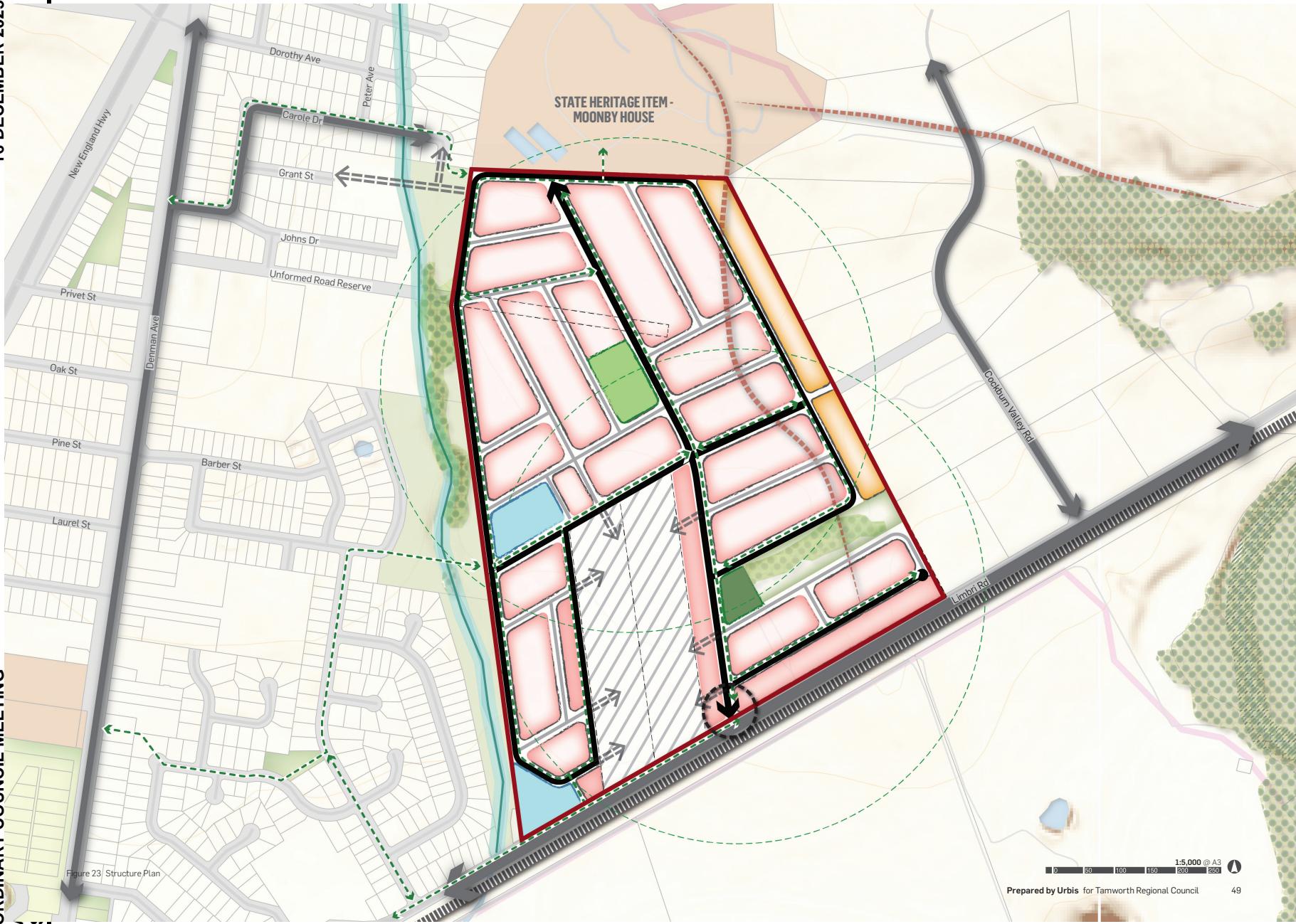
A future investigation area has been identified in the south-west quadrant of the precinct, with potential to extend the established urban lot pattern.

STRUCTURE PLAN

LEGEND (Refer to Page 49)

 Precinct Boundary
 Lot Boundaries
 Existing State Heritage Item Sufficient setback through the provision of a road along the interface of the Moonby House and retirement village, located to north to minimise amenity impacts.
 Potential Detention Basin Two detention basins are distributed along the western boundary of the precinct, in proximity to the creek line.
 Future Residential Area (Urban) 450-800m ² urban lots as the predominant typology within the precinct, to complement the existing fabric of Kootingal.
 Transition Residential Area (Large Lot) 1,000m ² lots provided along the eastern boundary to manage the interface with the adjoining large lot residential estate to the east.
 Existing Vegetation Retain the existing tree clusters to enhance and maintain the biodiversity value of the precinct. These tree clusters will also contribute to the unique open space experience.

 Neighbourhood Park (approx. 1ha) Located along the main spine of the development to maximise the catchment coverage, accommodating multi purpose lawn, playgrounds, BBQ facilities and footpaths.	 Potential Secondary Road Connections Opportunity to introduce secondary road connections to increase connectivity of the precinct.
 Local Park (approx. 0.5ha) Co-located with the existing tree cluster to enhance the connectivity of the open space. This park will include playgrounds, BBQ facilities and footpaths.	 Active Transport Links Shared pedestrian and cycleway routes along main roads linking the neighbourhood to key surrounding areas.
 Future Investigation Area Opportunity to extend the future desired urban fabric. The potential secondary connections have been identified as part of the structure plan.	 Ridgeline Alignment of roads and placement of open spaces in response to the existing topography.
 400m Radius from Open Space Radius demonstrating the accessibility of open spaces within a 5 minute walking distance.	
 Proposed Intersection Single intersection along Limbri road to control the traffic movements.	
 Proposed Roads Establishing a single main spine from Limbri Road, supported by a loop and grid-structure to maximise connectivity within the precinct.	



INFRASTRUCTURE OUTCOMES

Transport

Additional roads will be required to accommodate population growth within the precinct. This structure plan identifies a single road connection to Limbri Road which will service the future development. A second road connection, potentially via an extension of Grant Street may be required to address bushfire evacuation and emergency services routes. The requirement for a secondary access point in consideration of expected traffic volumes and ability to cross the adjoining gully will form part of future investigations.

Water

Council's reticulated water infrastructure will be required to be extended to service the precinct. A servicing strategy must be prepared as part of any future rezoning to detail how water infrastructure will be delivered.

Sewer

Council's reticulated sewer infrastructure will be required to be extended to service the precinct. Infrastructure required to service the study area will comprise a combination of new trunk gravity mains, new/upgraded sewage pumping stations and an upgrade of the Kootingal Sewerage Treatment Plant (KSTP). The existing KSTP can cater for all the residential zoned land in Kootingal, however any rezoning which requires connection to Council's reticulated sewer infrastructure will trigger a significant upgrade of the existing KSTP. The upgrading of the KSTP is currently being investigated but any upgrade works would be a minimum of 5 years away. A servicing strategy must be prepared as part of any future rezoning to detail how sewer infrastructure will be delivered to the precinct.

Stormwater Drainage

This structure plan nominates the indicative location of two onsite detention basins. The on-site detention basins have been located in consideration of ownership patterns and topography.

Open Space and Recreation

This structure plan identifies two local parks will be required as part of future developments. The local parks are located along the main road spine of the development to maximise catchment coverage for future occupants. The southern park has been collocated with an existing cluster of vegetation to enhance the connectivity and retain existing vegetation.

It is considered the dedication and embellishment of the public parks will form part of a future Development Contributions Plan.

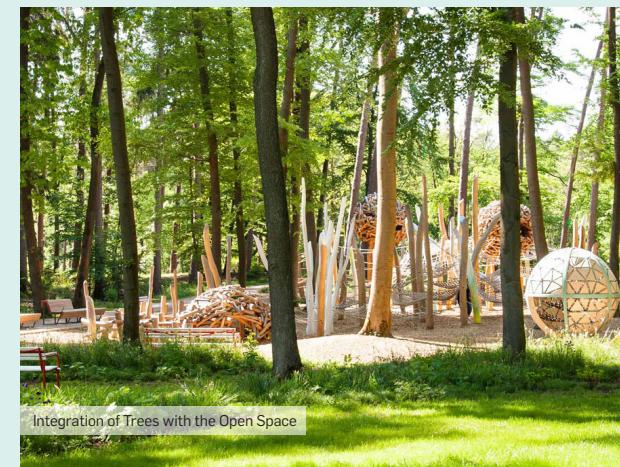
Active Transport

This structure plan recommends a number of new shared pathways, with the aim to improve pedestrian and cyclist connections between both existing Kootingal urban area and future residential growth precinct.



Figure 24 Indicative Project Staging

PRECEDENT IMAGERY





TAMWORTH SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT

VISION



The vision for the precinct is to create a vibrant and lively tourist, sporting and entertainment hub to ensure it continues to be a premier destination for sports and entertainment in Regional Australia.

The plan includes the development of high-quality tourist and visitor accommodation, food and drink premises, commercial premises, landscaping and active transport linkages to support the growth of the precinct. The plan supports the future night-time economy by identifying the boundaries of a Special Entertainment Precinct to facilitate activation of the precinct.

Complementary land uses including medium-density residential development and short-term accommodation will be integrated into the precinct, creating a dynamic and interconnected community. Areas for future investigation have been identified to support the growth of the precinct.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 1 – Coordinate land use planning for future growth, community need and regional economic development (Strategy 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3);
- Objective 5 – Enhance the diversity and strength of Central Business Districts and town centres (Strategy 5.1 and 5.3);
- Objective 8 – Adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience (Strategy 8.3);
- Objective 7 – Support a diverse visitor economy (Strategy 7.1);
- Objective 13 – Provide well located housing options to meet demand (Strategy 13.2 and 13.3);
- Objective 18 – Public spaces and green infrastructure support connected, inclusive and healthy communities (Strategy 18.1);
- Objective 20 – Improve state and regional freight connectivity (Strategy 20.1); and
- Objective 21 – Improve active and public transport networks (Strategy 21.1).

Blueprint 100: Part One

- Priority Initiative 2.3 – A more diverse and dense Longyard Local Centre (Action 2.4.1);
- Priority Initiative 2.6 – More diverse housing choices (Action 2.6.3);
- Priority Initiative 3.9 – Establish an aquatic centre as a regional sports and recreation attraction (Action 3.9.1);
- Priority Initiative 3.10 – Strengthen Tamworth's tourism opportunities (Action 3.10.1);
- Priority Initiative 3.12 – Support the Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC) by enabling equine activities in close proximity to the precinct (Action 3.11.1);
- Priority Initiative 3.13 – Leverage off the Tamworth Country Music Festival (Action 3.13.1);
- Priority Initiative 5.2 – More efficient road network (Action 5.2.2); and
- Priority Initiative 5.5 – Promote walking and cycling (Action 5.5.1).

Blueprint 100: Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (Blueprint 100: Part 2 - LSPS 2020)

- Planning Priority 1 – Smart growth and housing choices (Action SG5);
- Planning Priority 2 – Create a prosperous region (Action PR5);
- Planning Priority 3 – Building resilient communities (Action RC6);
- Planning Priority 4 – Connect our regions and its citizens; and
- Planning Priority 7 – Deliver durable infrastructure (Action DD2).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 1 – Provide for sustainable growth that is supported by infrastructure (Action 1.2);
- Priority 2.2 – Encourage a diverse range of housing.

UNDERSTANDING PLACE

The local place characteristics of the precinct are defined by five (5) key elements including: surrounding land use zones, access and movement, edge interface, open space and flooding.

SURROUNDING LAND USE ZONES



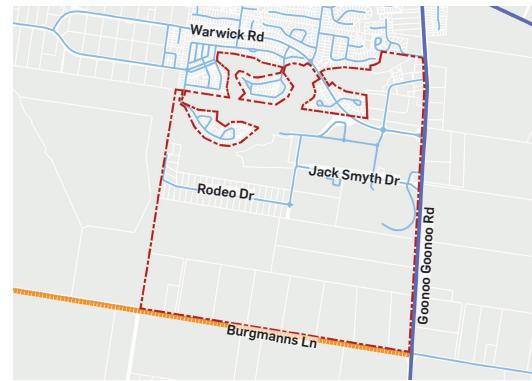
LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

SURROUNDING LAND USE ZONES

- R1 - General Residential Zone
- R2 - Low Density Residential Zone
- R5 - Large Lot Residential Zone
- RU4 - Primary Production Small Lots Zone
- RE1 - Public Recreation
- RE2 - Private Recreation Zone (Longyard Golf Course)
- SP3 - Tourist (Tamworth Regional Sports and Entertainment Precinct)
- MU1 - Mixed Use
- E3 - Productivity Support

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT



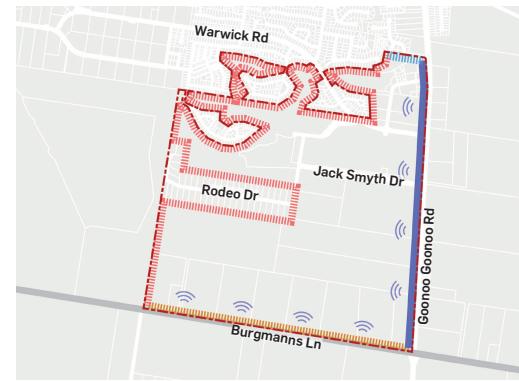
LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

- Future Western Freight Link
Burgmanns Lane runs along the southern boundary of the precinct. Part of the future Western Freight Link will be aligned along Burgmanns Lane.
- Major Road
New England Highway runs along the eastern boundary.
- Existing Local Roads
- Existing Roundabout
- Existing Access to the Precinct
The existing access points to the precinct are mainly distributed on the northeast.

EDGE INTERFACE



LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

EDGE INTERFACE

- Interface with Future Western Freight Link
- Interface with Highway
- Interface with Residential Lots
- Interface with Mixed Use Precinct
- Interface with Transport Corridors
Noise and air pollution impact from the interfaces with road freight corridors.

OPEN SPACE



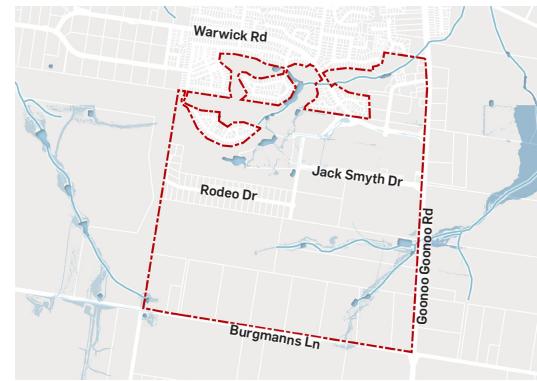
LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

OPEN SPACE AND BIODIVERSITY

- Existing Plant Communities
- Existing Open Space
- Golf Course
- Tamworth Truck Drivers Memorial

FLOODING



LEGEND

Precinct Boundary

FLOODING

Ephemeral Drainage Line

Flooding Affected Area

Indicative extent of flooding affected area along the creeks in the low elevation area.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Retain and enhance the existing open spaces.
- Minimise intersections on the Proposed Western Freight Link.
- Upgrade intersections along Goonoo Goonoo Road.
- Provide additional connectivity within the precinct.
- Mixture of land use zones within the precinct.

FUTURE TECHNICAL STUDIES

This structure plan has been informed by a high-level assessment of existing characteristics within each precinct. To progress to the next stage, a series of technical studies will be required to validate the feasibility of future developments, identify other constraints, and shape effective management strategies. These studies include, but are not limited to:

- Flood and Water Management Study
- Traffic, Transport and Access Impact Study
- Health and Safety Assessment
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment Report (ACHAR)
- Social Impact Assessment
- Infrastructure and Utilities Plan
- Bushfire Assessment
- Ecological Assessment
- Crime Risk Assessment (OPTED)

TOPOGRAPHY

The precinct contains varying topography with relatively flat terrain in the eastern and north-east section while sloping terrain in the south and south-west portion.

The topography slopes in a southwest to northeast direction, with the highest point in the northeast corner at RL 478 and the lowest in the southwest corner at RL 390.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Maximise the flatter topography to locate sporting, tourism and any facilities in relation with the AELEC.
- Carefully consider the placement of built form along the ridgelines.

LEGEND (Refer to Page 59)

 Precinct Boundary

 Surrounding Cadastre

 Existing Road Network

 View Corridors

ELEVATION (M)

 478

 390

TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDFORM

1m/10m Contours

The precinct is characterised by an undulating topography that varies in RL by over 88m.

Local High Points

Local high point is located at RL 478 in the south-west quadrant.

Local Low Points

Local low points are located along the western boundary at RLs 397 and 390.

Ridgeline

One main ridgeline runs north-south along the precinct's west, with one spur extending to the east.



IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

ARCADIA ESTATE

Situated on the southern side of Tamworth, Arcadia Estate is a master planned subdivision offering a range of housing options to cater to various lifestyles and family requirements.

Arcadia Estate will accommodate up to 2,350 standard dwellings and include a local centre.

KEY INSIGHTS

- Opportunity to explore pedestrian and vehicular connections to improve connectivity for the future residents.



Figure 26 Key Map



CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A detailed precinct analysis was undertaken to understand the opportunities and constraints of the precinct and identify the potential challenges and unique features to inform the structure plan. The findings are summarised below and shown in Figure 29.

CONSTRAINTS

Burgmanns Lane (Future Western Freight Link)

The proposed alignment for the future Western Freight Link runs along the southern boundary of the precinct, resulting in restricted access along this boundary.

Interface to Existing Residential Developments

Carefully consider the interface to the existing residential areas to reduce and mitigate amenity impact.

Land Use Conflicts

The precinct encompasses multiple land use zones which support a variety of existing and potential land uses. It is critically important the structure plan includes measures to minimise land use conflicts within the precinct.

OPPORTUNITIES

Support Regional Sporting and Entertainment Facilities

Ensure the structure plan supports and enhances the Regional Sporting and Entertainment Facilities located within the precinct.

Improve the Transport Network

Provide shared paths throughout the precinct which link into the wider active transport network and to Arcadia Estate. Investigate additional road connections to alleviate traffic congestion during events.

Enhance the Character

Improve the character of the precinct by making more pedestrian friendly increase landscaping and support the delivery of tourist and visitor accommodation, drink and food premises and other land uses to support the Sports and Entertainment Precinct. Opportunity for the precinct to be supported by a Special Entertainment Precinct.

Former Athletics Track

Future tourist-oriented development comprising accommodation, food services, public open space and related land uses which supports the AELEC and Tamworth Regional Sports and Entertainment Precinct.

LEGEND (Refer to Page 63)

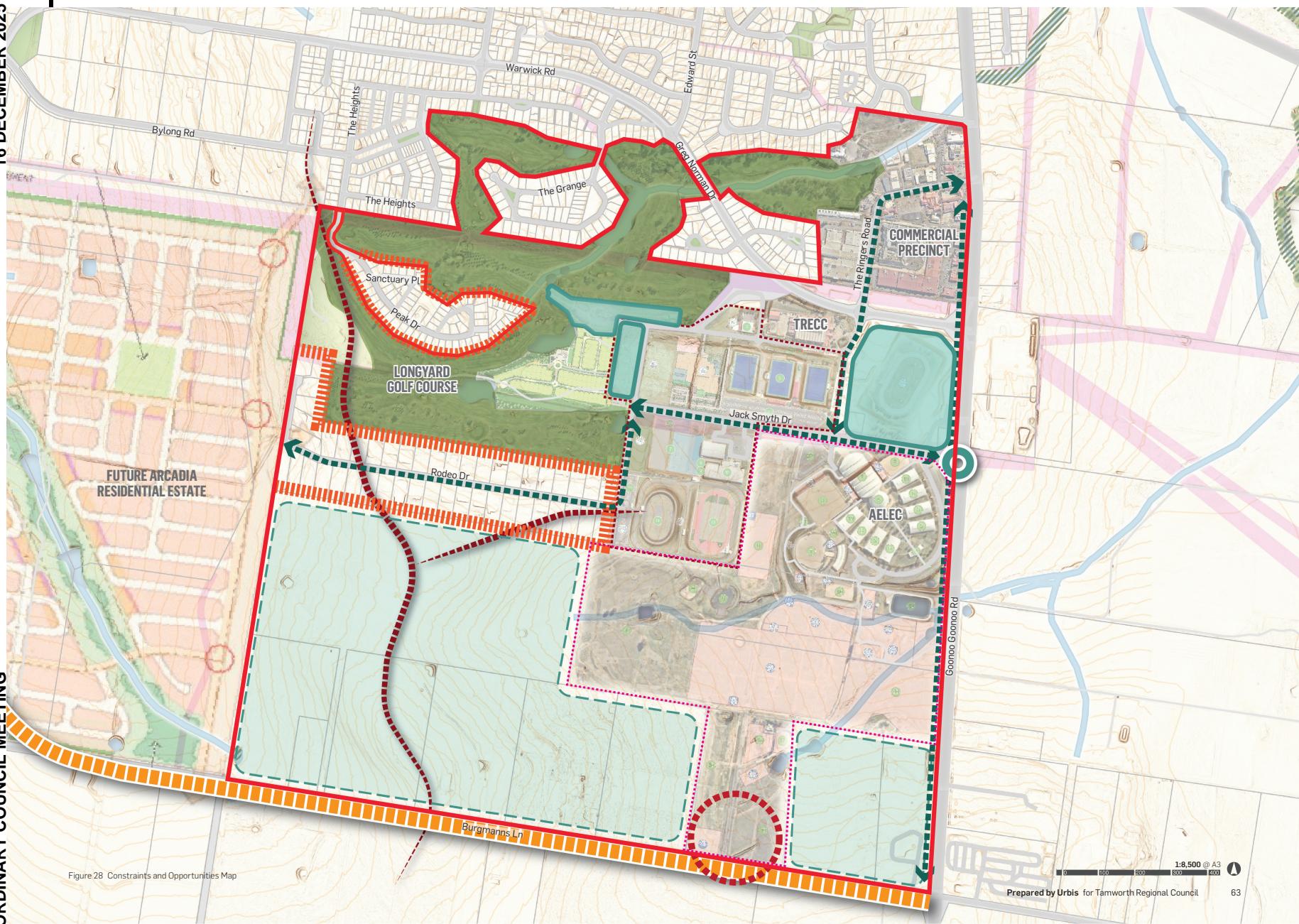
- Precinct Boundary
- Railway
- Ridgeline
- NICSE Boundary
- AELEC Boundary

CONSTRAINTS

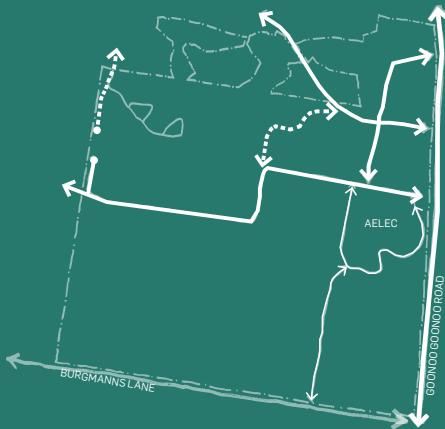
- Residential Interface
- Future Western Freight Link
- Constrained Access

OPPORTUNITIES

- Opportunity Sites
- Potential Future Investigation Areas
- Potential Active Transport Links
- Existing Roundabout



KEY CONSIDERATIONS



CONNECTIVITY

Enhance the connectivity of the precinct by providing additional connection routes to improve pedestrian and vehicle movements. Introduce shared active transport links connecting sporting facilities, Arcadia Estate and the wider active transport network. New road connection to Greg Norman Drive to alleviate traffic congestion during events. New connection to Peak Drive to provide access for medium density development on the Longyard Golf Course.

Continue to lobby and support for the duplication of Goonoo Goonoo Road (New England Highway) by Transport for NSW to further activate the precinct.



REGIONAL SPORTING FACILITIES

The precinct encompasses specialised sport and recreational facilities for community groups, sporting clubs, schools, organisations, businesses and the general public in one location. NICSE has the capacity to host and secure international, national, state and local sporting competitions and boosts sport tourism, investment and liveability in the region. These Regional Sporting facilities include:

- Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre
- Tamworth Sports Dome
- Tamworth Regional Hockey Complex
- Tamworth Regional Gymnastics Centre
- Tamworth Regional Athletics Centre
- Tamworth Regional Cycling Centre
- Tamworth Regional Aquatic Centre and Northern Inland Centre for Sport & Health
- Longyard Golf Course

The structure plan supports the ongoing development of the precinct as a sporting hub and builds upon Council's adopted *NICSE Sports Hub Master Plan 2023 and Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre, Strategic Master Plan – 2022 to 2023*.



FUTURE INVESTIGATION AREA

Identify the existing RU4 – Primary Production Small Lot zone located within the precinct as future investigation in consideration of several constraints, including access, infrastructure servicing and land use conflict. Any Planning Proposal or Development Application will need to consider the following objectives:

- To facilitate development that supports the AELEC and wider Sports and Entertainment Precinct by providing a variety of tourist and equine orientated development and related uses.
- To minimise land use conflicts between existing and proposed development within adjoining zones. This may include only considering an increase in new dwellings where it can be demonstrated they will not impact the operation of existing sporting and entertainment facilities.
- To prevent development that is not compatible with or that may detract from the provision of infrastructure. This may include restricting direct access onto Burgmanns Lane to protect the future Western Freight Link.



FORMER ATHLETICS TRACK

The former athletics track is a key site within the precinct. An opportunity exists for this key site to be developed into a vibrant and lively tourist and entertainment hub which supports AELEC and the surrounding sporting precinct in accordance with the zone objectives.

It is anticipated future developments could include architecturally designed buildings with active street frontages, mixture of tourist and visitor related land uses, significant landscaping, suitable carparking public open space and a transport interchange hub.



TOURISM AND ENTERTAINMENT

Facilitate a vibrant, accessible, and inclusive precinct which offers a dynamic mix of experiences that appeal to both visitors and locals. This requires a mixture of tourist and visitor related land use such as tourist accommodation and food and drink premises which leverage the existing regional sporting facilities and entertainment venues and help activate the precinct. To support the vision a draft Special Entertainment Precinct is identified which aims to promote and balance night-life vibrancy with community amenity.

Investigate expanding the SP3 zone to promote, support and protect the operations of AELEC.



HOUSING DIVERSITY

Promote medium-density housing within the precinct given the Longyard commercial area, regional sporting facilities, entertainment venues and transport links. Medium density housing provides more varied and often more affordable options compared to detached homes. They cater to a broad range of residents, including young professionals, small families, downsizers, and key workers, helping to meet diverse housing needs.

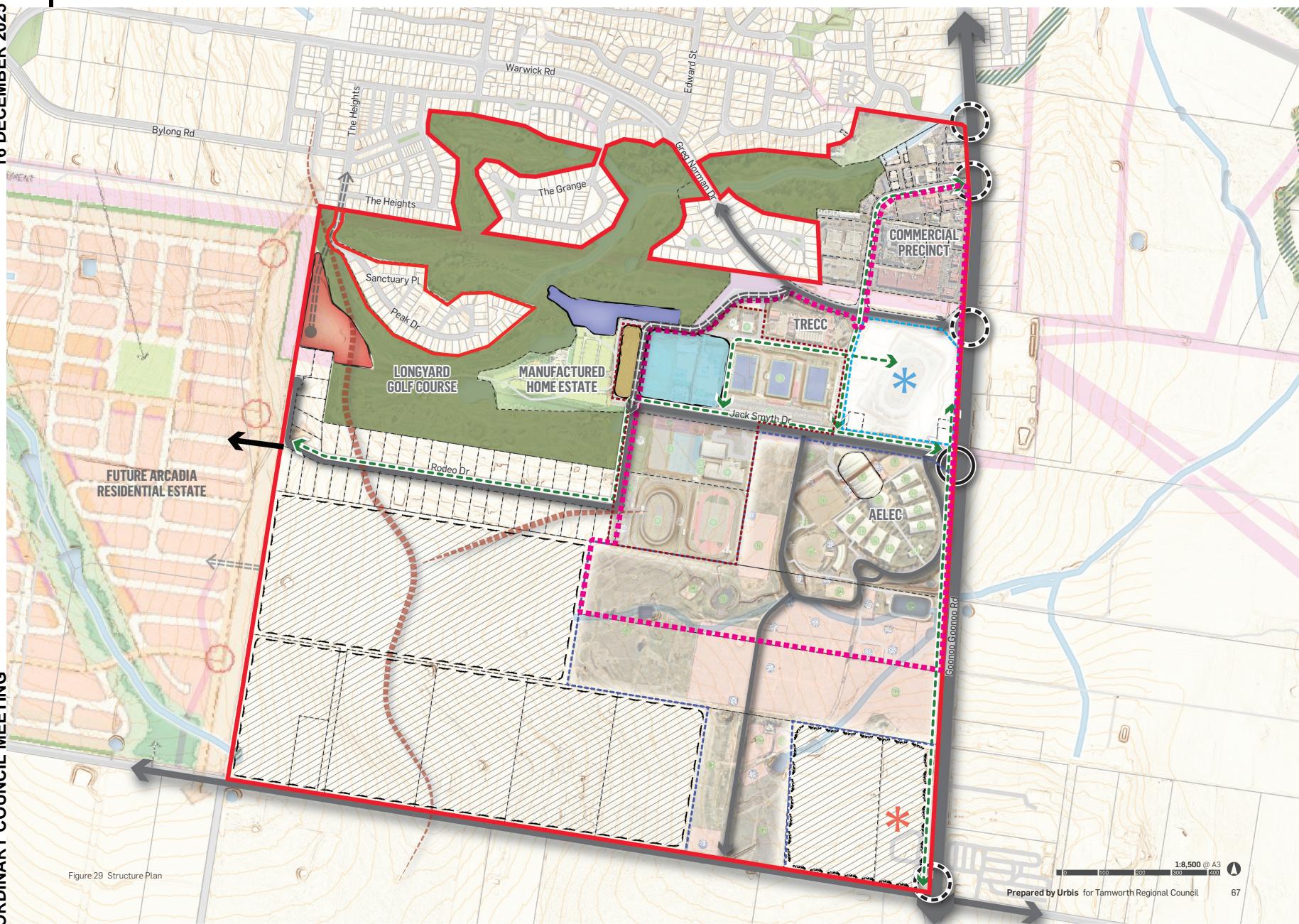
Other forms of housing may be considered where it can be demonstrated the development will not lead to an increase in land use conflict within the precinct.

STRUCTURE PLAN

LEGEND (Refer to Page 67)

 Precinct Boundary
 NICSE Boundary
 AELEC Boundary
 Draft Special Entertainment Precinct Boundary
 Key Site Future tourist-oriented development comprising accommodation, food services and related land uses which supports the AELEC and Tamworth Regional Sports and Entertainment Precinct. The precinct could include a bespoke architectural building, tourist & visitor accommodation with ground floor activation, integrated transport hub, consolidated surface parking, new open space and pedestrian street and retention of the Tamworth Truck Drivers Memorial.
 Key Entrance Site
 Longyard Golf Course
 Tamworth Regional Aquatic Centre and Northern Inland Centre of Sport and Health
 Medium Density Residential

 Tourist and Visitor Accommodation Motel
 Future Investigation Area to Support Tourism
 Future Investigation Area
 Ridgeline
 Proposed Road New road connections to improve the movement of vehicles within the precinct.
 Active Transport Shared pedestrian and cycleway routes along main roads connecting the main destinations within the precinct and establish a connection to the wider cycle network of Tamworth.
 Potential Future Connection Potential connections into Arcadia Estate, pending detailed layout design.
 Existing Roundabout
 Intersection Upgrade Proposed intersection upgrades along Goonoo Goonoo Road.



INFRASTRUCTURE OUTCOMES

Transport

Provision of additional road connections and upgrades to the existing network is critical to facilitate future development. This Structure Plan identifies the approximate location for potential road connections, based on future growth, as well as the impacts of this growth on the existing road network. The precinct is largely well connected to the existing local and state road network. The following road infrastructure is proposed, subject to further investigation:

- Goonoo Goonoo Road - The duplication of Goonoo Goonoo Road by Transport NSW is a high priority for Council and will greatly assist in improving the road network. The scope of works in the precinct include upgrades to the intersections of Craigends Lane, The Ringers Road and Greg Norman Drive.
- Cartwheel Way – This road is identified to provide a new connection onto Greg Norman Drive to alleviate traffic congestion currently experienced during events with the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct. This road is currently an unformed road reserve and the provision of this new road needs to be considered in the context of upgrades required for Longyard Drive and Stockmans Way.
- Rodeo Drive – This road is identified to provide a new shared pathway, with the aim to improve pedestrian and cyclist connections between the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct and Arcadia Estate.
- Peak Drive – This road is identified to provide a new connection for a proposed medium density development located in the western portion of the Longyard Golf Course.
- Burgmanns Lane - Formalise the existing temporary access driveway to AELEC to provide alternate access arrangement for large vehicles during events.

Access to public transport needs to be enhanced, and improved provision of more frequent bus services to this area to encourage more public transport patronage. An integrated transport hub is proposed as part of the redevelopment of the former Athletics Track to provide a centralised transport hub to service the entire Sports and Entertainment Precinct.

An opportunity exists to improve the precinct by making it more pedestrian friendly. This involves prioritising pedestrians in the precinct by implementing traffic calming devices such as roundabouts, wombat crossings, curve returns, and pedestrian fencing. Improving the amenity of the precinct is also a high priority and this will involve additional tree plantings, improved lighting and shared pathways throughout the precinct.

Water

Council's reticulated water infrastructure is generally readily available to service the precinct. The requirement for water reticulation and future extension will be dependent on the type of land uses which may be developed into the future.

A servicing strategy must be prepared as part of any future rezoning or servicing strategy for development applications to detail how water infrastructure will be delivered.

Sewer

The topography of the study area results on multiple sewer catchments. The study area is generally well serviced via existing sewer infrastructure; however, capacity constraints exist in certain catchments.

A servicing strategy must be prepared as part of any future rezoning or servicing strategy for development applications to detail how sewer infrastructure will be delivered.

Stormwater Drainage

The topography of the study area results in multiple stormwater drainage catchments. A servicing strategy must be prepared as part of any future rezoning or servicing strategy for development application to detail how stormwater drainage will be managed.

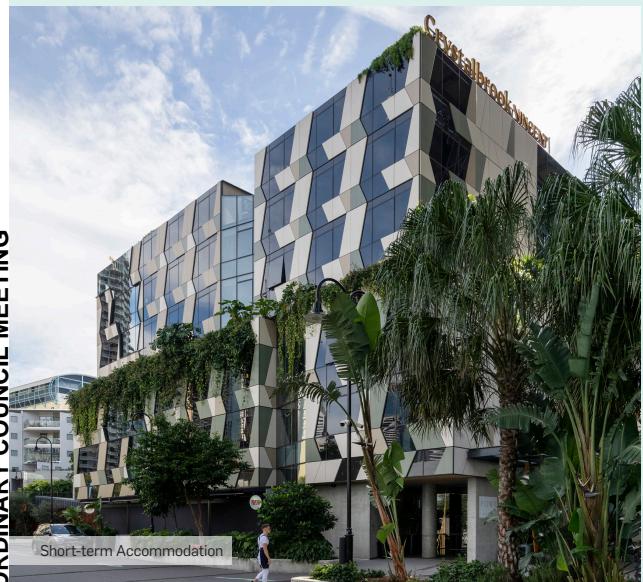
Open Space and Recreation

This structure plan recommends a new public open space area as part of the redevelopment of the former Athletics Tracks site. The open space will provide valuable open space for the precinct while complementing the long-term vision for the former Athletic Track site.

Active Transport

This structure plan recommends a number of new shared pathways, with the aim to improve pedestrian and cyclist connections within the precinct. This also a new shared pathway along Rodeo Drive to provide a connection between the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct and Arcadia Estate.

PRECEDENT IMAGERY



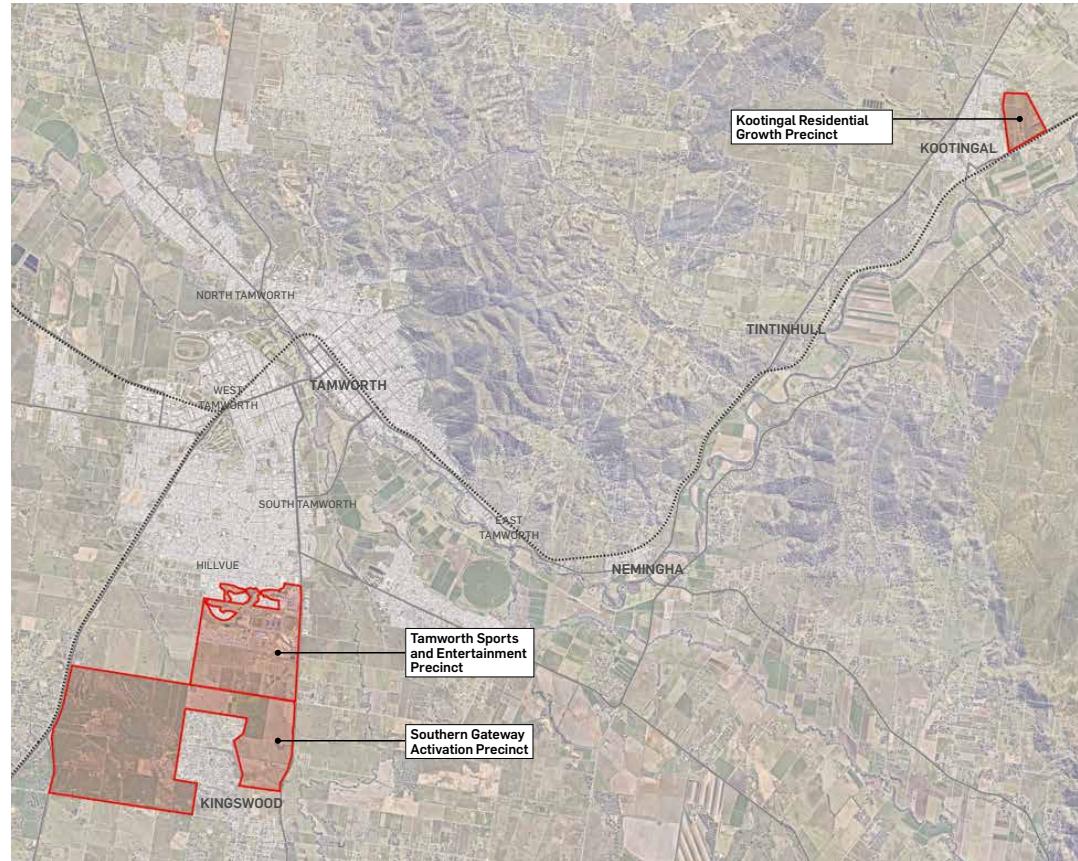
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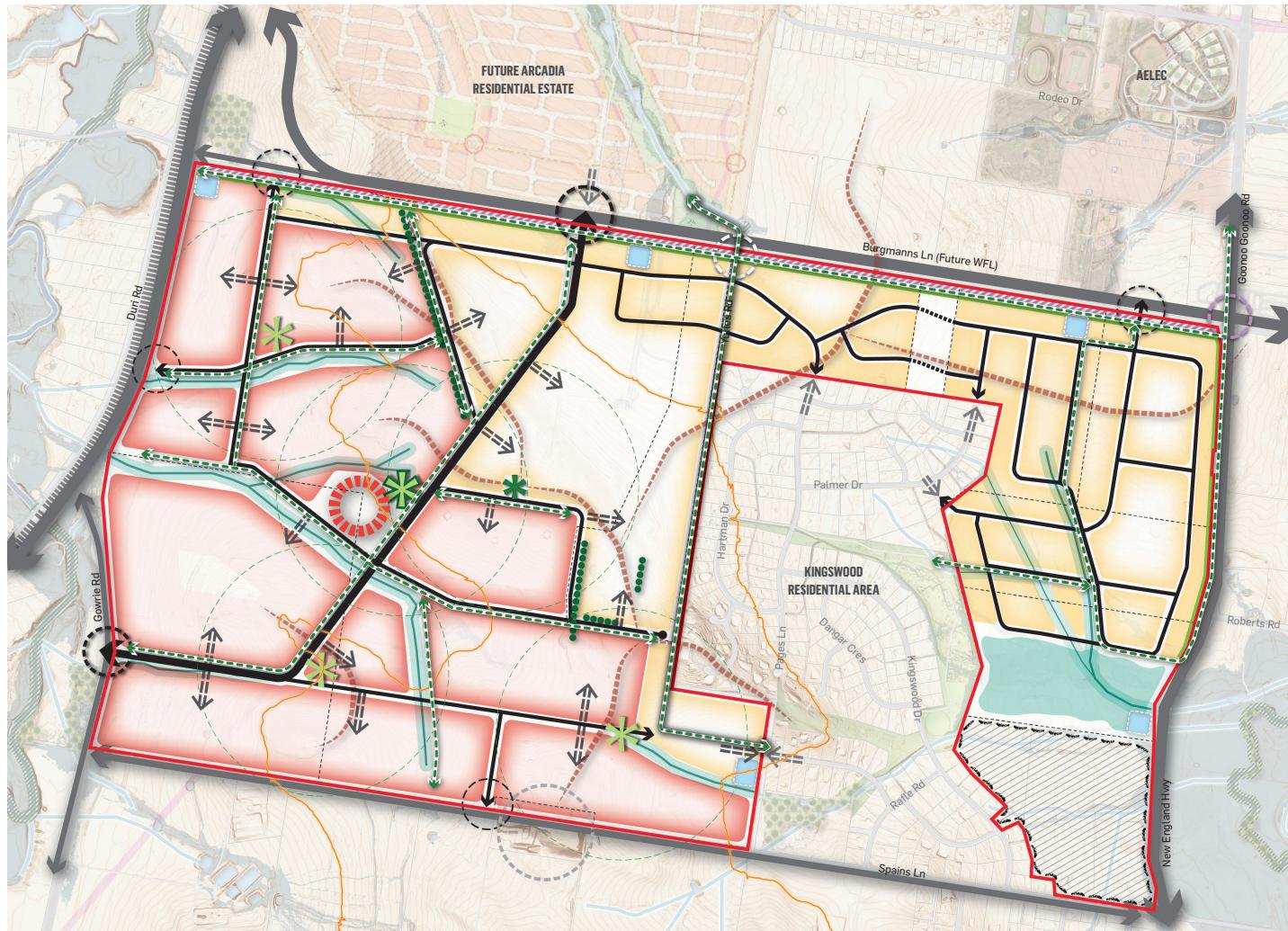
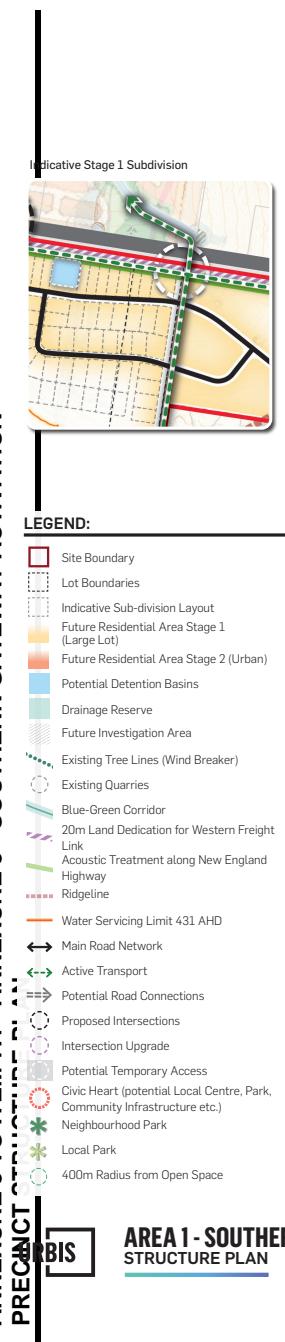


LOCALITY PLAN - STRUCTURE PLAN PRECINCTS

LEGEND

- Investigation Areas
- Railway Line
- Highway/ Major Roads

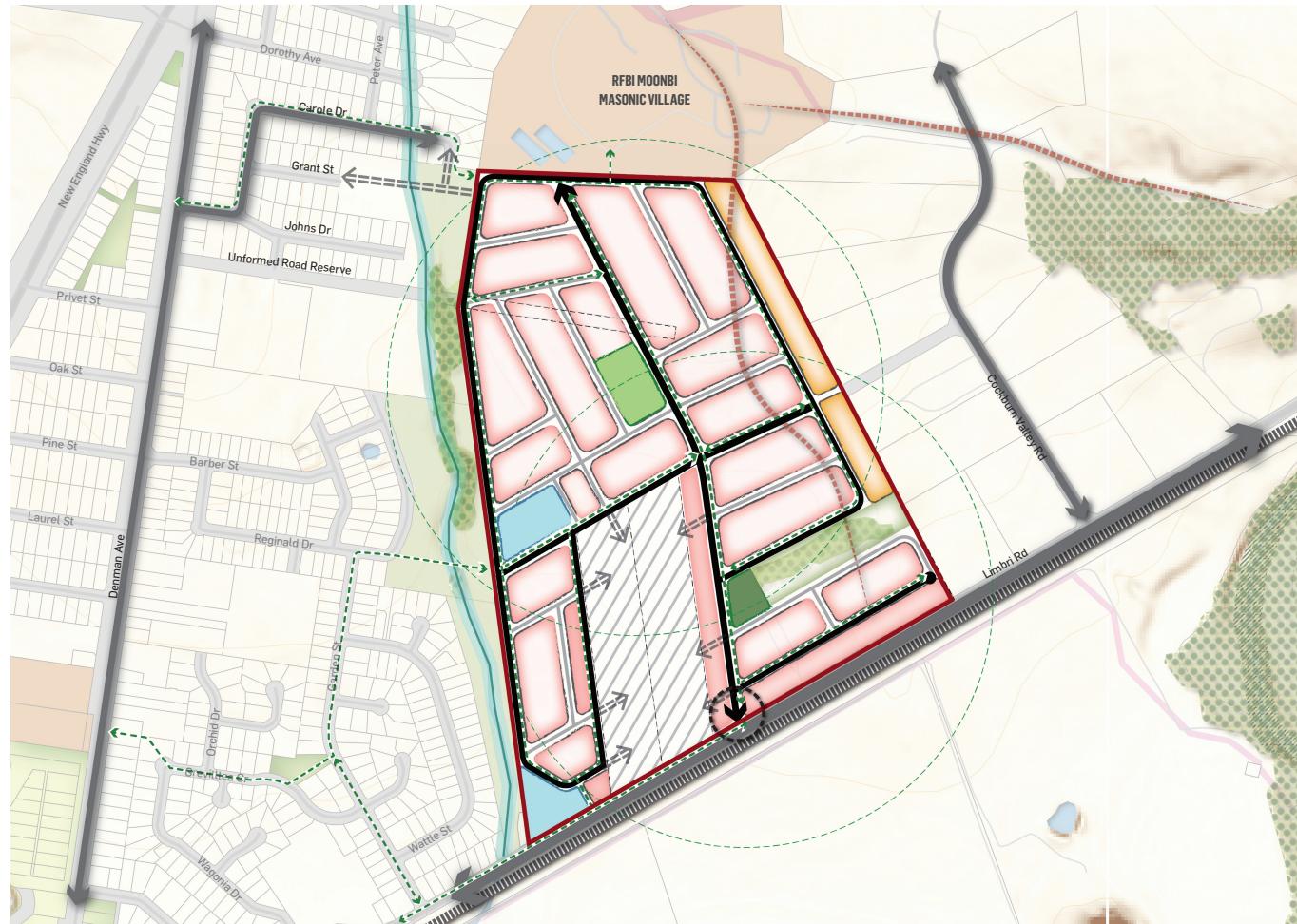




**AREA 2 - KOOTINGAL RESIDENTIAL GROWTH PRECINCT
STRUCTURE PLAN**

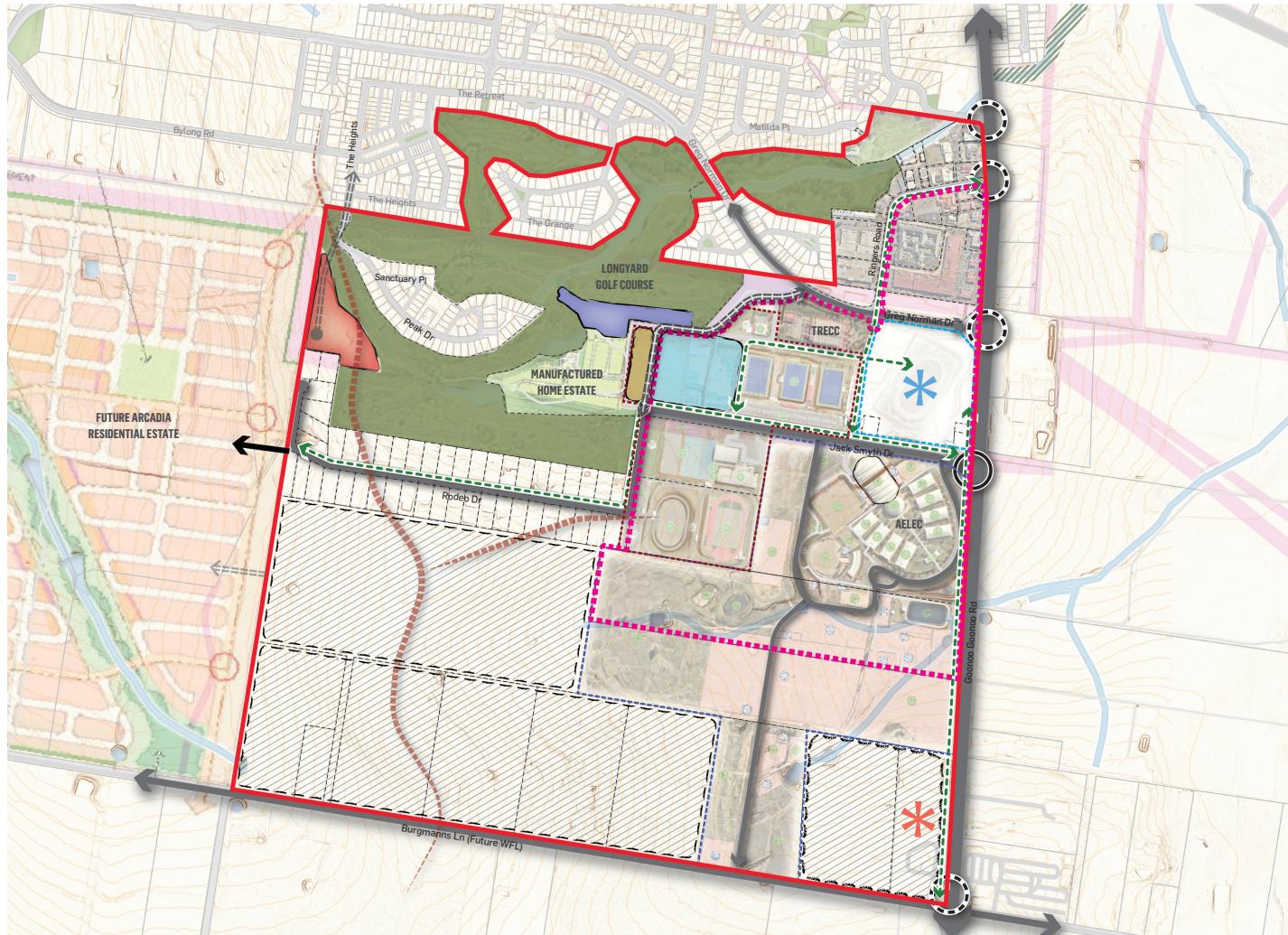
LEGEND:

- Site Boundary
- Lot Boundaries
- Existing State Heritage Item
- Local Park (approx. 0.5 ha)
- Neighbourhood Park (approx. 1 ha)
- Potential Detention Basin
- Existing Vegetation
- Future Residential Area (Urban)
- Transition Residential Area (Large Lot)
- Future Investigation Area
- Proposed Roads
- Active Transport Links
- Potential Road Connections
- Ridgeline
- Proposed Intersection
- 400m Radius from Open Space



LEGEND:

- Site Boundary
- Lot Boundaries
- NICSE Boundary
- AELEC Boundary
- Key Site (Future tourist-oriented development comprising accommodation, food services and related land uses which supports the AELEC and Tamworth Regional Sports and Entertainment Precinct)
- Draft Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP)
- Longyard Golf Course
- Tamworth Regional Aquatic Centre and Northern Inland Centre of Sport and Health
- Medium Density Residential
- Tourist & Visitor Accommodation Motel
- Future Investigation Area to support Tourism
- Future Investigation Area
- Key Site, potentially including a bespoke architectural building, tourist & visitor activation, integrated transport hub, consolidated surface parking, new open space and pedestrian street and retention of the Tamworth Truck Drivers Memorial.
- Key Entrance Site
- Ridgetline
- New Pedestrian Street
- Active Interface
- ↔ Proposed Roads
- ↔ Active Transport
- ↔ Potential Future Connection
- Existing Roundabout
- Intersection Upgrade



AREA 3 - TAMWORTH SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT
STRUCTURE PLAN

1:12,000 @ A1
DATE: 24.11.2025
JOB NO: P0052218

Tamworth Regional Council

Report Type: Project

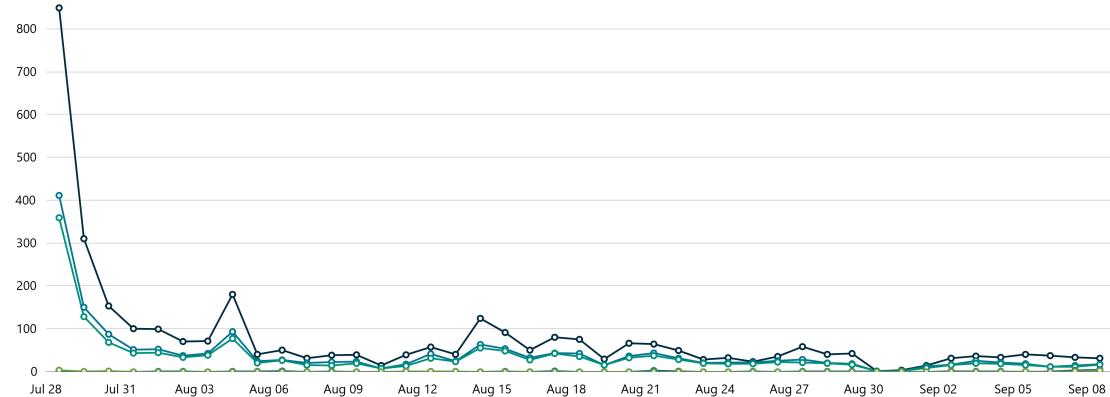
Project Name: Tamworth Regional Structure Plans

Date Range: 28-07-2025 - 08-09-2025

Exported: 25-09-2025 12:34:43

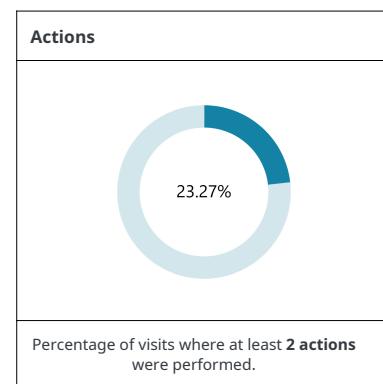
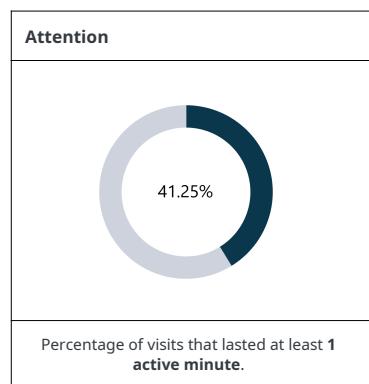
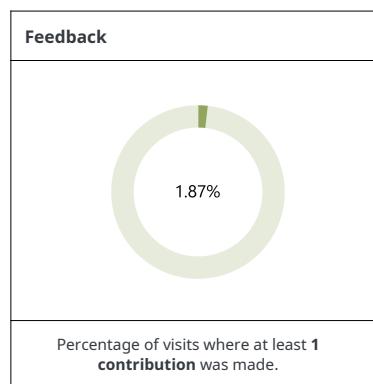
Performance Summary

Information regarding key visitation and utilisation metrics for your Site or projects.

3,368
Views1,818
Visits1,298
Visitors38
Contributions35
Contributors14
Followers**Views** - The number of times a Visitor views any page on a Site.**Visits** - The number of end-user sessions associated with a single Visitor.**Visitors** - The number of unique public or end-users to a Site. A Visitor is only counted once, even if they visit a Site several times in one day.**Contributions** - The total number of responses or feedback collected through the participation tools.**Contributors** - The unique number of Visitors who have left feedback or Contributions on a Site through the participation tools.**Followers** - The number of Visitors who have 'subscribed' to a project using the 'Follow' button.

Conversions

Information regarding how well your engagement websites converted Visitors to perform defined key actions.



Participation

Information regarding how people have participated in your projects and activities.

Contributions by Activity

Contributions by Activity is a breakdown of contributions across each tool

Activity	Contributions	%
Form	38	100%

Top Activities

Top Activities is the top 5 tools that received the highest contributions

Activity	Page Name	Contributions	Contributors
Form	Tamworth Regional Structure Plans	38	35

Projects

The current number of published projects on your site

Engagement Time		
2	23	2
Days	Hours	Minutes

Jul 28th 2025	Monday
Peak Visitation Date	Peak Visitation Day

Top Visited Pages

Summary information for the top five most visited Pages.

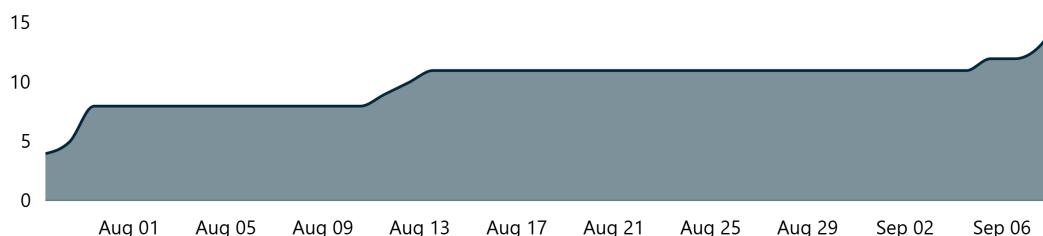
Page Name	Visitation %	Visits	Visitors
Tamworth Regional Structure Plans	91.36%	1,660	1,248
Precinct 1: Southern Gateway Activation Precinct	27.68%	503	416
Precinct 3: Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct	21.85%	397	341
Precinct 2: Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct	12.71%	231	196

People

Information regarding who has participated in your projects and activities.

Follower Activity

Information regarding the activity of registered Members who have 'followed' or subscribed to one or more projects.



14
Total Followers

14
New Followers

16
Total Follows

16
New Follows

Total Followers - The number of unique Members who have 'followed' at least one project.

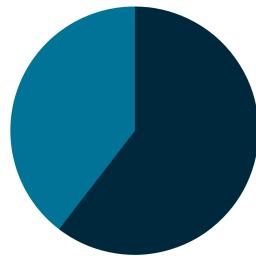
New Followers - The number of new unique Members who have 'followed' at least one project within the specified reporting date range.

Total Follows - The number of total 'follows' performed by all Followers across all projects. Each Follower may record multiple Follows.

New Follows - The number of new total 'follows' performed by all Members across all projects within the specified reporting date range.

Visit Profile

Visit Profile compares new visits and returning visits over the selected period.



● 1st Time: 1,099 - 60.45%

● Returning: 719 - 39.55%

First Time - The number of Visits that are visiting a Site for the first time within the reporting date range.

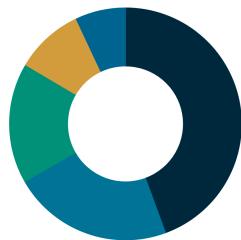
Returning - The number of Visits that have made more than one Visit to a Site within the reporting date range.

Acquisition

Information regarding the method by which Visitors arrived to your Site or projects.

Referral Types

Referral traffic is the segment of traffic that arrives on your website through another source, like through a link on another domain.



- Direct: 807 - 44.39%
- Social Media: 406 - 22.33%
- Campaigns: 305 - 16.78%
- Websites: 173 - 9.52%
- Search Engine: 127 - 6.99%

Direct - Visits from Visitors who enter the exact URL or click an untracked link (e.g., from emails without UTM parameters).

Search Engine - Visits from search results on engines like Google or Bing.

Websites - Visits from links on external sites, excluding search engines and social media.

Social Media - Visits from links on platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, or X.

Campaigns - Visits from tracked marketing efforts using UTM parameters, such as email campaigns or paid ads.

Downloads

Information regarding your downloads, the total set of unique documents downloaded, total downloads of all files, and your top downloads.



796

Total Downloads

Top Downloads

Top file downloads in your selection, ordered by the number of downloads.

File Title	File Type	Downloads
Southern Gateway Activation Precinct Structure Plan.pdf	PDF	137
Tamworth Regional Sports and Entertainment Structure Plan.pdf	PDF	122
Tamworth Regional Structure Plan Report- Part 1.pdf	PDF	122
Tamworth Regional Structure Plan Report - Part 2.pdf	PDF	94
Tamworth Regional Structure Plan Report - Part 3.pdf	PDF	93

Email Campaigns

Information regarding your email campaigns, your total campaigns, the total number of recipients, and your top campaigns by click-through rate (clicks as a percentage of total recipients).



1

Email Campaigns Sent



859

Total Recipients



15.25%

Click-through Rate

Top Campaigns

Top email campaigns that have activity in your selection, ordered by click-through rate (clicks as a percentage of total recipients).

Campaign Name	Recipients	Clicks	Click-through Rate
Tamworth Regional Structure Plans	859	131	15.25%



Tamworth Regional Structure Plans

Engagement Outcomes Report

November 2025

Prepared for: Tamworth Regional Council

Urbis staff responsible for this report were:

Director Carlos Frias
Senior Consultant Darshini Rajeshwaran
Project Code P0052218

Acknowledgment of Country

Tamworth Regional Council would like to acknowledge the Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi people, who are the traditional custodians of this land. We would like to pay respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in and visiting our region.



The artwork on this page was created by Gomeroi artist Tess Reading. Her artwork was selected through an expression of interest where Aboriginal artists with a connection to the Kamilaroi/Gomeroi Nation were asked to create an artistic element for inclusion in Council's corporate brand.

Ms Reading describes her work as depicting the land and communities that spread across the Tamworth Regional Council footprint. Elements of the artwork will start to appear on Council's letterheads, business cards, signage and uniforms in 2025.

All information supplied to Urbis in order to conduct this research has been treated in the strictest confidence. It shall only be used in this context and shall not be made available to third parties without client authorisation. Confidential information has been stored securely and data provided by respondents, as well as their identity, has been treated in the strictest confidence and all assurance given to respondents have been and shall be fulfilled.

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Introduction

Tamworth Regional Council publicly exhibited the draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plans for the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct (SGAP), Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct, and Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct (TSEP) between 28 July and 8 September 2025. The exhibition sought feedback from the community, landowners, developers, government agencies, and other stakeholders on the proposed high-level frameworks for land use, housing, active transport and open space across these three key precincts.

A comprehensive review and categorisation of all submissions was undertaken following the close of exhibition. This process involved:

1. **Collating all submissions** received from community members, landowners, developers, and State Agencies.
2. **Identifying key themes** within each precinct, including recurring issues, opportunities, and points of alignment or divergence between stakeholders.
3. **Reviewing agency advice** from Transport for NSW, the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, and the Energy Corporation of NSW.

This analysis has informed Council's consideration of the proposed outcomes and has resulted in some amendments to SGAP and TSEP. No amendments to the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct Structure Plans were required following exhibition.

Engagement

The structure plan report was released for public feedback for 42 days from 28 July 2025 to 8 September 2025. The engagement process aimed to:

- Provide opportunities to community and relevant stakeholders to have a say about what they value in the precincts and how it should change over time.
- Provide opportunities to share the feedback to all those involved among the three precincts.
- Raise awareness about the vision for the three precincts.

Engagement was aimed at the people who live and work within the three precincts, as well as individuals and communities who visit the precincts especially to access sports and entertainment services. Council also held targeted sessions with State Agencies and the relevant landowners at an early stage to present the draft structure plan for feedback and help articulate ideas.

The release of the structure plans was supported by a wide-reaching engagement program, which involved:

- Television and Radio;
- Article for Your Council News;
- Editorial for the Northern Daily Leader;
- Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn Posts (A total of five Facebook posts, five Instagram posts, three LinkedIn posts and two Facebook Community Posts were made throughout the public exhibition, as well as being included in the post-Council Meeting wrap ups on Facebook and Instagram.);
- Posters were created and distributed to each of Council's Customer Service Offices to display;
- Project page created on 'Council's Have Your Say' page; and

- QR code for easy access to the project page.

The social media videos showcasing each precinct proved to be a great way to convey key information in an engaging and easy-to-digest format. The 'At a Glance' post, which also offered a break down then a map of each precinct, performed strongly, achieving above-average views and interactions on Facebook.

Paid social media advertising, which ran from 14–29 August 2025, directly aligned with notable spikes in both webpage visits and online submissions, demonstrating the success of the campaign's targeted approach.

Additionally, including the QR code on the campaign poster worked well, as reflected in the Have Your Say report data. Using the QR code contributed to Direct Visits being the highest referral source to the campaign webpage.

Snapshot of Engagement Process



ABC News Breakfast

Local Audience of **5,300**

Prime 7NEWS

Local Audience of **14,320**



Instagram

Total views of **4,288**

NBN News

Local Audience of **15,264**

Facebook

Total views of **38,912**

LinkedIn

Total likes of **31**

Social Media Impressions

Total of **33,667**



Targeted Pre-Exhibition Workshops

Total of **THREE**

1 Analysis of Submissions

1 Analysis of Submissions

An analysis of the Forty-Two (42) submissions was undertaken to draw out the key observations, including those from State Agencies.

1.1 Key Observations from the Submissions

1.1.1 Southern Gateway Activation Precinct

1. Growth

- Broad support for the precinct as a driver of Tamworth's future growth, housing supply, and economic development.
- Recognition that the plan can deliver a mix of lot sizes and housing typologies, with staged delivery to meet both immediate and long-term demand.
- Support for integrating new development with existing neighbourhood character, particularly in areas adjoining Kingswood.

2. Access & Traffic

- Concerns about safety risks with proposed access routes via Herden Road and Ralfe Road, including restricted sight lines, erosion, flooding, and narrow carriageways.
- Suggestions to use alternative access routes, such as Yules Road, to improve safety and connectivity, and to integrate active transport corridors during road construction.
- Calls for upgrades to Spains Lane, including widening, sealing, and weight limits to prevent heavy vehicle use as a freight bypass.
- Proposals to extend Stage 1 west to Burgmanns Lane to provide an additional road connection and buffer residential areas from traffic noise.
- Strategic proposals to leverage the Southern Access Route and Western Freight Link to connect South Tamworth to the airport, industrial precincts, and regional transport networks.

3. Land Use & Staging

- Opposition to industrial uses such as quarries within residential growth areas due to concerns about land stability, reduced lot yield, and long-term vision.
- Desire to maintain large-lot character along certain boundaries, with minimum lot sizes of 2,000–4,000m² to preserve visual character and appeal.
- Proposals for staged delivery:
 1. Early release of large-lot areas to meet immediate demand and integrate with existing character.
 2. Flexibility to subdivide larger lots into smaller formats once infrastructure (e.g. sewer) becomes available.
- Suggestions to expand the precinct boundary to include strategic landholdings for mixed-use development, tourist accommodation, and residential uses.
- Recommendations to unify large-lot residential areas south of Spains Lane with consistent subdivision standards.

4. Agency & Government Input

- **Transport for NSW (TfNSW)**: Supports limiting access points to protect freight corridor efficiency and recommends further investigation into intersection designs.
- **Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo)**: Requests coordination with the Port to Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) strategy to accommodate over-sized and over-mass vehicle movements.
- **NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPCI)**: Advises targeted consultation with multiple State Agencies, adoption of flood risk-based planning, and infrastructure service planning before rezoning.
- **NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water – Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group (DCCEEW – CPHR)**: Identifies biodiversity values and recommends avoiding floodplain and high environmental value land, with clear criteria for assessment.
- **NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture and Biosecurity**: Highlights the cumulative loss of high-quality agricultural land and recommends Land Use Conflict Risk Assessments (LUCRA) to manage transitions between rural and urban uses.

1.1.2 Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct

1. Traffic & Road Safety

- Concerns about connecting certain roads to new residential areas without upgrades, due to pedestrian safety risks and rural character impacts.
- Recognition of the need for a larger capacity transport hub, including coach parking, to manage event-related congestion.

2. Land Use & Zoning

- Calls for balanced development that supports existing businesses and avoids oversupply of tourist accommodation.
- Suggestions to limit on-site accommodation to a single facility and allocate more space for parking and event infrastructure.
- Proposals to develop key sites, such as the Former Athletics Track, as mixed-use precincts incorporating commercial, retail, entertainment, and tourism use.
- Recommendations to remove restrictive indicative layouts from the Structure Plan to allow flexibility in master planning.

3. Amenity & Liveability

- Concerns about noise, light pollution, increased traffic, litter, and petty crime associated with entertainment uses.
- Requests for more accessible facilities, including "Changing Places" bathrooms, to improve inclusivity.
- Suggestions to incorporate cultural infrastructure, such as a performance hall or outdoor performance space, to diversify precinct use beyond sport.

4. Open Space & Community Use

- Support for retaining and enhancing existing open space assets, including memorials and parks, as part of a connected network.

- Proposals to integrate performance areas into open space to create year-round cultural attractions.
- Recommendations to expand parking capacity to meet current and future event demand.

5. Agency & Government Input

- **NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPCI):** Recommends a formal planning proposal for the Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP), consultation with relevant agencies, and infrastructure service planning before rezoning.
- **NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water – Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group (DCCEEW – CPHR):** Identifies biodiversity values and recommends avoiding floodplain and high environmental value land.

1.1.3 Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct

1. Support for Growth

- Recognition of strong housing demand in Kootingal, with calls to prioritise the precinct due to market readiness and community support.
- Suggestions to improve pedestrian connectivity, particularly between residential areas and schools.

2. Opposition / Concerns

- Concerns about loss of village lifestyle, increased crime, and inadequate infrastructure to support growth.
- Criticism of recent development patterns dominated by dual dwellings, limited parking, and lack of neighbour consultation.

3. Infrastructure & Safety

- Calls for traffic safety improvements, including speed reductions and enforcement measures on key roads.
- Proposals for active transport links, such as a cycle/walkway between Kootingal and Moonbi, to improve connectivity and reduce reliance on cars.

4. Agency & Government Input

- **Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo):** Requests coordination with the Port to Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) strategy for road upgrades and over-sized/over-mass vehicle movements.
- **NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPCI):** Advises targeted consultation, flood risk-based planning, and infrastructure service planning before rezoning.
- **NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water – Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group (DCCEEW – CPHR):** Identifies biodiversity values and recommends avoiding floodplain and high environmental value land.

1.1.4 Integrated Summary of Themes

This table illustrates the key themes and stakeholder perspectives identified across all precincts. Comments were grouped into recurring themes, with significant points distilled into concise statements. Stakeholder positions were compared to identify areas of high, moderate or partial alignment, summarised in the "Stakeholder Alignment" column.

THEME	KEY POINTS ACROSS ALL PRECINCTS	STAKEHOLDER ALIGNMENT
PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS		
Access & Road Safety	Safety concerns about proposed access routes, especially in SGAP and TSEP. Suggestions for alternative routes (e.g. Yules Road in SGAP), intersection upgrades, and integration of active transport corridors. Event-related traffic management in TSEP requires larger transport hubs and coach parking.	All stakeholders recognise safety and capacity issues, though preferred solutions vary.
Open Space & Environmental Protection	Suggestions for performance areas in TSEP open space, blue-green links in SGAP, and active transport integration in Kootingal.	Shared priority, with agencies adding compliance requirements.
Infrastructure Before Growth	Strong consensus that water, sewer, and road upgrades must precede or accompany new development. Calls for climate resilience measures, such as new water storage, improved road networks, and banning heat-retaining dark roofs.	Agreement among all stakeholders.
Connectivity & Active Transport	Calls for pedestrian and cycle links within and between precincts (e.g. Kootingal–Moonbi path, SGAP active transport via Yules Road). Developers support integration with road construction to reduce costs.	All stakeholders support, though scope and funding mechanisms vary.
Process & Engagement	Appreciation for extended consultation periods; calls for transparency in decision-making and early clarity on land potential.	Shared priority for open, inclusive process.
Event & Visitor Infrastructure	In TSEP, need for expanded parking, integrated transport hubs, and cultural facilities (performance halls, outdoor venues). Retain and enhance memorials and parks as part of visitor experience.	Community and developers agree on activation.
Lot Sizes & Character Preservation	Desire to maintain large-lot character in SGAP and Kootingal, with minimum lot sizes of 2,000–4,000m ² in certain areas. Avoid abrupt transitions to higher density. Developers propose staged release of large lots, with flexibility to subdivide later.	Community and developers agree on large-lot value.

Land Use Mix & Flexibility	Support for mixed-use development in key sites (e.g. Former Athletics Track in TSEP, SGAP extensions). Calls to avoid incompatible industrial uses (e.g. quarries in SGAP). Developers seek inclusion of tourist accommodation, specialised retail, and commercial uses; community wants balance to avoid oversupply.	Agreement on mixed-use potential, but tension over scale of tourist accommodation and commercial activity.	P
Agricultural Land Management	Developers argue for rezoning where rural use is no longer viable.	Agreement on need for assessment; differing views on rezoning thresholds.	P
STATE AGENCY SUBMISSIONS			
Open Space & Environmental Protection	Strong emphasis on preserving and enhancing open space, integrating green corridors, and protecting biodiversity. Agencies stress avoiding floodplain and High Environmental Value (HEV) land.	Shared priority, with agencies adding compliance requirements.	H
Infrastructure Before Growth	Infrastructure service planning before rezoning.	Agreement among all stakeholders.	H
Freight & Transport Coordination	Need to protect freight corridor efficiency in SGAP; coordinate with Port to Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) strategy for over-sized/over-mass vehicle movements.	Agencies focus on technical compliance.	H
Process & Engagement	Agencies recommend targeted consultation with multiple State Agencies before finalising plans.	Shared priority for open, inclusive process.	H
Land Use Mix & Flexibility	Recommend a flood risk-based planning and a planning proposal for the SEP of TSEP.	Agencies focus on planning compliance.	P
Agricultural Land Management	Concern over cumulative loss of productive agricultural land, especially in SGAP. Agencies recommend Land Use Conflict Risk Assessments (LUCRA) to manage transitions.	Agreement on need for assessment; differing views on rezoning thresholds.	P

Alignment Scale

H	High alignment
M	Moderate alignment
P	Partial alignment

2 Actions taken since Exhibition

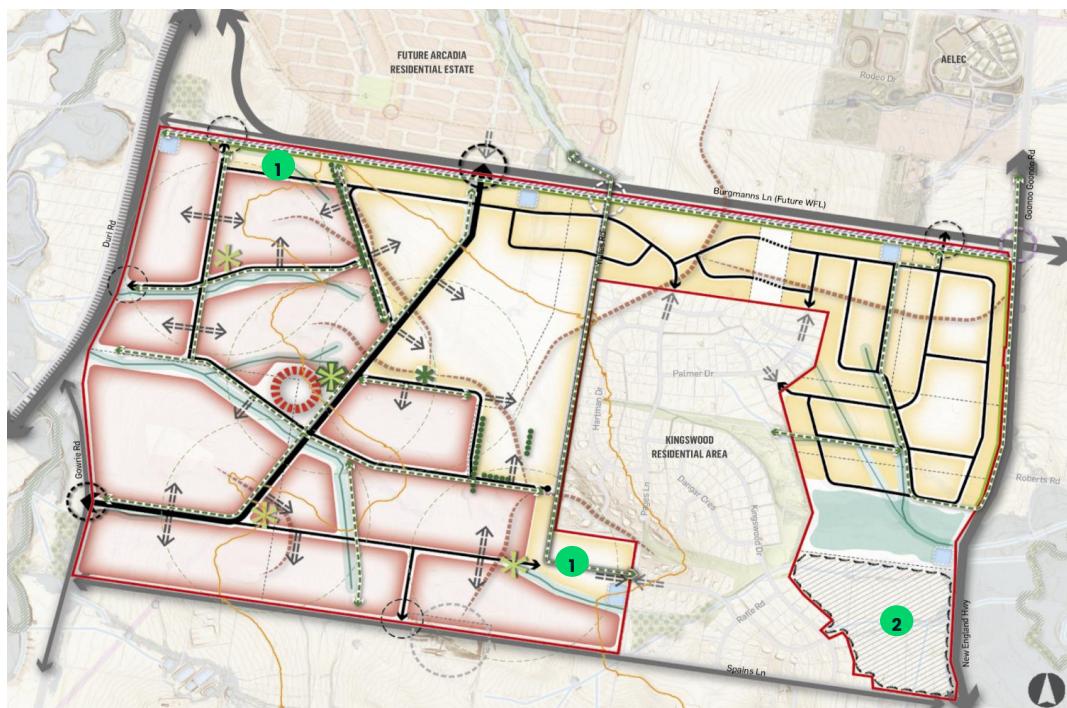
2 Actions taken since Exhibition

Analysis of submissions has informed Council's consideration of the proposed outcomes and has resulted in some amendments to SGAP and TSEP which are detailed in this section. No amendments to the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct Structure Plans were required following exhibition.

2.1 Amendments to the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct Structure Plan

The following are the amendments undertaken to the Structure Plan, post receipt of all the submissions.

1. Stage 1 has been expanded to include the lots located south of Yules Road and further to the west along Burgmanns Lane.
2. The precinct boundary has been expanded to the south-east to include Lot 62 DP 800714 and Lots 6100 and 6101 DP 1059416, and identify these sites as future investigation areas for potential large-lot residential and / or tourism related land uses.



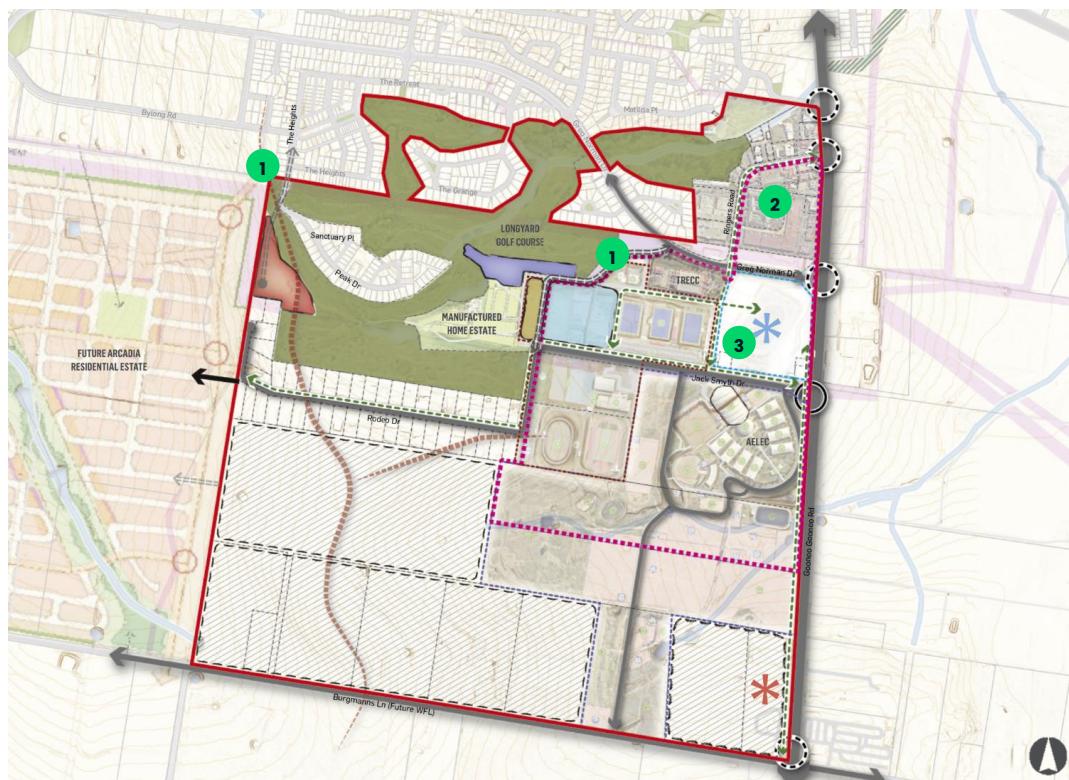
LEGEND:

■ Site Boundary	■ Acoustic Treatment along New England Highway
□ Lot Boundaries	■ Ridge line
□ Indicative Sub-division Layout	— Water Servicing Limit 431 AHD
■ Future Residential Area Stage 1 (Large Lot)	↔ Main Road Network
■ Future Residential Area Stage 2 (Urban)	↔ Active Transport
■ Potential Detention Basins	==> Potential Road Connections
■ Drainage Reserve	○ Proposed Intersections
■ Future Investigation Area	○ Intersection Upgrade
■ Existing Tree Lines (Wind Breaker)	■ Potential Temporary Access
○ Existing Quarries	○ Civic Heart (potential Local Centre, Park, Community Infrastructure etc.)
■ Blue-Green Corridor	■ Neighbourhood Park
■ 20m Land Dedication for Western Freight Link	■ Local Park
	○ 400m Radius from Open Space

2.2 Amendments to the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct Structure Plan

The following are the amendments undertaken to the Structure Plan, post receipt of all the submissions.

1. A potential future connection has been identified from the proposed medium density residential area to Peak Drive towards The Heights and from Jack Smyth Drive to Greg Norman Drive, pending traffic advice.
2. The boundary for the Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP) has been adjusted to include the commercial centre along Ringers Road.
3. The indicative layout for the former Athletics Track has been removed with the site now identified as a key site, listing the potential activities that could be included to activate the precinct.

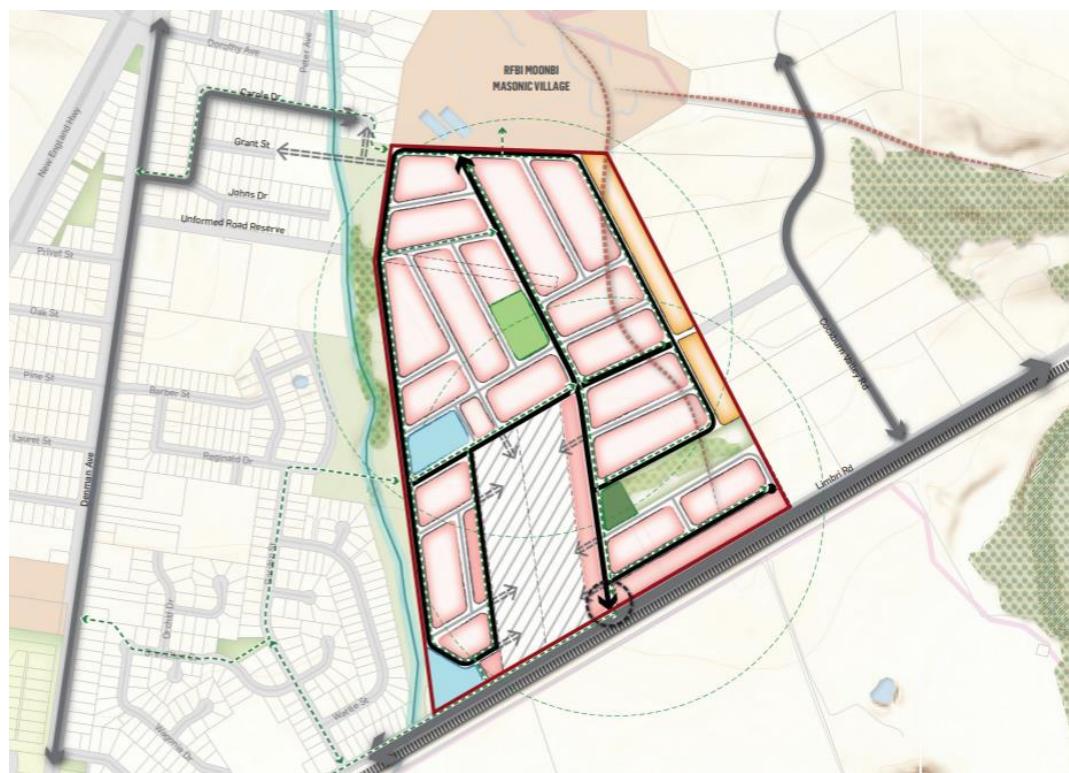


LEGEND:

█	Site Boundary
█	Lot Boundaries
█	NICSE Boundary
█	AELEC Boundary
█	Key Site (Future tourist-oriented development comprising accommodation, food services and related land uses which supports the AELEC and Tamworth Regional Sports and Entertainment Precinct)
█	Draft Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP)
█	Longyard Golf Course
█	Tamworth Regional Aquatic Centre and Northern Inland Centre of Sport and Health
█	Medium Density Residential
█	Tourist & Visitor Accommodation Motel
█	Future Investigation Area to support Tourism
█	Future Investigation Area
* 	Key Site, potentially including a bespoke architectural building, tourist & visitor accommodation with ground floor activation, integrated transport hub, consolidated surface parking, new open space and pedestrian street and retention of the Tamworth Truck Drivers Memorial.
* 	Key Entrance Site
—	Ridgeline
—	New Pedestrian Street
—	Active Interface
↔	Proposed Roads
↔	Active Transport
⇒	Potential Future Connection
○	Existing Roundabout
○	Intersection Upgrade

2.3 Amendments to the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct Structure Plan

No amendments to the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct Structure Plans were required following exhibition.



LEGEND:

- Site Boundary
- Lot Boundaries
- Existing State Heritage Item
- Local Park (approx. 0.5 ha)
- Neighbourhood Park (approx. 1 ha)
- Potential Detention Basin
- Existing Vegetation
- Future Residential Area (Urban)
- Transition Residential Area (Large Lot)
- Future Investigation Area
- ↔ Proposed Roads
- ↔ Active Transport Links
- ↔ Potential Road Connections
- Ridgeline
- Proposed Intersection
- 400m Radius from Open Space

3 Response to Submissions

3 Response to Submissions

3.1 Public Submissions

#	SUBMISSION NUMBER	SUBMISSION SUMMARY	COUNCIL RESPONSE
SOUTHERN GATEWAY ACTIVATION PRECINCT (SGAP)			
1	18759	Expressed strong support for the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct plan, noting its potential to drive future growth in Tamworth. Supports the vision and direction of the plan without requesting changes.	Council acknowledges the support for SGAP.
2	18757	Request that future planning for Arcadia Estate (East) allow for vehicle access/egress from Crestix land and adjoining properties.	A potential connection is identified in the structure plan, and any further detail will depend on a detailed traffic study and consultation by the developer with the adjoining landowners of Arcadia estate.
3	18756	Proposes SGAP boundary extensions to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Burgmanns Lane/Roberts Road Extension Area – gateway location, mixed-use potential, blue-green open space link, leverage Southern Access Route & Western Freight Link. Stockman's Motel and adjacent lands – include Stockman's Motel site and adjacent RU4 land for tourist and residential uses. South Kingswood Extension Area – include R5 land south of Spains Lane, allow subdivision to minimum 4,000m² to unify Kingswood's large-lot character. Ready to invest immediately; seeks clarity on future potential. 	The boundary of SGAP has been amended to include the Stockman's Motel and the adjacent lands as future investigation. However, the inclusion of the commercial and residential lands on the eastern side of the New England Highway are outside the scope of this structure plan and not identified in strategic planning documents. The inclusion of the South Kingswood Extension Area is outside the scope of the exhibited structure plans. Additionally, the land is not identified in current strategic planning documents for further investigation.
4	18753	Detailed safety concerns with Herden Road and Raife Road access, including flooding, erosion, and poor sight lines. Proposed Yules Road as a safer main access route, with	Safety concerns to be addressed in detailed road design; visual impacts will be mitigated through

		<p>potential for active transport integration. Requested minimum lot sizes of 2,000–3,000m² along Yules Road boundary to maintain visual character.</p>	<p>landscaping and design measures.</p> <p>Stage 1 will comprise of 4,000m² lots in response to the existing character of Kingswood Residential Area.</p>
5	18752	<p>Requested upgrades to Spains Lane, including widening, sealing, and weight limits to prevent heavy vehicle use as a freight bypass.</p> <p>Opposed the inclusion of a quarry in Stage 2, citing concerns about land stability, reduced residential lot yield, and long-term vision for the area.</p>	<p>Spains Lane upgrades to be investigated at the detailed design stage.</p> <p>The quarry is intended to be operational for the next 15–20 years and is subject to a separate development application process. Stage 2 of SGAP is anticipated to be executed post the 20-year mark.</p>
6	18751	<p>Opposed Herden Road as an access point due to safety and capacity issues. Suggested alternative access via Crown land to Spains Lane. Requested that block sizes remain at a minimum of 4,000m² to match surrounding Kingswood properties. Emphasised the need to protect local wildlife and maintain community character.</p>	<p>Herden Road is not intended to be a primary traffic route for SGAP.</p> <p>Stage 1 will comprise large lots of 4,000m².</p>
7	18735	<p>The submission supports the Draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plan but requests expanding Stage 1 to include two areas currently identified as Stage 2 (Stages 1A and 1B). Stage 1A would provide large lots adjacent to Kingswood, avoiding abrupt density transitions and reducing traffic and amenity impacts. Stage 1B would deliver additional large lots, improve road network connectivity to Burgmanns Lane, enhance character and environmental outcomes, and allow later subdivision once sewer services become available. The proposed changes increase early housing supply, improve feasibility, and better align with community expectations.</p>	<p>Stage 1 has been expanded and amended to include the area along Burgmanns Lane and the area south of Yules Road along the interface with the Kingswood Residential area.</p>
8	18725	<p>Recommended leaving open space between Kingswood and TRECC to avoid development creep. Opposed urban sprawl and suggested incorporating heritage and design inspiration from Walter Burley Griffin's work and historic Tamworth references. Encouraged community engagement, including with school students, to generate ideas.</p>	<p>Council acknowledges the importance of protecting the transition between Kingswood and TRECC. This area is identified as 'future investigation' in the TSEP structure plan.</p> <p>Opportunities to incorporate open space buffers and supporting uses for AELEC will be further examined</p>

		during the next phase of land use planning. This will involve community engagement.	
9	18722	Supported medium-density housing in the SGAP, referencing the NSW housing pattern booklet. Suggested that medium-density housing would help meet demand from people moving inland due to coastal housing costs.	
TAMWORTH SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT (TSEP)			
10	18758	Supports Council's goal of creating a strong tourism gateway at the Former Athletics Track but highlights several risks in the Draft Structure Plan. Emphasised the critical need for safe, purpose-built long-vehicle parking, recommending at least ten 16-metre pull-through bays. Caution against introducing multiple new short-stay accommodation sites without strong evidence of demand, as oversupply could harm existing operators. Urge that any Pedestrian Street complements—rather than competes with—Peel Street's CBD role. If the Golden Guitar is relocated, stress prioritising safety, photo experience, and a well-designed forecourt. Request staged development and genuine industry consultation.	Council acknowledges the issues raised regarding long-vehicle parking, accommodation demand, and the relationship between the future use and the existing CBD. These matters will be reviewed as part of future investigations and detailed design process for the Former Athletics Track, including consultation with stakeholders.
11	18757	Support the plan but request greater flexibility in future investigation areas. Recommended allowing a wider range of land uses, including manufactured home estates, to better support AELEC without creating land-use conflicts. Also suggested softening prescriptive wording in the key considerations and removing the term "potential" from investigation area mapping to reduce ambiguity.	Future land uses in the in the 'future investigation area' will be subject to a merit assessment and further investigation. Importantly, future land use should support the functioning of AELEC and the wider precinct and not give rise to potential land use conflict.
12	18754	Suggested limiting tourist accommodation to one facility; proposed a 500-seat performance hall or outdoor venue; retain Truck Drivers Memorial and Lions Park; double parking capacity for events.	Detailed design of the former athletics track will be undertaken through a future structure plan process.
13	18750	Opposed connecting Rodeo Drive to Arcadia Estate until upgrades are made to widen the road, add kerb and guttering, street lighting, drainage, and pedestrian walkways.	All proposed road connections will be subject to a detailed traffic assessment and infrastructure upgrade analysis to ensure they are fit of purpose.

14	18747	Fears the entertainment precinct will harm local amenity through excessive noise, light pollution, increased vehicle and foot traffic, litter, vandalism and petty crime, citing past issues with nearby venues. Opposes the precinct unless strict, enforceable guidelines are set for businesses, with approval from affected property owners to protect residential quality of life.	Event management guidelines and an acoustic impact assessment will be undertaken in future design development stages.
15	18745	The exhibited Indicative Layout Plan is considered overly prescriptive and inconsistent with the purpose of a structure plan, limiting potential land uses—particularly specialised retail premises. The submission requests removal of the Indicative Layout Plan and a broader vision enabling mixed-use development including specialised retail premises, hotel and visitor accommodation, food and drink premises, childcare, indoor recreation and integrated transport facilities. These uses are seen as essential to activating and supporting the AELEC and wider Sports and Entertainment Precinct.	The structure plan has been amended to identify the former athletics site as a key site. The indicative layout has been removed. The structure plan identifies a mixture of land uses for the former athletics track to support and complement the operation of the AELEC and the wider precinct.
16	18742	Questions why Northern Burgmanns Lane properties are excluded from development despite poor agricultural suitability, existing services, and demand for larger residential blocks. Urges consistent land use planning, developer-funded access, and reconsideration of long-term “future investigation” status to better support Tamworth’s growth.	Properties located to the north of Burgmanns Lane are identified as ‘future investigation’. The ‘future investigation area’ will be subject to further investigation, analysis and consultation. It is expected this will include the preparation of a site-specific structure plan for the area.
17	18744	Seeks rezoning of 293 Burgmanns Lane from 25-acre lots to 4,000m ² blocks to match neighbouring areas, ensuring consistency, visual appeal, and orderly growth at a key Tamworth gateway. Opposes retaining the current rural zoning, citing the land’s unsuitability for agriculture. All affected landowners agree to a collective sale to a developer to enable master-planned infrastructure, avoid piecemeal development, and deliver an estimated \$2 million saving to Council. Rezoning is sought to achieve planning uniformity, economic benefits, and appropriate land use consistent with other successful developments in Tamworth.	Properties located to the north of Burgmanns Lane are identified as ‘future investigation’.
18	18739		The ‘future investigation area’ will be subject to further investigation, analysis and consultation. It is expected this will include the preparation of a site-specific structure plan for the area.

19	18740	Supported subdivision into lifestyle blocks; noted poor agricultural suitability of large blocks in the area.	Noted, support for lifestyle-lot subdivision acknowledged.
20	18738	Opposed connecting Rodeo Drive to Arcadia Estate due to safety concerns for pedestrians and children using sporting facilities. Suggested traffic be directed to Burgmanns Lane instead.	All proposed road connections will be subject to a detailed traffic assessment and infrastructure upgrade analysis to ensure they are fit of purpose.
21	18733	Requested more "Changing Places" accessible bathrooms across Tamworth, including in the precinct, to support families with high-needs children.	Compliant amenities within the precinct will be considered during the detailed design stage.
22	18732	Supports the immediate adoption of the Structure Plan.	Council acknowledges the support for SGAP.
23	18727	Recommended retaining the old athletics field as public parkland with amenities such as shade trees, seating, and lighting.	The former athletics track is a key site within the precinct. Future uses of the former athletic track will be subject to merit assessment, detailed design and consultation. It is expected this will include the preparation of a site-specific structure plan.
24	18721	Suggested using the sports oval for an Aquatic Centre; warned against "white elephant" buildings without clear purpose.	The former athletics track is a key site within the precinct. Future uses of the former athletic track will be subject to merit assessment, detailed design and consultation. It is expected this will include the preparation of a site-specific structure plan.
25	-	Raises safety concerns regarding proposed medium-density housing in Precinct 3: Tamworth Sports and Entertainment. They argue the planned Peak Drive intersection is unsafe due to limited road width, curves, proximity to high-voltage infrastructure, and pedestrian risks. The developer should consider a new public road off Bylong Road (Arcadia Estate East) for access, closing Peak Drive. Access to the site needs a common-sense and long-term traffic planning that mitigates safety risks and protects existing residents' amenity and public confidence in planning decisions.	The access onto Peak Drive is identified as 'potential' and will be investigated through detailed traffic investigations and future site planning.

26	-	Suggests that the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct should remain public land. Argues the aggregated structure plan undermines sound planning, undervalues the land, and poorly accommodates visitor access. Cites past failed Visitor Information Centres and proposes alternative uses, including performing arts, Council offices, or a multi-use stadium, emphasizing public ownership, accessible parking, and green space preservation.	The former athletics track is a key site within the precinct. Future uses of the former athletic track will be subject to merit assessment, detailed design and consultation. It is expected this will include the preparation of a site-specific structure plan.
27	-	Seeks confirmation that the attached diagrams are illustrative only, ensuring the AQHA carpark won't be significantly reduced by trees in the proposed redevelopment.	Council confirms that all diagrams within the exhibited structure plan are indicative only.
KOOTINGAL RESIDENTIAL GROWTH PRECINCT			
28	18731	Concerned about recent development patterns dominated by dual key dwellings, often owned by out-of-town investors. Raised concerns about lack of neighbour consultation, poor parking provision, and inadequate infrastructure (roads, school capacity, public transport).	Concerns about dual key dwellings are noted. The development standards for these types of developments are largely set by State Legislation. Infrastructure capacity, including roads and community facilities, will form part of the detailed planning and staging considerations at rezoning stage.
29	18728	Strong case for prioritising Kootingal due to demand; retain wooded areas; provide public access to open space; ensure houses face key landmarks rather than back fences.	Council notes support for focusing growth in Kootingal. The detailed design stage will ensure high-quality streetscapes, accessible public spaces.
30	18726	Opposed the plan, citing lack of infrastructure (schools, shopping, police presence, medical services). Concerned that growth will erode the village lifestyle and increase crime. Suggested alternative growth areas such as Attunga or Manilla.	The proposed structure plan intends to maintain and enhance the existing character. Future planning will include detailed assessments of community infrastructure.
31	18724	Raised traffic safety concerns on Daruka Road, citing high speeds and heavy vehicles ignoring weight limits. Suggested speed reduction to 60 km/h and installation of average speed cameras.	The safety of Daruka Road will need to be considered separately and is outside the scope of the structure plans.

32	18719	Opposed high-density development near the property, citing increased traffic, rubbish, and loss of aesthetics. Concerned about strain on electricity, internet, and mobile coverage.	Infrastructure strain and impacts will be avoided. Future stages will include detailed infrastructure assessments and planning.
33	18718	Suggested creating a cycle/walkway between Kootingal and Moonbi to improve connectivity, especially for elderly residents using mobility scooters.	The suggestion is noted. Opportunities to deliver shared paths and active-transport connections will be investigated as part of the transport network planning for the precinct.
34	18717	Supported growth in Kootingal, noting the need for more housing. Suggested pedestrian access to Reginald Street to improve school connectivity.	Support for growth in Kootingal is noted. The structure plan includes active transport linkages into the existing / future Kootingal active transport network.
ALL			
35	18736	Urges Tamworth Council to address water supply before supporting further growth, warning that relying on farmers or small towns during droughts is irresponsible. Suggests building an additional dam as a fair solution.	Water security is a key priority, and water supply considerations will be investigated and assessed in all future planning stages to mitigate impacts.
36	18734	Suggests focus on improving roads and infrastructure at Calala, as flooding closes Calala Lane, forcing early departures. Seeks all-weather roads and practical council action instead of misused rate increases.	The adequacy of Calala Lane is outside the scope of the structure plan precincts.
37	18723	Urges Council to mandate green space in new housing, limit dark-colored roofs to reduce heat, and ensure sustainable planning to prevent water shortages, learning from other municipalities' strategies.	Sustainability considerations will be addressed in future planning and development controls.

3.2 Agency Submissions

#	AGENCY NAME	SUBMISSION SUMMARY	COUNCIL RESPONSE
38	Transport for NSW (TfNSW)	Generally supports the transport and active transport infrastructure outcomes identified for each precinct. Noted that Burgmanns Lane in SGAP is currently subject to a 100 km/h speed limit and is identified as a potential corridor for the future Western Freight Link. Supports limiting access to the precinct to two locations to protect the long-term function of	Freight corridor requirements are acknowledged. Council, TfNSW and the developer will continue discussions regarding the future intersection treatment with Arcadia Estate.

		<p>the freight corridor. Recommended further investigation into the proposed intersection treatment at the shared access point with the future Arcadia Estate, as the design may influence the current speed zone and have implications for safety and efficiency of freight movements.</p>	
39	Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo)	<p>Provided feedback noting that the Tamworth Regional Structure Plans are located within the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). EnergyCo is developing its Port to REZ strategy, including potential haulage routes for over-sized and over-mass (OSOM) vehicles during construction and operation of renewable energy projects. Requested ongoing coordination with Council during the development of the SGAP and Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct plans, particularly in relation to any associated road upgrades, to ensure alignment with the Port to REZ strategy and to avoid conflicts with OSOM freight movements.</p>	<p>Council, TfNSW and Energy Co will continue discussions regarding the future road upgrades related to SGAP and Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct.</p>
40	NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPCI)	<p>Acknowledged Council's work on the Structure Plans and provided detailed recommendations to ensure alignment with the New England North West Regional Plan 2041, State Environmental Planning Policies, and Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions.</p> <p>Recommended targeted consultation with key State Agencies including TfNSW, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Department of Education School Infrastructure, NSW Rural Fire Service, and NSW Resources. Advised adopting a flood risk-based approach and avoiding sensitive land uses below the probable maximum flood level. Suggested careful consideration of the size and scale of the proposed civic centre in SGAP to avoid negative impacts on the city's retail hierarchy. Recommended that a planning proposal be required to establish the Special Entertainment Precinct in TSEP in accordance with NSW guidelines, with consultation with relevant agencies. Emphasised that infrastructure service planning should be undertaken prior to rezoning to ensure land can be feasibly serviced.</p>	<p>Council acknowledges DPCI's recommendations and confirms that the identified State Government agencies has been consulted as part of the draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plans.</p> <p>Future planning proposals and development application will be required to follow the provisions given in the TRLEP 2010 and Flood Risk Management Manual 2023 (FRMM 2023) and provide an infrastructure servicing plan.</p> <p>The draft structure plan provides an indicative civic centre with the size and scale to be determined based on a future economic analysis which will consider existing retail hierarchies.</p> <p>A planning proposal has been prepared to establish the proposed Special</p>

			Entertainment Precinct in the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct.
41	NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water – Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group (DCCEEW – CPHR)	Supports the intent to provide high-quality public spaces and diverse housing options while avoiding environmentally sensitive areas. Recommended prioritising avoidance of development in floodplains and high environmental value (HEV) land. Identified small areas of biodiversity value within all three precincts and advised further investigation to avoid impacts. Provided detailed guidance for assessing and addressing biodiversity impacts in planning proposals, including steps for HEV identification at the property scale and methods for avoiding and minimising impacts. Encouraged ongoing communication with DCCEEW during preparation of biodiversity studies and planning proposals.	Planning Proposal and Development Applications will need to be supported by Flora and Fauna Assessment to identify, avoid and minimise impacts to areas of high environmental value. Future Planning Proposal and Development Applications will also be required to consider the provisions of the TRLEP 2010 and Flood Risk Management Manual 2023 (FRMM 2023).
42	NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture and Biosecurity	Noted that development of the precinct areas will result in cumulative loss of agricultural land within the Tamworth LGA. Highlighted that the SGAP contains significant areas of high-quality agricultural land (Land and Soil Capability Class 4). Recognised that the precinct areas are identified as investigation areas in strategic plans and supported by the Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy. Recommended undertaking a Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) to inform development controls, buffer requirements, and staging, particularly where agricultural production may continue adjacent to new residential areas. Emphasised the importance of managing land use conflicts during staged development.	A LUCRA will be required for future Planning Proposals. Transition areas have been incorporated where agricultural production may continue adjacent to other parts of the Precinct that may transition to residential land uses earlier.

Disclaimer

This report is dated 11 November 2025 and incorporates information and events up to that date only and excludes any information arising, or event occurring, after that date which may affect the validity of Urbis Ltd (**Urbis**) opinion in this report. Urbis prepared this report on the instructions, and for the benefit only, of Tamworth Regional Council (**Instructing Party**) for the purpose of Response to Submissions (**Purpose**) and not for any other purpose or use. To the extent permitted by applicable law, Urbis expressly disclaims all liability, whether direct or indirect, to the Instructing Party which relies or purports to rely on this report for any purpose other than the Purpose, and to any other person which relies or purports to rely on this report for any purpose whatsoever (including the Purpose).

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Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure



IRF25/1813

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4 September 2025

Subject: Exhibition of the draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plans

Dear Mr Bennett

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plans.

I would like to acknowledge the work undertaken by Council to date as well as your continued pursuit to deliver positive strategic-led planning outcomes for the community.

Council's review of development, transport and open space opportunities in the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct, Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct and the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct is acknowledged. A number of specific matters are identified in Attachment One of this letter for Council's consideration.

When finalising the Structure Plans, Council should ensure that they are consistent with the New England North West Regional Plan 2041, State Environmental Planning Policies and Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions. The Department's Hunter and Northern Regional Team would be pleased to assist Council as this project progresses.

Should you have any enquiries, I have arranged for Ms Kate Campbell, Senior Planning Officer, to assist you. Ms Campbell can be contacted on 5778 1401 or kate.campbell@planning.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Craig Diss
Director, Hunter and Northern Region
Local Planning & Council Support



**Attachment One – Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure comment on the draft
Tamworth Regional Structure Plans:**

- Targeted consultation be undertaken with the following State government agencies:
 - Transport for NSW
 - Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
 - Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
 - Department of Education School Infrastructure
 - NSW Rural Fire Service
 - NSW Resources
- That a flood risk-based approach be adopted and consideration be given to the appropriateness of developing any land for sensitive land uses below the probable maximum flood level;
- The size and scale of the proposed civic centre in the Southern Gateway Precinct be carefully considered in relation to the city's retail hierarchy and the potential impact on the viability of existing commercial spaces;
- That a planning proposal be required to establish the proposed Special Entertainment Precinct in accordance with the NSW Special Entertainment Precinct Guidelines in the Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct. Council may wish to consult on its appropriateness with agencies such as NSW Police, Liquor and Gaming NSW, NSW Live Music Office, Transport for NSW, Office of the 24-hour Economy Commissioner and NSW Health (Local Health District);
- Infrastructure service planning should be undertaken prior to the lodgement of any future planning proposals to establish that land can be feasibly serviced prior to rezoning; and
- Following adoption of the Structure Plans by Council and prior to the lodgement of any planning proposals, it is recommended that the plans are submitted to the Department for approval.



Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Our ref: DOC25/621823-4

Your ref: Tamworth Regional Structure Plan Report

Mitch Gillogly
Team Leader, Strategic Planning
Tamworth Regional Council
By email: m.gillogly@tamworth.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mitch

CPHR Response – draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plan – July 2025 Exhibition

Thank you for your email dated 23 July 2025 to the Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group (CPHR) of the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (NSW DCCEEW) inviting comments on the exhibited draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plan (the 'plan').

We have reviewed the draft plan and are supportive of the intent to provide high-quality public spaces and facilities, and a diverse mix of housing options by maximising existing infrastructure and avoiding environmentally sensitive areas. Prioritising avoidance of development in the floodplain and in areas of high environmental value (HEV) in the first instance is key to meeting this intent.

Through our desktop review we have identified small areas of biodiversity value within the three proposed precincts and recommend additional investigation to identify and avoid impacts to the floodplain and HEV land. A summary of our recommendations is provided in **Attachment A**, and our detailed comments are in **Attachment B**.

For any planning proposals which are prepared in relation to the plan, we recommend our standard approach to avoiding and minimising impacts to biodiversity values and assessing biodiversity impacts on HEV land. This approach is set out in the following attachments to this letter:

- **Attachment C** describes our recommended steps for assessing and addressing biodiversity as part of the strategy. This aims to ensure that a planning proposal demonstrates consistency with the strategic planning framework including the relevant Regional Plan, particularly in identifying and protecting HEV lands.
- **Attachment D** describes the HEV criteria and provides our recommended method for investigating lands for the presence of HEV criteria at the property scale as part of a planning proposal.
- **Attachment E** provides our recommended guidance for avoiding and minimising impacts on HEV land as part of a planning proposal.

We encourage ongoing communication with us to discuss HEV identification or preparation of any biodiversity studies associated with the plan, or subsequent planning proposals.

Please do not hesitate to contact Rebecca Hobbs, Conservation Planning Officer, via
Rebecca.hobbs@dcceew.nsw.gov.au or 4224 4135.

Yours sincerely,



Renee Shepherd
Acting Senior Team Leader Regional Conservation, North West Branch
Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group

2 September 2025

Attachment A – CPHR's Recommendations
Attachment B – CPHR's Detailed Comments & Recommendations
Attachment C – CPHR's Steps for Assessing Biodiversity in Planning Proposals
Attachment D – CPHR's HEV Criteria and Identification Methods
Attachment E – CPHR's Guidance for Avoiding & Minimising Impacts on HEV Land

Attachment A

CPHR's Recommendations

Draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plan

BAM	Biodiversity Assessment Method
BC Act	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i>
BC Reg	<i>Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017</i>
BDAR	Biodiversity development assessment report
BOS	Biodiversity Offset Scheme
Box Gum Woodland CEEC	White Box, Yellow Box, Blakely's Red Gum Critically Endangered Ecological Community
BV Map	Biodiversity values map
CPHR	Conservation Planning, Heritage and Regulation Group
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water
ESA	Environmentally sensitive areas
HEV	High environmental value
LEP	Local environmental plan
LGA	Local government area
The plan	Tamworth Regional Structure Plan
SAII	Serious and irreversible impact
STVM	State Vegetation Type Map

Biodiversity

- 1.1. Conduct site-specific field assessment by an ecologist for each precinct to identify the quality and extent of all biodiversity values early in the planning stage.
- 1.2. Prioritise identification, avoidance and minimisation of impacts to areas of high environmental value and serious and irreversible impact entities via strategic master planning, prior to progressing any planning proposals or development applications.

Flooding

- 2.1. Consider flooding issues according to the requirements of the NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy as set out in the Flood Risk Management Manual 2023 and supporting guidelines and consider relevant parts of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979.
- 2.2. Prepare a detailed Flood Impact and Risk Assessment for future planning stages of the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct and Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct.
- 2.3. Undertake a Flood Study for the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct as a vital first step in flood risk assessment for this precinct.
- 2.4. Prepare a simple Flood Impact and Risk Assessment for the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct.

Attachment B

CPHR's Detailed Comments & Recommendations

Draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plan

Introduction

CPHR understand the draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plan (the 'plan') has been developed in response to key actions identified in the New England North West Regional Plan 2041, Council's Blueprint 100: Part 1 and Part 2 – Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 and Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024.

CPHR is providing comment on the plan as we may be consulted if a planning proposal or development application is prepared which affects land with biodiversity or flooding constraints. CPHR has four areas of interest relating to strategic land use:

1. The impacts of development intensification on biodiversity.
2. Adequate investigation of the environmental constraints of affected land.
3. Avoiding intensification of land use and settlement in areas of high environmental value (HEV).
4. Ensuring that development within a floodplain is consistent with the NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy, the principles set out in the Floodplain Development Manual, and applicable urban and rural floodplain risk management plans.

We generally support strategic planning proposals which:

- avoid settlement intensification in areas of HEV and environmental hazards
- aligns with state, regional and local strategic planning frameworks and includes objectives, such as 'no net loss of native vegetation'
- update planning controls to reflect the environmental values and constraints present, and
- minimise flood risk to human life, property and the local environment while maintaining floodplain connectivity for environmental benefit.

Biodiversity

The draft plan identifies two potential precincts for greenfield residential development and a mixed-zone sports and entertainment hub to support regional growth and tourism. We acknowledge that the plan is a high-level summary of the key planning directions for the three precincts and will require future amendments to the Tamworth Regional Development Control Plan and Tamworth Local Environmental Plan 2010.

We have reviewed satellite imagery, State Vegetation Type Mapping (SVTM) and BioNet threatened species records, to identify any biodiversity constraints in the proposed development precincts. We note that much of the land across the three precincts has been cleared historically for agricultural use, but remnant patches of vegetation and paddock trees have been retained in some areas. It is important to highlight that the composition of groundcover or quality of vegetation cannot be reliably determined at a desktop level and the suitability of development of any precinct would require further on-ground investigation to identify and appropriately mitigate any impacts to biodiversity values.

For Tamworth Regional LGA, remnant vegetation and scattered trees are often associated with *White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland* critically endangered ecological community (Box Gum Woodland CEEC) and can extend beyond the tree line as a derived grassland community. Given the potential for Box Gum Woodland CEEC to occur across the precincts, we recommend a site-specific field assessment by an ecologist. The field assessment would identify the

quality and extent of all biodiversity values and be used to inform any constraints analysis as part of the upfront master planning of each precinct.

Early identification of biodiversity values is important at the land use strategy stage as it directly influences the development potential and yield of land at subsequent planning phases. This will ensure adequate avoidance of threatened species, communities and their habitat can be incorporated into the lot yield and layout. Identifying and avoiding clearing of biodiversity values early in the strategic planning framework will also help to avoid delays in meeting the requirements of any future planning proposal or development application resulting from the plan.

If a future subdivision identified in the plan will impact native vegetation and the clearing exceeds the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme (BOS) thresholds (Part 7, *Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017* [BC Reg]); the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) must be applied, and a biodiversity development assessment report (BDAR) prepared to assess and calculate the biodiversity offset credits requirement.

Serious and Irreversible Impact entities may be present within the residential precincts

Available regional-scale native vegetation mapping indicates the potential for Box Gum Woodland CEEC to be present within several residential precincts in the plan. It is important to note that the extent of predicted Box Gum Woodland CEEC may be larger than expected. The CEEC also occurs in a derived native grassland form, which is not represented in DCCEEW regional scale mapping products.

Box Gum Woodland CEEC has been assessed by DCCEEW as an entity likely to be at risk of serious and irreversible impacts (SAII) within the meaning of clause 6.7 of the BC Reg. Entities at risk of SAII have additional assessment requirements under the BAM when the BOS is triggered.

Under section 7.16 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* (BC Act), the consent authority must refuse to grant consent if the approval of a proposed development is likely to have a serious and irreversible impact on SAII entities. Further advice regarding determination of serious and irreversible impacts is available via the Department's website <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-02/guidance-decision-makers-determine-serious-irreversible-impact-190511.pdf>

Investigating, avoiding and minimising impacts to Box Gum Woodland CEEC at the strategic planning stage will reduce the likelihood of future development in the residential precincts having a SAII determination and being unable to proceed, or incurring substantial biodiversity credit offset obligations.

Recommendations

1. Conduct site-specific field assessment by an ecologist for each precinct to identify the quality and extent of all biodiversity values early in the planning stage.
2. Prioritise identification, avoidance and minimisation of impacts to areas of high environmental value and serious and irreversible impact entities via strategic master planning, prior to progressing any planning proposals or development applications.

Flooding

Development of the proposed precincts will alter the natural hydrologic environment. It is expected the increase in the impervious surface will result in higher runoff volumes than the existing conditions and modify natural flood behaviour. Thus, the associated risk of flooding should be estimated.

For each precinct, it is required to analyse the pre- and post- development scenarios based on catchment hydrologic conditions, proposed subdivision layout, drainage network, Tamworth Regional Council's engineering design standards and the Australian Rainfall Runoff (ARR) 2019 Guidelines¹. The analysis

¹ <https://arr.ga.gov.au/arr-guideline>

should include flood mitigation options to safely control the expected additional surface runoff, such as stormwater detention basins.

Consideration of flooding issues is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy as set out in the Flood Risk Management Manual 2023 (the Manual) and supporting guidelines². Furthermore, the relevant planning directions and circulars relating to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* must be considered.

It should also be noted that large housing projects associated with the residential development will require master planning proposals. The following guidelines on the NSW SES website may also be useful in development of these planning proposals: Reducing Vulnerability of Buildings to Flood Damage; Designing Safer Subdivisions; and Managing Flood Risk Through Planning Outcomes.

Southern Gateway Activation Precinct and Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct

The combined area of the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct (757 ha) and adjacent Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct (341 ha) exceeds 1,000 ha and as suggested in the plan, upgrades and new road infrastructure will be necessary. Future planning stages for these precincts will require the preparation of a Flood Impact and Risk Assessment³ (FIRA). Separate assessments for each precinct can be prepared, however, a combined assessment where the two precincts are merged is also acceptable and may be more cost-effective. In either case, a detailed FIRA is mandatory.

Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct

Council is invited to submit an application to undertake a Flood Study under the NSW Floodplain Management Program to estimate the existing risk of flooding in the Kootingal precinct. A simple FIRA should then be prepared.

Recommendations

- 2.1 Consider flooding issues according to the requirements of the NSW Government's Flood Prone Land Policy as set out in the Flood Risk Management Manual 2023 and supporting guidelines and consider relevant parts of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*.
- 2.2 Prepare a detailed Flood Impact and Risk Assessment for future planning stages of the Southern Gateway Activation Precinct and Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct.
- 2.3 Undertake a Flood Study for the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct as a vital first step in flood risk assessment for this precinct.
- 2.4 Prepare a simple Flood Impact and Risk Assessment for the Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct.

² <https://www2.environment.nsw.gov.au/publications/flood-risk-management-manual>

³ <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/flood-risk-management-impact-risk-assessment-230234.pdf>

Attachment C

CPHR North West Branch Steps for Assessing Biodiversity in Planning Proposals

Introduction

Planning proposals should demonstrate consistency with the State, regional and local strategic planning framework including the relevant Regional Plan and section 9.1 Ministerial Directions. To be consistent with the relevant Regional Plan for areas with High Environmental Value (HEV) (see **Attachment D** for identifying HEV), planning proposals should identify areas of HEV at the property scale and avoid intensification of development and land uses in those areas.

The s.9.1 Direction 2.1 Conservation Zones, require that Councils in preparing or amending a Local Environmental Plan (LEP) must include provisions that facilitate the protection and conservation of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) zoned or otherwise identified for conservation. As a minimum, these provisions must aim to maintain the existing level of protection for ESAs within the local government area (LGA), as afforded by the current LEP.

Avoiding and minimising land use intensification in HEV areas may also facilitate future development by avoiding triggering the Biodiversity Offset Scheme (BOS) at the development application stage; or simplifying the application of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) and reducing the future biodiversity credit liability.

Biodiversity assessment for all planning proposals which affect HEV

Biodiversity assessment for planning proposals should implement the following steps:

Step 1: Identify HEV

The planning proposal should identify and map areas of HEV with desktop analysis and site investigations when required, as set out in **Attachment B**.

Step 2: Avoid and minimise impacts on HEV

The planning proposal should take into consideration any impacts throughout the life of the proposal and all possible future land uses. Once all impacts are identified, the proposal can be located and designed to maximise avoidance of land use intensification in HEV areas and adhere with the guidance in **Attachment C**.

Step 3: Protect HEV

The planning proposal should maintain or improve existing planning provisions to protect HEV, while permitting land use intensification on certain parts of the land suitable for development. Updates to planning controls should reflect the environmental values and constraints present on the land, rather than permitting development intensification uniformly across an entire site. Areas of HEV should instead be better protected by updating LEP provisions, such as through:

- an appropriate zone which has strong conservation objectives and limited land uses
- an appropriate minimum lot size (MLS) so the land cannot be subdivided
- updating terrestrial biodiversity mapping
- creating local provisions which:
 - contain site specific constraints such as buffers, objectives and considerations for future development consents and limits certain development or land uses

- identifies land with "high biodiversity significanceⁱ⁴" to preclude exempt or complying development from occurring on any ESAs
- require future management actions through a Development Control Plan (DCP) or Biodiversity and Vegetation Management Plan (BVMP).

Optional step for large or complex planning proposals which affect HEV

Step 4: Identify biodiversity values and entities at risk of serious and irreversible impacts (SAII)

The planning proposal could apply Stage 1 of the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) to identify plant community types, threatened species and ecological communities, as well as SAII entities likely to be present. Application of Stage 1 of the BAM can be beneficial at the planning proposal stage as, if in the opinion of Council any:

- Clearing associated with future subdivision or development of the land is likely to impact native vegetation and exceed the thresholds in Part 7 of the Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017, then a biodiversity development assessment report (BDAR) will be required at the development application stage.
- Future development is likely to have a serious and irreversible impact on a SAII entity, then under section 7.16 of the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* a consent authority must refuse to grant consent to the development. Further advice regarding determination of serious and irreversible impacts is available via the [*Guidance to assist a decision-maker to determine a serious and irreversible impact \(2019\)*](#).

By applying Stage 1 of the BAM as part of the planning proposal, the proponent can further identify and avoid areas of biodiversity value that will generate a biodiversity credit liability or contain SAII entities in the development application planning phase. When biodiversity is considered strategically at planning stage, future development assessment can be simplified and credit obligations reduced.

⁴ *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008* – cl.1.5(g) and *Standard Instrument – Principal Local Environmental Plan (2006 EPI 155a)* cl.3.3(g) "environmentally sensitive area" includes land identified in an environmental planning instrument as being of high biodiversity significance.

Attachment D

CPHR North West Branch HEV Criteria and Identification Methods at the Property Scale

High Environmental Value (HEV) Criteria and Components	Property Scale HEV Identification Method	
Criterion 1. Sensitive Biodiversity Mapped on the Biodiversity Values Map		
1.1 Biodiversity Values Map	<p>a. Identify the parts of the land on the Biodiversity Values map which can be viewed at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/biodiversity-offsets-scheme/about-the-biodiversity-offsets-scheme/when-does-bos-apply/biodiversity-values-map.</p> <p>b. Include any BV map areas as HEV.</p>	
Criterion 2. Native vegetation of high conservation value		
2.1 Vegetation in over-cleared landscapes (Mitchell landscapes)	<p>a. Identify over-cleared Mitchell landscapes by viewing map data from the SEED portal https://www.seed.nsw.gov.au/ – selecting NSW (Mitchell Landscapes) – latest version, selecting 'Show on Seed Map' and viewing the 'View Over Cleared Land Status'.</p> <p>b. Map all native vegetation on the land as HEV if it is in an over-cleared Mitchell landscape.</p>	
2.2 Over-cleared vegetation types	<p>a. Identify Plant Community Types (PCTs) on the land through field work.</p> <p>b. Register and visit the Vegetation Information System (VIS) database at vis@environment.nsw.gov.au.</p> <p>c. Use the VIS to determine whether the % cleared status of the PCTs identified through field work on the land is above 70%.</p> <p>d. Map all PCTs on the land with the % cleared above 70% as HEV.</p>	
2.3 Threatened Ecological Communities - any vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered ecological community listed under the BC Act, the FM Act 1994 or the EPBC Act and not mapped on the BV map	<p>a. Identify Plant Community Types (PCTs) on the land through field work.</p> <p>b. Register and visit the VIS database at vis@environment.nsw.gov.au.</p> <p>c. Use the VIS to determine whether the PCTs on the land have Threatened Ecological Community (TEC) Status.</p> <p>d. If not identified as a TEC from steps a – c above, then refer to the NSW Threatened Species Scientific Committee determinations to consider whether the any of the PCTs accords with the determinations.</p> <p>e. Map all PCTs on the land that are TECs as HEV.</p>	
Criterion 3. Threatened species		
3.1 Key habitat for threatened species (vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species listed under BC Act)	Key breeding habitats with known breeding occurrence	<p>a. Search BioNet for threatened species records on and within 10km of the land</p> <p>b. Undertake field work to identify potential breeding habitats on the land for threatened species.</p> <p>c. Either assume breeding occurrence and map identified breeding habitats on the land as HEV or undertake targeted surveys during the applicable breeding season(s) and map these habitats as HEV if breeding occurs there.</p>
	Core Koala Habitat	<p>a. Check council records for approved comprehensive or individual property Koala Plans of Management (KPoM).</p> <p>b. Identify areas of core koala habitat on the land mapped in any approved KPoMs and map these areas as HEV.</p> <p>c. If there are no approved KPoMs, then undertake field work in accordance with the relevant State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) for koalas, e.g. SEPP (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2022, to determine whether Core Koala Habitat is present on the land.</p>

rog.nw@environment.nsw.gov.au | environment.nsw.gov.au | 9

High Environmental Value (HEV) Criteria and Components		Property Scale HEV Identification Method
Habitat for known populations of flora and fauna species-credit-species and SAI1 entities (species-credit species and SAI1 entities are identified in the Threatened Biodiversity Data Collection)		<p>d. Map any core koala habitat identified on the land through field work as HEV.</p> <p>a. Search BioNet for threatened species records on and within 10km of the land.</p> <p>b. Undertake field work to identify populations of threatened species credit species on the land and their habitats.</p> <p>c. Map all habitats of known populations of species credit species on the land as HEV.</p> <p>The Biodiversity Assessment Method and the Department's survey assessment guidelines should be referred to for suitable habitat assessment methodologies and can be found here.</p> <p>If a recent Biodiversity Development Assessment Report has been prepared for the land, then this could be referred to in support of demonstrating how this criterion has been considered.</p>
		<p>a. Search BioNet for threatened migratory species records on and within 10km of the land.</p> <p>b. Undertake field work to identify habitats of threatened migratory species on the land.</p> <p>c. Map all habitats of threatened migratory species on the land as HEV.</p>
Criterion 4. Wetlands, rivers, estuaries & coastal features of high environmental value		
4.1 Nationally important wetlands Note: Rivers and their riparian areas comprising HEV are already included in the Biodiversity Values Map under HEV Criterion 1 as protected riparian land	<p>a. Search the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia for those occurring in NSW available at http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/wetlands/search.pl?smode=DOIW.</p> <p>b. Identify any nationally important wetlands listed in the directory that occur on the land and map these areas as HEV.</p>	
Criterion 5. Areas of geological significance		
5.1 Karst landscapes	<p>a. Identify whether limestone outcrops or caves occur on the land.</p> <p>b. Consider any additional Karst landscapes that occur in the vicinity of the land, with reference to the NSW Government's <i>Guide to New South Wales Karst and Caves</i> available at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Land-and-soil/nsw-karst-cave-guide-110455.pdf and any other available karst mapping, such as karst maps associated with local environmental plans.</p> <p>c. Map any limestone outcrops or caves on the land and any other karst landscapes that occur in the vicinity of the land as HEV.</p>	
5.2 Sites of geological significance included in the State Heritage Register or Heritage Inventory	<p>a. Map any sites of geological significance that occur on, or in the vicinity of, the land as HEV. Refer to the State Heritage Inventory and map at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/heritage/search-heritage-databases/state-heritage-inventory</p>	

Attachment E

CPHR North West Branch HEV Guidance for Avoiding and Minimising Impacts on HEV Land

Decisions about the location of land use intensification in planning proposals should be informed by knowledge of biodiversity values including high environmental values (HEV) recognising that this is an iterative process that should consider the guidance provided below.

Locating land use intensification to avoid and minimise impacts on validated HEV

1. Planning proposal design, including the potential location of future temporary and permanent ancillary construction and maintenance facilities, should minimise direct impacts to clearing of native vegetation, habitat of threatened species and ecological communities, and validated HEV.
- Impacts can be avoided and minimised by locating land use intensification in areas:
 - (a) where there are no biodiversity values e.g. locating future development away from native vegetation, geological features of significance or waterbodies
 - (b) that avoid habitat for species and native vegetation communities in high threat status categories (i.e. endangered or critically endangered species or communities)
 - (c) where the native vegetation or threatened species habitat is in the poorest condition (e.g. areas that have already been disturbed)
 - (d) such that connectivity enabling movement of species and genetic material between areas of adjacent or nearby habitat is maintained e.g. further fragmenting or isolating habitat patches, and migratory flight paths to important habitat.
2. In selecting locations for land use intensification, the following alternatives should be addressed:
 - (a) optimising the locations of land use intensification to minimise future interactions with threatened species and ecological communities, e.g. allowing for buffers around features that attract and support aerial species, such as forest edges, riparian corridors and wetlands, ridgetops and gullies, and National Park estate⁵
 - (b) alternative locations that would avoid or minimise impacts on biodiversity values and justification for selecting the proposed location
 - (c) alternative sites within a property on which land use intensification is proposed that would avoid or minimise impacts on biodiversity values and justification for selecting the proposed site.
3. Justifications for decisions on the location of land use intensification should identify any other site constraints that the proponent has considered in determining the location and design of these areas, e.g. bushfire protection requirements including clearing for asset protection zones, flood planning levels, servicing constraints.
4. Actions taken to avoid and minimise impacts through locating areas for land use intensification must be documented and justified in the planning proposal.

⁵ For more information, see the Developments adjacent to NPWS lands: Guidelines for consent and planning authorities (Environment, Energy and Science, 2020), accessible at <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Parks-reserves-and-protected-areas/Development-guidelines/developments-adjacent-npws-lands-200362.pdf>

Other Impacts on validated HEV

Some future development to be enabled by a planning proposal may have other impacts on validated HEV in addition to, or instead of, impacts from clearing vegetation and/or loss of habitat. For many of these impacts, validated HEV may be difficult to quantify, replace or offset, making avoiding and minimising impacts critical.

Other impacts on validated HEV can include:

- (a) impacts of future development on the habitat of threatened species or ecological communities associated with:
 - i. karst, caves, crevices, cliffs and other geological features of significance, or
 - ii. rocks, or
 - iii. human made structures, or
 - iv. non-native vegetation
- (b) impacts of future development on the connectivity of different areas of habitat of threatened species that facilitates the movement of those species across their range
- (c) impacts of future development on movement of threatened species that maintains their life cycle
- (d) impacts of future development on water quality, water bodies and hydrological processes that sustain threatened species and threatened ecological communities (including from subsidence or up-sidence resulting from underground mining)
- (e) impacts of wind turbine strikes on protected animals
- (f) impacts of vehicle strikes on threatened species or on animals that are part of a Threatened Ecological Community.

- Within the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*, these types of impacts are called 'prescribed impacts'. Where the Biodiversity Offset Scheme is triggered by a future development, the decision maker may increase the number of biodiversity credits to be retired (or other conservation measures to be undertaken) to compensate for residual prescribed impacts. Avoiding these types of impacts to HEV at the planning proposal stage can simplify future development assessment at the site.

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES SUBMISSIONS

Department of Primary Industries
and Regional Development



OUT25/11828

Mr Paul Bennett
General Manager
Tamworth Regional Council
PO Box 555
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Attention: Mitch Gillogly
m.gillogly@tamworth.nsw.gov.au

Tamworth Regional Structure Plans

Dear Mr Bennett

Thank you for your correspondence of 23 July 2025 and the opportunity to provide comment on the draft structure plans for the following precincts:

- Precinct 1: Southern Gateway Activation Precinct;
- Precinct 2: Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct; and
- Precinct 3: Tamworth Sports and Entertainment Precinct.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Agriculture and Biosecurity (the Department) collaborates and partners with our stakeholders to protect and enhance the productive and sustainable use and resilience of agricultural resources and the environment.

The Department has reviewed the draft structure plans and associated reports and provides the following comments for your consideration:

The future development of the Precinct areas will result in a cumulative loss of agricultural land within the Tamworth Local Government Area (LGA). The Southern Activation Precinct in particular represents a large area of high quality agricultural land with parts of this proposed precinct mapped as Land and Soil Capability (LSC) Class 4 land under the Land and Soil Capability (Second Approximation).

It is however recognised that the Precinct Areas are identified as investigation areas within relevant strategic plans and that the development of Structure Plans for these Precincts was supported by actions within the endorsed Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy. It is understood that these areas will be subject to additional strategic and site merit justification.

Land use conflict risk is identified as a consideration within the Structure Plan documentation. A Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) will help to inform and complement the Structure Planning process, development controls, and buffer requirements, enabling a systematic, consistent, and site-specific assessment of conflicts related to land use planning and development. This will be particularly important for the proposed staging of Precincts where agricultural production may continue within these areas adjacent to other parts of the Precinct that may transition to residential land uses earlier.

The Department welcomes continued consultation on this matter as it progresses.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0412 424397 or by email at landuse.ag@dpird.nsw.gov.au.

Sincerely



Selina Stillman
Agricultural Land Use Planning Officer
Agriculture and Biosecurity | Agricultural Land Use Planning
New England and North West Region

12 September 2025

Transport for NSW

26 August 2025



File No: NTH24/00581/003

General Manager
Tamworth Regional Council
PO Box 555
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

Attention: Mitch Gillogly, Team Leader – Strategic Planning

Public Exhibition of the Tamworth Regional Structure Plans (3 Precincts)

I refer to the public exhibition of the three (3) Precincts of the Tamworth Regional Structure Plans currently on public exhibition, being:

- Precinct 1 - Southern Gateway Activation Precinct,
- Precinct 2 - Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct, and
- Precinct 3 - Tamworth sports and Entertainment Precinct

Additionally, Council's email of 23 July 2025 requesting Transport for NSW agency advice.

TfNSW has reviewed the Tamworth Regional Structure Plans prepared by Urbis on behalf of Tamworth Regional Council, dated 23 June 2025 and generally supports the transport and active transport infrastructure outcomes identified for each precinct. The following advice is provided for Council's review:

1. Precinct 1 – Southern Gateway Activation Precinct

This precinct is accessed from Burgmanns Lane, which is currently subject to a 100km/h speed limit. The structure plan identifies Burgmanns Lane as a potential corridor for the future 'Western Freight Link'. As such, TfNSW acknowledges that access to the precinct has been limited to two (2) locations, which supports the long-term planning intent for the corridor.

TfNSW recommends further investigation into the proposed intersection treatment at the shared access point with the future Arcadia Estate. The proposed design may influence the current speed zone and could have implications for the overall safety and efficiency of a freight corridor.

If you have any further enquiries regarding the above comments please do not hesitate to contact Leisa Sedger, Development Services Case Officer on 1300 207 783 or 02 9549 9485 via email at: development.north@transport.nsw.gov.au.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Shelby Wells'.

Shelby Wells
A/Team Leader Development Services
Technical Advice & Development Services
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OFFICIAL

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transport.nsw.gov.au 1 of 1

Mitchell Gillogly

From: Ania Dorocinska <Ania.Dorocinska@energyco.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 9 September 2025 8:42 AM
To: Mitchell Gillogly
Cc: David Koppers; Asha McNeill
Subject: RE: Public Exhibition of the Tamworth Regional Structure Plans - Agencies and Stakeholders

Dear Mitchell,

Thank you for consulting with EnergyCo regarding the draft Tamworth Regional Structure Plans located within the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).

EnergyCo is currently developing its Port to REZ strategy for the New England REZ, including potential haulage routes for over-sized and over-mass (OSOM) (and other construction and operational) movements, funding and delivery arrangements.

EnergyCo would like to achieve a coordinated approach between the planning of traffic movements (during construction and operation) of the proposed Precincts and the Port to REZ strategy. In this regard, EnergyCo requests ongoing coordination with Tamworth Regional Council during the development of the plans for Precinct 1 (Southern Gateway Activation Precinct) and Precinct 2 (Kootingal Residential Growth Precinct), particularly in relation to any associated road upgrades.

Please contact David Koppers, Manager Planning at David.Koppers@energyco.nsw.gov.au if you would like to discuss this matter further, or require more information.

Thank you, Ania.

Kind Regards,

Ania Dorocińska
Senior Planning and Policy Officer
Planning and Communities

Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo)

T 9274 6225 M 0414 848 343
E ania.dorocinska@energyco.nsw.gov.au W energyco.nsw.gov.au



EnergyCo

From: Mitchell Gillogly <m.gillogly@tamworth.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 23 July 2025 5:57 PM
Cc: Andrew Spicer <a.spicer@tamworth.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Public Exhibition of the Tamworth Regional Structure Plans - Agencies and Stakeholders

Good afternoon,

GYDE

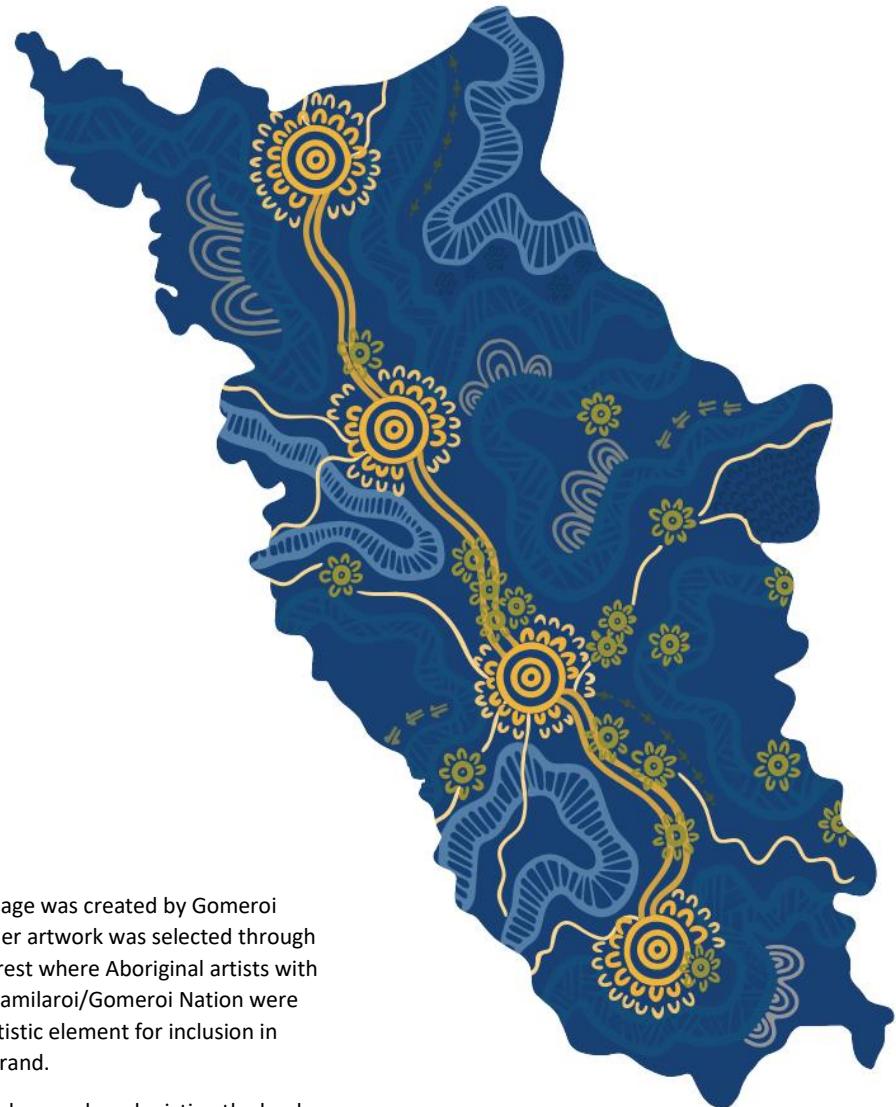
Draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy

Prepared for Tamworth Regional Council
Issued December 2025

Acknowledgment of Country

Tamworth Regional Council would like to acknowledge the Gamarlari/Kamarlari people, who are the traditional custodians of this land.

We would like to pay respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in and visiting our region.



The artwork on this page was created by Gomeroi artist Tess Reading. Her artwork was selected through an expression of interest where Aboriginal artists with a connection to the Kamarlari/Gomeroi Nation were asked to create an artistic element for inclusion in Council's corporate brand.

Ms Reading describes her work as depicting the land and communities that spread across the Tamworth Regional Council footprint. Elements of the artwork will start to appear on Council's letterheads, business cards, signage and uniforms in 2025.

Revised Draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy

Date: December 2025

Status: Revised Draft – Post Exhibition

This report has been prepared by Gyde with input from a number of expert consultants. To the best of our knowledge, the information contained herein is neither false nor misleading and the contents are based on information and facts that were correct at the time of writing. Gyde accepts no responsibility or liability for any errors, omissions or resultant consequences including any loss or damage arising from reliance on information in this publication.

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Executive Summary

The Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy sets the strategic vision for the future of rural lands within the Tamworth Regional Local Government Area (Tamworth Regional LGA).

The Strategy provides a framework to guide decision-making around land use planning and development in rural areas, setting out Tamworth Regional Council's (Council) position on rural land use matters.

Council will continue to support the Tamworth Regional LGA's critically important existing rural industries, provide for the needs of our unique rural communities, and encourage the growth of a range of diverse and emerging rural land use opportunities.

This Rural Lands Strategy identifies key existing and future considerations that are impacting the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural areas, productivity and local character. Key considerations include:

- Managing potential land use conflict as a range of rural uses compete for space and resources
- Preserving valuable and unique local character, scenic landscapes, natural environments and biodiversity
- Ongoing demand for rural subdivision and the construction of dwellings in rural zones
- Ensuring the compatible growth of emerging industries in rural areas, particularly with renewable energy projects in parts of the Tamworth Regional LGA
- Responding to a changing climate and evolving lifestyle needs through sustainable rural land use practices.

Eight focus areas have been developed to set out Council's strategic position on such matters. The focus areas are underpinned by key actions, which together provide a comprehensive policy framework to plan for

and manage the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands into the future.

Focus Area 1 – Prioritise Agriculture and Preserve the Productivity of our Rural Lands.

The intention of this focus area is to recognise the critical role of productive agriculture for the Tamworth Regional LGA, and ensure its ongoing strength by prioritising and preserving rural land primarily for agricultural purposes.

Actions identified under this focus area relate to the identification and protection of important agricultural land, the role of minimum lot size in supporting diverse rural industries, and the identification of amendments to relevant land use controls to continue to facilitate viable productivity.

Focus Area 2 – Reduce and Manage Land Use Conflicts

Land use conflict can occur when demand for the same space or resources arises from competing or incompatible sources.

Actions set out under this focus area relate to establishing appropriate land use buffer zones and separation distances, protecting high quality agricultural lands from potentially incompatible development, and incorporating land use conflict risk assessment into Council's management of rural lands.

Focus Area 3 – Improve Safety and Efficiency of Inter- and Intra- Regional Linkages

Tamworth is a regional centre, with significant transport infrastructure connecting the New England North West Region to Newcastle, Sydney and beyond. The efficiency of this network directly influences the region's productivity, collaboration, growth and access to markets.

This focus area identifies actions to enhance the function and efficiency of the Tamworth Regional LGA's regional transport infrastructure. Actions include road upgrades to improve vehicular movement, enhance safety and ensure freight connectivity, supporting the Tamworth Regional Airport as a regional gateway and air freight hub, and facilitating

the growth of the Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility.

Focus Area 4 – Support and diversify the rural economy

Diversification of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural industries will enable the region to adapt and grow in response to emerging challenges and opportunities impacting rural economies.

The actions identified under this focus area relate to identifying and supporting diverse agricultural growth industries and facilitating other compatible enterprises in rural areas, such as tourism, agritourism and educational initiatives. This focus area also considers how the Tamworth Regional LGA can leverage opportunity and investment in energy generating and extractive industries.

Focus Area 5 – Support Rural Housing in the Right Locations

Providing a diverse range of suitable housing is essential to balancing growth and meeting the needs of the Tamworth community. Rural housing needs to be carefully considered to ensure logical and sustainable growth, and to avoid potential land use conflicts.

In order to deliver rural housing in the right locations, actions include rationalising controls relating to dwelling opportunities, permitting secondary dwellings in certain areas, resolving constraints that have limited large lot housing development, and addressing demand for seasonal and temporary workers accommodation.

Focus Area 6 – Facilitate the Prosperity of our Rural Communities

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural communities offer unique local character and valuable industries, set in distinct scenic landscapes.

This focus area seeks to support place-making opportunities that enhance character, reinforce a sense of community and foster growth to contribute to the quality of life of residents and attract visitors and investment.

Focus Area 7 – Protect and Improve Environmental, Scenic and Heritage Values in Rural Areas

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains important scenic, biodiversity and heritage values which contribute

significantly to the region's local character and high-quality scenic landscapes.

Council has identified key actions to complete existing biodiversity and heritage studies, and commence work on a scenic landscape strategy to better enable their long-term preservation.

Focus Area 8 – Encourage Sustainable and Resilient Rural Practices to Strengthen the Region's Ability to Respond to a Changing Climate

Climate change has the potential to significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands. Understanding, adapting and preparing for a changing climate is crucial to protecting our rural lands, both their natural value and economic productivity.

Actions identified under this focus area include investigating opportunities to diversify the economy, educating rural landowners on sustainable land use practices, and reviewing and updating flooding and water security studies.

This Rural Lands Strategy has been developed to facilitate a consistent approach to the planning and development of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands, meeting the diverse needs of rural communities, primary producers and emerging industries to ensure a prosperous and sustainable future.

1 Introduction

The Tamworth region is home to some of the most productive rural lands in the nation.

The region is well known for its high-quality agricultural lands and favourable climate. It is a leading region for a range of agricultural sectors including intensive livestock, poultry production and broadacre cropping.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands boast vast areas of high environmental value, and contain a range of national parklands, including the Warrabah National Park and part of the Mount Kaputar National Park.

Major river systems within the Tamworth Regional LGA include the Peel River, Namoi River, MacDonald River and Manilla River. The region also contains three major dams; Lake Keepit, on the Namoi River, Split Rock Dam on the Manilla River and Chaffey Dam on the Peel River.

These watercourses and their associated alluvial floodplains are defining landscape structural elements, as well as key assets underpinning ecological systems and agricultural soils.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is home to approximately 65,908 people and spans approximately 9,894 square kilometres.

The regional city of Tamworth (Tamworth City) is the largest centre in the New England North West region of NSW. It is positioned along the New England Highway and Manilla Road, which form a key spine north-south through the Tamworth Regional LGA, as well as the Oxley Highway, which extends generally east-west.

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains many diverse and attractive rural towns; including Manilla, Kootingal, Barraba and Nundle, and a number of rural communities; including Moonbi, Attunga, Bendemeer, Duri, Dungowan, Hanging Rock, Niangala, Somerton, and Woolomin.

The Tamworth region is the traditional land of the Gomeroi / Kamilaroi people, who have cared for and been sustained by its rich waterways and vast lands for over 60,000 years.



Figure 1: Tamworth Regional LGA.

Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, MET/NASA, USGS

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of this Rural Lands Strategy is to provide a framework to guide decision making for the ongoing planning and management of the rural lands within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Rural lands are a crucial part of the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy and character. With a growing population, a range of diverse rural industries and emerging development, including the construction of renewable energy projects within the region, Council needs to ensure that land use policy continues to support existing and future rural land uses, while providing for the needs of rural communities.

Key focus areas of this Rural Lands Strategy are:

- Focus Area 1: Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands
- Focus Area 2: Reduce and manage land use conflicts
- Focus Area 3: Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages
- Focus Area 4: Support and diversify the rural economy
- Focus Area 5: Support rural housing in the right locations
- Focus Area 6: Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities
- Focus Area 7: Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas
- Focus Area 8: Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to a changing climate.

1.2 What land does the Strategy consider?

In this Strategy, 'rural lands' refers to land in the following land use zones:

- RU1 – Primary Production
- RU3 – Forestry
- RU4 – Primary Production Small Lots
- RU5 – Village
- RU6 – Transition
- C1 – National Parks and Nature Reserves
- C2 – Environmental Conservation
- C3 – Environmental Management
- R5 – Large Lot Residential.

This Strategy does not consider all other urban or employment lands, nor land zoned for recreation. Figure 2 identifies these land use zones within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

1.3 Structure of the Strategy

Section 1: Introduction

This section provides an overview and context of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands and outlines the purpose of this Rural Lands Strategy.

Section 2: Planning & Policy Context

This section identifies the planning policy and legislation relevant to the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Section 3: Key Considerations

This section identifies key existing and future issues impacting land use, productivity and character within the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Section 4: Focus Areas

This section outlines the key focus areas to effectively plan for and manage the Tamworth's Regional LGA's rural lands going forward, each underpinned by key actions.

Section 5: Implementation, Monitoring and Review

This section outlines how the key focus areas and actions will be implemented, including identifying responsible stakeholders, progress reviews and timeframes.

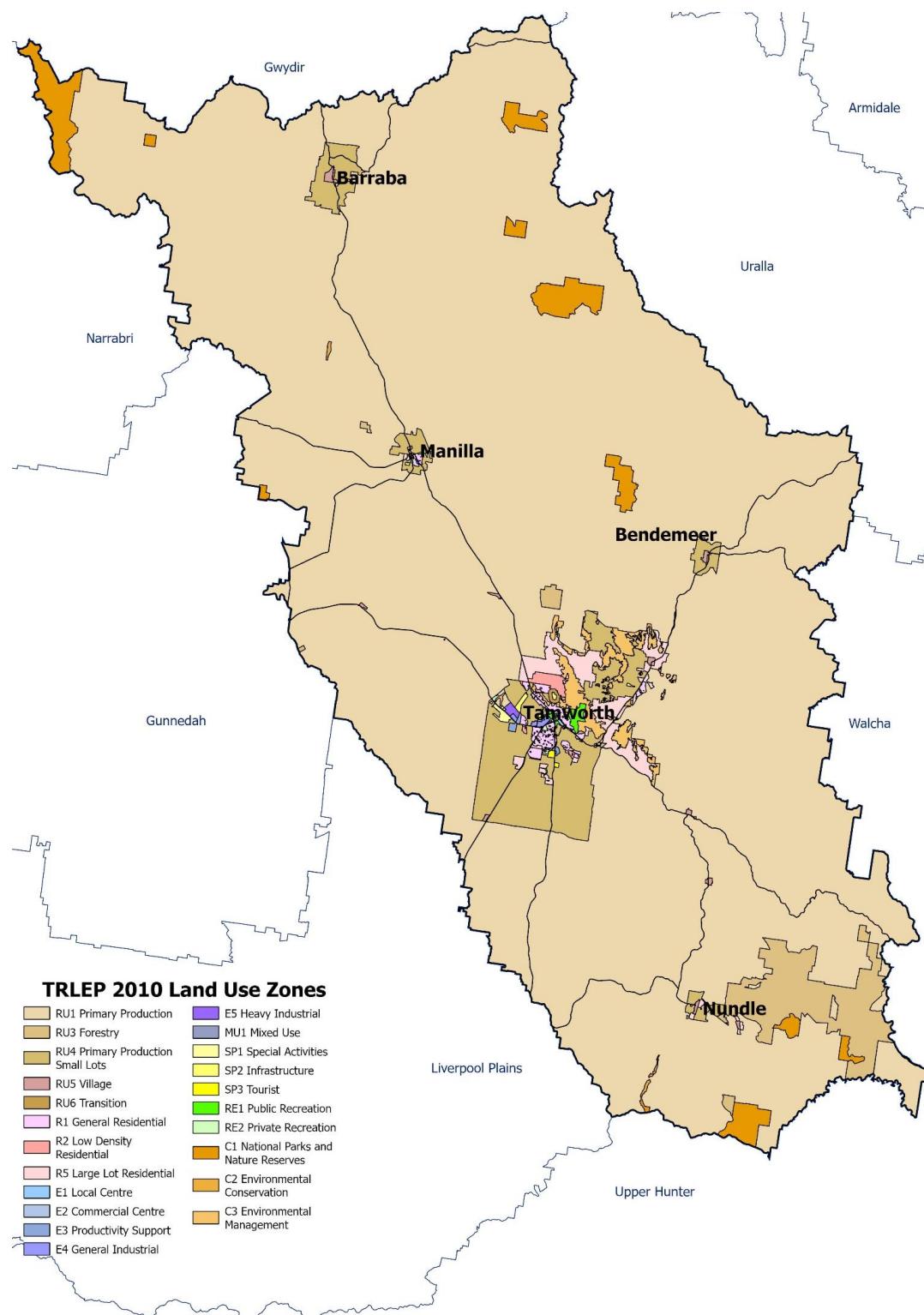


Figure 2: Land use zones in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

1.4 Overview

The Tamworth Regional LGA plays an essential role in the wider New England North West as a national agricultural producer and regional centre for employment, education, tourism and health services.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is surrounded by the rural shires of Gunnedah, Narrabri, Gwydir, Uralla, Walcha, Upper Hunter and Liverpool Plains.

This Strategy covers 99% of land in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Of that, 89% is zoned RU1 Primary Production and 55% has a minimum lot size of 800ha.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is well-known for its natural resources and high-quality agricultural lands. Agriculture is one of the Tamworth Regional LGA's key industries, and the LGA is a centre for the production and processing of beef, lamb and poultry products.

The agricultural industry in the Tamworth Regional LGA generated \$305.46m total gross value for agricultural commodities in 2020/21 and employs approximately 1,440 people.

The Tamworth Regional LGA ranks No. 1 in NSW for cattle livestock (meat) and No. 2 for poultry livestock and broadacre crops based on the value of agricultural commodities.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is generally characterised by highlands to the east and low river flats to the west. The steeper land to the east generally contains lands used for some grazing, forestry and national parks, while the lower lands provide valuable arable lands, better suited for productive farming.

Other key industries include retail, manufacturing, tourism, aviation, education, health and retail services, which contribute to significantly diversifying the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy.

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains vast lands that are already afforded permanent conservation status as national parks and nature reserves, as well as environmental and biodiversity values across public and privately owned lands, and as crucial corridors for habitat.

The natural environment is highly varied across the New England North West region, with diverse native flora and fauna reflecting the range of geology, soils, topography and climate across the area.

Tamworth Rural Economy At A Glance



65,246

Total population (2023)

39

Median age



27,640

Total dwellings (2021)

2.51

Average household size

84.3% Of residents were born in Australia

7.5% Of residents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

6.6% Of residents required assistance with core activities

49.5% Of residents aged over 15 years hold tertiary qualifications



\$4.13

BILLION
Gross Regional Product

6,138

Local businesses

32,905

Local jobs

Leading Industry Sectors By Employment:

Healthcare & Social Assistance	18.1%
Construction	12.2%
Education & Training	9.0%
Retail Trade	9.0%
Manufacturing	8.8%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	6.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	5.8%
Public Administration and Safety	5.8%
Other Services	4.8%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	4.5%

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing has the largest number of businesses in the Tamworth Regional LGA, comprising 24.9% of total businesses

\$305 **723**

MILLION

Total gross value of agricultural commodities

Total agricultural businesses

1,440 **1,594**

Total people employed in agriculture

Total people employed in manufacturing industries related to agriculture

An estimated

88%

of land within the Tamworth Regional LGA is used for agricultural production (8,712km²).

Top 10 highest value agricultural commodities produced in Tamworth Regional LGA, 2020-2021

Cattle and calves	39.5%
Poultry	31.5%
Hay	5.3%
Milk	4.9%
Sheep and lambs	4.4%
Wool	3.3%
Wheat for grain	3.1%
Eggs	2.7%
Barley for grain	1.9%
Other broadacre crops	1.4%



No. 1 in NSW for Cattle and calves



No. 2 in NSW for Poultry



No. 2 in NSW for Broadacre crops

2 Planning & Policy Context

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

The *New England North West Regional Plan 2041* (the 'Regional Plan 2041') sets a 20-year strategic land use planning framework for the region, aiming to protect and enhance the region's assets and plan for a sustainable future.

The Regional Plan 2041 sets out 22 objectives and a series of supporting strategies and actions to guide the delivery of the plan's vision for *"healthy and thriving communities, supported by a vibrant and dynamic economy that builds on the region's strengths."*

Following are key objectives of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy:

- Objective 1 - Coordinate land use planning for future growth, community need and regional economic development
- Objective 2 - Protect the viability and integrity of rural land
- Objective 3 - Expand agribusiness and food processing sectors
- Objective 7 - Support a diverse visitor economy
- Objective 8 - Adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience
- Objective 9 - Lead renewable energy technology and investment
- Objective 10 - Support a circular economy
- Objective 11 - Sustainably manage and conserve water resources
- Objective 12 - Protect regional biodiversity and areas of High Environmental Value
- Objective 20 - Improve state and regional freight connectivity.

Namoi Regional Water Strategy 2023

The *Namoi Regional Water Strategy 2023* (the 'Water Strategy') is a catchment-based strategy identifying critical challenges impacting water supply in the Namoi Region and outlining priorities and actions to respond to those challenges.

The Water Strategy states that the Tamworth Regional LGA is of statewide significance to the industries of agriculture and manufacturing, with the largest number of agricultural employees for an LGA in NSW and the highest number of food manufacturing employees outside metropolitan Sydney.

The majority of Tamworth city water supply comes from the Chaffey and Dungowan dams, with a very small proportion coming from Peel Alluvium groundwater. When there is no rain and low river flows, groundwater levels drop quickly. This means that during severe drought, groundwater cannot sustain the needs of Tamworth for extended periods of time.

The Water Strategy recognises that, even without growth, Tamworth is at significant risk in a severe and prolonged drought, and there could be extended periods when Tamworth residents are on high or persistent water restrictions.

The Water Strategy sets out the following three key priorities supported by a series of detailed actions to deliver the vision of healthy, reliable and resilient water resources for the region:

- Supporting the long-term water needs of towns across the region
- Supporting regional communities under a more variable and uncertain future climate
- Improving the health and resilience of water dependant ecosystems.

Lower North West Regional Economic Development Strategy – 2023 Update

Published by the NSW Department of Regional NSW, the 2023 update to the *Lower North West Regional Economic Development Strategy* (REDS) reported the following headline statistics in relation to agriculture in the region (comprising Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire LGAs):

- +7.2% year-on-year growth from 2011-2020
- \$475 million Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2020
- 3,123 jobs supported in 2021.

Stakeholders from the Lower North West highlighted housing availability, water security and addressing skills and workforce shortages as key priorities for the region.

The REDS update noted the following significant events impacting major industries since 2018, including drought, floods and mouse plague.

The REDS update identified the following strengths, vulnerabilities and opportunities in relation to the region's agricultural sector:

Strengths

- Highly productive agricultural land with a favourable climate.
- Well known for high quality produce
- Significant road and rail investments have enhanced infrastructure and connectivity
- Strongly developed links between agriculture and key downstream processing facilities.

Vulnerabilities

- Supply chain disruptions, high input costs and workforce shortages
- Uncertain water availability.

Opportunities

- Investment in high-value, diverse agricultural activities targeted for export, such as high-value crops, food processing and packaged produce.
- Namoi Regional Job Precinct will provide additional support for intensive agriculture and livestock production.
- Agritourism promoting the region as a premium food producing region and provide income opportunities for producers.

- Innovation in agribusiness and agricultural engineering can drive productivity and output.
- Leveraging export efficiencies of the Tamworth Intermodal Freight Terminal.
- Upgrading water infrastructure and implementing water efficiency measures.

Draft Namoi Regional Job Precinct

Prepared in May 2024 by the Department of Regional NSW, the draft *Namoi Regional Job Precinct* (Namoi RJP) aims to explore opportunities for sustainable growth of the intensive agriculture sector by identifying locations for production clusters where amended planning controls can be applied.

This initiative should deliver faster planning approvals to provide local councils, regional communities, industry and businesses with greater confidence around future investment and development.

The Namoi RJP is comprised of five LGAs, including Gunnedah Shire, Gwydir Shire, Liverpool Plains Shire, Tamworth Regional and Walcha Shire.

The Namoi RJP contains six identified primary regional intensive agriculture investigation areas and two secondary investigation areas with a focus on industrial and agricultural processing.

'Area 2' is a primary regional intensive agriculture investigation area centred largely over the Tamworth Regional LGA, with some encroachment into Gunnedah Shire.

'Area 8' is a secondary investigation area with a focus on industrial and agricultural processing, located at the Tamworth Global Gateway Park.

The Namoi RJP proposes that each of the investigation areas are adopted as 'Identified Protection Areas' under Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and prioritised over the long-term as predominantly productive agricultural land.

Blueprint 100: Part One 2020

Published in May 2020, Blueprint 100 is a series of plans and strategies developed to guide the Tamworth region towards its vision of a prosperous economy and

high living standards with a population of 100,000 people.

Blueprint 100: Part One is an overarching policy that ties together all of Council's strategies and policies to guide the development of the Tamworth Regional LGA to 2041.

Blueprint 100: Part One identifies eight Priority Themes to support the realisation of the vision:

- Deliver durable infrastructure including raw water
- Facilitate smart growth and housing choices
- Create a prosperous region
- Build resilient communities
- Connect our region and its citizens
- Design with nature
- Celebrate our culture and heritage
- Strengthen our proud identity.

Blueprint 100: Part Two - Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020

Adopted in May 2020, the *Blueprint 100: Part Two - Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (LSPS 2020)* sets out the following 20-year vision for land use planning in the LGA:

"Tamworth is a prosperous, resilient and liveable region that:

- *Is the Northern Inland Capital of New South Wales*
- *Is well connected with the New England-North West and surrounding towns, villages and the rural communities; and*
- *Boasts well designed living, play and work areas."*

The *LSPS 2020* is set out under the same Priority Themes as Blueprint 100 Part One. Of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy are:

1 – Facilitate Smart Residential Growth and Housing Choices

The *LSPS 2020* acknowledges that there will be continuing demand for large lot and rural residential living in the region. Rural residential areas require careful and considered planning and management, as their delivery can often conflict with other rural land uses.

The *LSPS 2020* notes that planning should consider reducing minimum lot sizes and setting minimum dwelling per hectare standards to support diversity, control sprawl, and provide for the efficient use of infrastructure.

Analysis was undertaken as a part of the development of the *LSPS 2020* to assess the supply and demand of rural residential land which is principally zoned R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha.

This analysis showed that while in theory Council has an abundance of rural residential land zoned, the practical supply is much less and heavily influenced by the requirements for reticulated water and environmental factors. Furthermore, the analysis indicated market demand is present for lifestyle lots in the range of 5ha-20ha, with a deficiency in the 5ha supply.

The key vision for strong economic and population growth is through a smart growth strategy, that produced sustainable outcomes, through efficiency and connectedness.

2 - Create a Prosperous Region

The *LSPS 2020* notes that Tamworth is an important centre for the production and processing of beef, lamb, poultry and grain products for supply across NSW and beyond.

The proximity of grain, livestock, feedlots, sale yards and processing facilities provides a competitive advantage for producers in the sector, and further expansion could be promoted through appropriate controls, especially at the Tamworth Global Gateway.

3 - Build Resilient Communities

The *LSPS 2020* emphasises the importance that options are provided for the use of rural lands, recognising variable land use and economic trends.

Support for the 'poultry precinct' that has begun to form in the Manilla district is one such option, which has the potential to significantly grow on the back of expanding poultry processing facilities in the region.

The *LSPS 2020* also prioritises options for the LGA's rural centres; to be supported with lifestyle opportunities and appropriate land use controls to support their various ongoing needs.

The Tamworth Regional LGA includes several rural communities including Moonbi, Attunga, Bendemeer, Somerton, Dungowan, Wollomin, Niangala and Duri.

The *LSPS 2020* recognises that the villages deserve a review of existing provisions to identify any suitable options going forward. While zone changes are not likely, the plan notes that lot size amendments in areas near rural communities could provide further lifestyle opportunities without greater servicing burdens. The plan notes that lot sizes in the range from 5ha to 20ha could be considered.

5 – Design With Nature

The *LSPS 2020* identifies priorities to protect high-quality blue/green corridors, better protect biodiversity and undertake joint water, energy and waste projects between food processors and Council.

The *LSPS 2020* sets out plans to investigate the formulation of development controls to address large scale renewable energy proposals and mitigate environmental impact.

6 – Celebrate culture and heritage

The *LSPS 2020* prioritises the recognition and protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites from inappropriate development, recommending that an *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan* is prepared and that appropriate measures are adopted to protect Aboriginal heritage including protocols on processes for Development Applications, Planning Proposals, Development Control Plans etc.

Blueprint 100: Our Community Plan 2023-2033

Published in June 2022, *Blueprint 100: Our Community Plan* provides more detail of how the strategies from *Blueprint 100: Part One* and *Blueprint 100: Part Two - LSPS 2020* will be pursued.

In accordance with the wider Blueprint 100 documents, the Community Plan lists nine strategic focus areas. While all identified priorities play an important role in contributing to the successful and sustainable future of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands, the following focus areas are of particular relevance:

Focus Area 1 - Water security

- Improve water sustainability across the region.
- Water sustainability is included in strategies, plans and policies.

Focus Area 2 - A liveable built environment

- Manage growth by updating the strategic land use plans and the LEP, and ensure developments meet these requirements.

Focus Area 3 - Prosperity and innovation

- Ensure Tamworth's strategies, plans and policies appropriately enable growth in our food processing industry.
- Establish a high technology agribusiness cluster.

Focus Area 4 - Resilient and diverse communities

- Establish local strategies and community groups for towns and villages, including Kootingal, Manilla, Barraba and Nundle.
- Improve drought resilience of regional communities.
- Support our region's prevention, preparedness, response and recovery measures to help build our resilience to disasters.

Focus Area 6 - Working with and protecting our environment

- Improve environmental sustainability across the region by implementing the initiatives, plans and programs identified within the Sustainability Strategy.
- Ensure that our planning and operational processes minimise and mitigate impacts on biosecurity and our natural environment.

Focus Area 7 - Celebrate our cultures and heritage

- Ensure development controls and zoning protect the heritage significance of items and conservation areas.

Tamworth Tomorrow Economic Development and Investment Strategy 2022

Published in September 2022, the *Tamworth Tomorrow Economic Development and Investment Strategy* (the 'Tamworth Tomorrow Strategy') sets out a plan to support continued economic development in the Tamworth region.

The Tamworth Tomorrow Strategy states that the Tamworth Regional LGA will leverage its growing population and strong existing industry base, enhance water security, support future industries and leverage

the renewable economy to build on the area's traditional economic strengths.

The Tamworth Tomorrow Strategy notes that the nature of employment in agriculture is changing, due largely to digital technology, mechanisation and shifting productivity capabilities. The Strategy sets out that the region must be conscious of this shift in order to remain competitive and to maintain employment in agriculture.

Two industries are highlighted of particular relevance to the LGA's rural lands:

- Protein Processing and Production

The Tamworth Tomorrow Strategy' notes that protein processing will continue to expand as a critical employer in the region, with over \$250 million of upcoming private sector investment in the region's protein processing facilities.

- Renewable Energy

The Tamworth Tomorrow Strategy' recognises that the region is well positioned, both strategically and geographically, to capitalise on growing demand for renewable energy as the world transitions away from traditional fuel bases.

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

Adopted in July 2024, the *Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024 (TRHS 2024)* presents Council's vision for the future of land use and housing development in the Tamworth Regional LGA, setting a framework for where housing can be delivered to ensure that the needs of the community can be met now and in the future.

The *TRHS 2024* identifies that the population of the Tamworth Regional LGA will increase from approximately 65,000 to 80,000 by 2041. The projections suggest that between 3,827 (Source: DPHI data) and 7,374 (Source: .id ERP data) additional dwellings will be required in the Tamworth Regional LGA over the next 20 years. The *TRHS 2024* sets out that while the Tamworth Regional LGA should have theoretical capacity under the existing land use planning controls to meet this demand, physical delivery may be constrained by factors such as environmental conditions, land use patterns or infrastructure availability.

The *TRHS 2024* sets out a number of priorities to guide the future of housing in the Tamworth Regional LGA. Of relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy are:

Priority 1.1: Water security for continued growth

The *TRHS 2024* notes that to sustain an increasing population, it will be essential to increase the supply of, and reduce the demand on, water resources.

Priority 1.3: Rural residential development in the Tamworth Hinterlands

The *TRHS 2024* identifies that much land zoned for rural residential purposes appears constrained by a range of environmental factors. The *TRHS 2024* recommends investigating the removal of the requirement to provide reticulated water to rural residential lots measuring 5ha or more, where a sustainable and potable alternate water supply is available.

Priority 2.2: Encourage a diverse range of housing

The *TRHS 2024* supports the delivery of secondary dwellings in rural areas, which is currently prohibited, to contribute to the supply of diverse housing in the Tamworth Regional LGA. The *TRHS 2024* notes that this limits the opportunities for rural property owners to retire on their property. This change may have the

potential to undermine the key objectives of the zones that relate to prioritising primary industry production, and considered planning will be required to ensure a sustainable balance can be found between the two land uses.

Priority 2.3: Provide sufficient temporary workers accommodation

The *TRHS 2024* notes that the Tamworth Regional LGA experiences large influxes of workers associated with agriculture, meat processing, manufacturing, construction and the New England Renewable Energy Zone. Consequently, Council has identified a priority to develop local solutions to support the delivery of accommodation suitable for the fluctuating needs of temporary workers.

Priority 5: Promote rural communities

The *TRHS 2024* sets out Council's intentions to support the sustainable growth of the LGA's significant rural communities, undertaking targeted precinct planning and promoting lifestyle living around rural townships.

Associated with these objectives, the *TRHS 2024* identifies actions to review minimum lot size provisions applicable to the RUS Village zone and permit 'multi-dwelling housing' and 'residential flat buildings' in the RUS Village zone and adopt car parking standards appropriate to the zone. These proposed changes would need to be carefully implemented to ensure the continued support of the diverse character of the LGA's rural villages.

Tamworth Integrated Transport Plan 2024

The *Tamworth Integrated Transport Plan 2024* aims to enhance the local transport network, aligning with Tamworth Regional Council's *Blueprint 100 Plan* and Transport for NSW's *Future Transport Strategy*.

It identifies priority projects to guide investment to meet the current and future transport needs of the community and visitors, and includes the following projects which are of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy:

- Western Freight Link
- Southern access route (now known as the Eastern Detour)
- Intermodal freight efficiency improvements

- Fossickers Way and New England Highway higher productivity vehicles.

The vision is to strengthen the partnership between Transport for NSW and Council to enhance the transport network which is critical in supporting the growth of rural industries and freight network within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

State Environmental Planning Policies

State environmental planning policies (SEPPs) are environmental planning instruments prepared by the NSW Government. The following SEPPs are of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy:

State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021* (Primary Production SEPP) contains planning provisions to manage primary production and rural development, including supporting sustainable agriculture for the protection of prime agricultural land of state and regional significance, as well as regionally significant mining and extractive resources.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021* (Biodiversity and Conservation SEPP) provides a framework to protect and manage the state's natural environment, which helps support the community's health and wellbeing, economic security and cultural identity.

The Biodiversity and Conservation SEPP sets out approval requirements for vegetation removal in non-rural zones, including environmental zones.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021* (Resilience and Hazards SEPP) contains planning provisions in Chapter 3 relating to the development of hazardous or offensive industries and Chapter 4 to promote the remediation of contaminated land to reduce the risk of harm to health or any other aspect of the environment.

Any development of hazardous or offensive material is required to address the provisions of the Resilience and Hazards SEPP. This is of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy for rural land uses that would, without mitigation measures, result in risks to the locality or emit pollution, including noise. The Resilience and Hazards SEPP is also relevant to the redevelopment of land that may be contaminated from previous hazardous industries.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021* (Housing SEPP) provides State Significant Development pathways for certain types of housing, including affordable and diverse housing.

Under the Housing SEPP, new planning pathways to fast-track housing for construction workers on major infrastructure projects in renewable energy zones have been announced. Construction worker accommodation has been clearly defined and is permitted in all residential zones, and in some non-residential zones, such as rural zones near renewable energy infrastructure or business zones with convenient amenities and transport links.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008* (Codes SEPP) aims to provide streamlined assessment processes for minor or straightforward development.

Of relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy, the policy sets out the following provisions:

- Part 3D Inland Code, which specifies circumstances where dwelling houses or ancillary developments can be erected as exempt or complying development in rural land use zones.
- Part 9 Agritourism and Farm Stay Accommodation Code, which sets out criteria for the development of “farm experience premises”, “farm gate premises” and “farm stay accommodation” on land zoned RU1, RU2 or RU4 to be classified as complying development.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resource and Energy) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resource and Energy) 2021* (Resource and Energy SEPP) allows for

mining and mineral resource extraction on land where agriculture or industry may be carried out, however it does not apply to environmental conservation zones or Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL), which is mapped and protected under the Resource and Energy SEPP. The Tamworth Regional LGA does contain small areas of BSAL where the highest soil fertility exists.

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains several hard rock quarries and the Attunga Limestone Mine. When assessing applications for extractive industries, the Resource and Energy SEPP requires that consideration be given to the impact of the proposed extractive industry on existing and approved land uses, and conversely that consideration be given to the impacts of the approval of other land uses on the operation of extractive industries.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* (Transport and Infrastructure SEPP) provides additional pathways for the delivery of infrastructure for both public authorities and developers.

Of relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy, the policy sets out provisions for types of state significant infrastructure development, such as electricity generating works, which may be prohibited in an LEP but permitted under the Transport and Infrastructure SEPP.

Right to Farm Policy

In 2015 the NSW Government adopted the *Right to Farm Policy*. The policy has been given a statutory reference by inclusion as an objective in the revised *Ministerial Planning Directions* for Rural Lands (Direction 9.2) as part of the Primary Production focus area and accompanying planning framework.

The policy highlights the importance of planning for agricultural industry development and maintaining access to agricultural resources, including access to land. It emphasises the need for appropriate zoning and permissible land uses that are compatible with agricultural activities and supports local strategies that guide land use and minimise conflict.

The Right to Farm Policy brings together a collection of actions including:

- Reinforcing rights and responsibilities
- Establishing a baseline and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of land use conflicts
- Strengthening land use planning
- Ensuring ongoing reviews of relevant environmental planning instruments
- Improving education and awareness on management of land use conflicts.

Renewable energy generation and agriculture in NSW's rural landscape and economy – growth sectors on a complementary path, 2022

This Report considers the implications of the growth of renewable energy generation and associated infrastructure in relation to existing agricultural land uses and rural communities. This Report was drafted following growing concerns over land use conflicts related to the growth of the renewable energy sector, particularly the roll out of the NSW Government's renewable energy policy.

This Report makes 29 recommendations to achieve a better balance between the interests of project applicants, landholders and communities. The recommendations relate to improving the knowledge of interested parties, improving their capacity to participate in the planning system and providing clarity of impact management and benefit sharing arrangements.

With the growth of the NEREZ and the strong agricultural economy in the Tamworth Regional LGA, the region is already experiencing such significant land use conflicts.

Local Land Services Act 2013

The *Local Land Services Act 2013* is a governance framework for the efficient management and delivery of local land services, with a statutory corporation (known as Local Land Services) with responsibility for the management and delivery of local land services in the social, economic and environmental interests of the State.

Local land services are programs and advisory services associated with agricultural production, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management.

Agricultural Commissioners Reports

Improving the Prospects for Agriculture and Regional Australia in the NSW Planning System, 2021

The NSW planning system seeks to plan for and manage competing land uses, which in the context of rural lands, often relates to balancing demand for housing and essential services as well as retaining the productivity of agricultural land and conserving areas of high scenic or biodiversity value. With increasingly intensive production practices and an expanding urban footprint accommodating population growth, land use conflicts are accelerating.

This Report includes 12 recommendations to the NSW Government, with short and long-term measures to improve planning outcomes for agriculture, increase confidence for producers and landowners, and provide certainty for nearby residents. The recommendations are also intended to assist councils in managing their planning and conflict management functions.

Ministerial Planning Directions

The Minister for Planning has set out directions for the assessment of planning proposals. This includes acknowledging the significance of agriculture and primary production lands byway of Directions 9.1 – Rural Zones and Direction 9.2 – Rural Lands.

Several other Directions would also be subject to consideration when dealing with rural land. An important step is that the rezoning of rural land to urban must be identified in a relevant strategy.

Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010

The *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010 (TRLEP 2010)* provides the statutory framework for planning, development and building within the Tamworth Regional LGA. It manages land use through zoning development standards, planning controls and other planning provisions.

Principal development standards controlled by the *TRLEP 2010* include land use, minimum lot size, height of buildings, floor space ratio and heritage.

Table 1 outlines the primary land use zones within the LGA's rural lands and their objectives.

Table 1: Primary land use zones in rural areas.

Land Zone	Objectives
RU1 Primary Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base. • To encourage diversity in primary industry enterprises and systems appropriate for the area. • To minimise the fragmentation and alienation of resource lands. • To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones. • To permit subdivision only where it is considered by the Council to be necessary to maintain or increase agricultural production. • To restrict the establishment of inappropriate traffic generating uses along main road frontages. • To ensure sound management of land which has an extractive or mining industry potential and to ensure that development does not adversely affect the extractive industry. • To permit development for purposes where it can be demonstrated that suitable land or premises are not available elsewhere.
Zone RU3 Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable development for forestry purposes. • To enable other development that is compatible with forestry land uses.
Zone RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable sustainable primary industry and other compatible land uses. • To encourage and promote diversity and employment opportunities in relation to primary industry enterprises, particularly those that require smaller lots or that are more intensive in nature. • To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.
Zone RU5 Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide for a range of land uses, services and facilities that are associated with a rural village. • To encourage a range of housing types in appropriate locations. • To enable development for retail, commercial and light industrial purposes for the local and nearby rural community in appropriate locations and scale within the zone.
Zone R5 Large Lot Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide residential housing in a rural setting while preserving, and minimising impacts on, environmentally sensitive locations and scenic quality. • To ensure that large residential lots do not hinder the proper and orderly development of urban areas in the future. • To ensure that development in the area does not unreasonably increase the demand for public services or public facilities. • To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones. • To provide a mix of housing that supports and encourages neighbouring equine-related facilities and is compatible with surrounding land uses and activities.
Zone C1 National Parks and Nature Reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable the management and appropriate use of land that is reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 or that is acquired under Part 11 of that Act. • To enable uses authorised under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. • To identify land that is to be reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 and to protect the environmental significance of that land.
Zone C2 Environmental Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect, manage and restore areas of high ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values. • To prevent development that could destroy, damage or otherwise have an adverse effect on those values.
Zone C3 Environmental Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect, manage and restore areas with special ecological, scientific, cultural or aesthetic values. • To provide for a limited range of development that does not have an adverse effect on those values.

3 Key Considerations in Rural Areas

The following key challenges, opportunities and trends will influence the strategic direction of this Rural Lands Strategy and have contributed to the development of the Focus Areas.



Land Use Conflict in Rural Areas

- Land use conflict can occur when demand for the same resources arises from competing and sometimes incompatible sources.
- A common example of rural land use conflict occurs with urban sprawl into agricultural lands. General farming practices can produce impacts such as noise, odour or spray drift, and nearby residents can present challenges to ongoing farming operations.
- Another source of potential land use conflict occurring in the Tamworth Regional LGA is the development of the NEREZ. This project will see significant investment in renewable energy generating projects across the region, but has the potential to impact other important values in the Tamworth Regional LGA, such as displacing or degrading important agricultural, biodiversity and scenic values. Council will look to balance important advancements towards net zero with the need to protect and preserve many of the Tamworth Regional LGA's other critical values, assets and industries.
- One measure to minimise land use conflict involves physically separating uses with specified buffer distances. Buffer distances, for example specified around particular agricultural uses, could be established as a requirement under Council's planning instruments and enforced prior to development approval.



Preserving Local Character

- The Tamworth Regional LGA is home to a number of lively rural communities, including Barraba, Bendemeer, Hanging Rock, Kootingal, Manilla, Moonbi, Nemingha and Nundle.
- Each rural community offers distinct character and attractive scenic landscapes.
- Preserving the strength, character and economic viability of these important communities is an essential part of ensuring that the Tamworth rural lands are diverse, inclusive and supported with infrastructure and services.



Renewable Energy

- The New England Renewable Energy Zone (NEREZ) is in the early stages of planning by the NSW Government, and the Tamworth Regional LGA is partly located within the zone.
- The NEREZ is expected to deliver up to \$24 billion in private sector investment and support around 8,000 jobs. Such development is expected to bring a large influx of workers and families to the area within a relatively short timeframe.
- Council is experiencing a large increase in renewable energy projects outside the NEREZ. Renewable energy projects have the potential to displace land available for productive

agriculture, damage to natural environments, key habitat and biodiversity, and the degradation of scenic rural landscapes.

- In order to leverage the opportunities of investment from the renewable energy projects, including the NEREZ, the Tamworth Regional LGA needs upfront strategic planning that will ensure it can attract complementary land uses and industries, accommodate a short term influx in workers and their families, and best mitigate potential land use conflict.



Dwellings in Rural Zones

- Dwellings in rural areas are essential to support agricultural viability, enabling farmers to live and work on the land, sustaining rural communities, supporting farm succession planning, providing on-site accommodation for seasonal workers and enhancing land stewardship through the management of vegetation and maintenance of rural infrastructure.
- Residential uses can also be one of the most common sources of land use conflict in rural areas, presenting many challenges and a range of impacts for both primary producers and residents.
- Dwellings in rural areas have the potential to undermine agricultural productivity, fragment agricultural lands, degrade rural landscapes and damage important environmental lands.
- Careful strategic planning, including establishing appropriate buffers, guiding new housing towards less productive or already-settled areas, and setting clear expectations about rural living can help avoid conflict and mitigate impacts.



Rural Subdivision

- Rural subdivision is a consistent theme of landowners in rural areas, particularly arising from residents planning farming succession, or from rural lifestyle purchasers.
- However, subdivision which enables new dwelling opportunities in rural areas has the potential to result in fragmentation and increase the likelihood of land use conflict.
- In order to preserve the productivity of our agricultural lands, appropriately mitigating demand for rural subdivision and minimum lot sizes is a critical consideration for Council and a focus of this Rural Lands Strategy.



Extractive Industries

- Significant activity in extractive industries will continue to be anticipated throughout the region, with mining a key industry of the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy.
- Manilla is a commuting base for miners and their families due to the town's proximity to a number of mines. As the industry evolves, the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy will need to respond, enhancing diversification and flexibility to support miners and their families now and into the future.



Temporary Workers Accommodation

- Tamworth experiences large influxes of workers each year, many on a temporary or seasonal basis. This trend is only expected to increase significantly with the development of the NEREZ.
- An insufficient supply of accommodation for temporary or seasonal workers has the potential to put upward pressure on housing rental markets and risks overcrowding or makeshift housing.
- Council will look to sustainably manage the delivery of temporary accommodation to meet demand, enabling the continued growth of key industries while minimising pressure on the region's existing housing and tourist accommodation market.



Scenic Protection

- The Tamworth Regional rural lands are highly valued for their attractive scenic qualities, which contribute significantly to the identity and character of the region.
- Some industry, urban sprawl and modern infrastructure can degrade valuable scenic landscapes. For instance, solar and wind farms proposed within the NEREZ have the potential to significantly impact the character of the LGA's scenic rural lands and careful, upfront strategic planning must be taken to manage such land use conflict.



Climate Change

- An increase in global temperatures is exacerbating extreme weather events, increasing the incidence and severity of drought, flooding, storms and bushfires.
- The Tamworth Regional LGA's economy is heavily reliant on the productivity of its rural lands. Climate change will therefore likely pose a significant challenge to those living and working on rural lands as the availability of necessary natural resources, such as water and high-quality soils, are increasingly at risk.



Water Security

- The Tamworth Regional LGA's water supply is dependent on the weather, leaving supply particularly vulnerable in periods of drought.
- Council is currently developing a *Water Security Plan*, to ensure that water resources are reliable, sustainable and able to support future demand.



Heritage Values

- There are over 540 heritage listed buildings or places in the Tamworth Regional LGA, including many throughout our rural lands.
- Preserving built and natural heritage is a key priority to ensuring the Tamworth region remains a vibrant, distinct and desirable place.



Environmental Value and Biodiversity

- The Tamworth Regional LGA has lands of high environmental value and ecological diversity, including national parks, conservation areas and biodiversity corridors.
- Parts of the Tamworth Regional LGA contain endangered ecological communities, and are an important refuge for threatened species, including koalas, gliders and many woodland birds.
- However, the impacts of some industry, residential and urban sprawl, and land clearing on areas of high environmental and ecological value, particularly land not protected through planning policy, threatens important assets and ecosystems.
- The current development of the NEREZ has the potential to significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's important biodiversity values, endangering species and displacing habitat. Council must ensure that current and emerging industries in rural areas are developed in a manner that can protect and enhance the integrity and connectivity of the Tamworth Regional LGA's high biodiversity values.



Sustainable Rural Practices

- Council seeks to encourage sustainable rural practices to respond to certain land use trends and challenges such as overexploitation and degradation of natural resources.
- As the climate evolves, and the Tamworth population and economy continue to grow, such practices will be increasingly crucial to ensure a viable and resilient future.



Emerging Industries

- The Tamworth Regional LGA has strong and critically important agricultural foundations, but diversification is essential to enable prosperous and sustainable growth.
- It is essential to ensure that emerging industries remain compatible with existing land uses, retain local character and contribute sustainably to the region.



Tourism

- Tourism plays an important role in the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy, with many attractions including festivals, sporting events, restaurants, museums and galleries. As discussed above, opportunities exist to expand the tourist industry to help diversify the regional economy.
- Enhancing the tourist industry will require well planned infrastructure and services to ensure sustainable and successful growth, and minimise potential land use conflict.
- The growth of the NEREZ has the potential to significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's housing and accommodation market, with an anticipated influx of workers potentially depleting tourist and visitor accommodation options if not appropriately managed. This would significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's capacity to support regionally important visitor events, festivals and shows.

Expressions of Interest in Rural Areas

As part of the comprehensive review of the *TRLEP 2010*, Council received 74 Expressions Of Interest (EOI) from residents in relation to rural lands. The general location of the EOIs is shown in Figure 3.

These EOIs generally aligned with the following themes:

- Re-zoning land to R5 Large Lot Residential with corresponding reduction in minimum lot sizes.
- Re-zoning of properties from a rural or conservation zone to a different rural zone.
- Supply of lifestyle lots around rural communities such as Attunga, Bendemeer, Kootingal, Manilla and Nundle.
- Supply of smaller rural lots to support the equine industry.
- Reduction in rural minimum lot sizes to enable subdivision or dwelling opportunities.
- Re-zoning of rural zoned land within Tamworth and Nemingha for industrial, commercial or general residential purposes.
- Additional permitted uses on specific properties in rural areas.

The EOIs provide a valuable insight into the views of residents and have been used to inform the Focus Areas of this Strategy in connection with other key considerations and drivers of change.

For clarification, this Rural Lands Strategy does not:

- Propose the reduction or change of conservation zones, which by their nature conserve important areas of the Tamworth Regional LGA.
- Propose to zone any land for industrial, commercial or general residential (excluding land subject to a separate Structure Planning process).
- Assess requests for site specific dwelling opportunities or additional permitted uses, which are subject to a separate Planning Proposal and/or Development Application process.

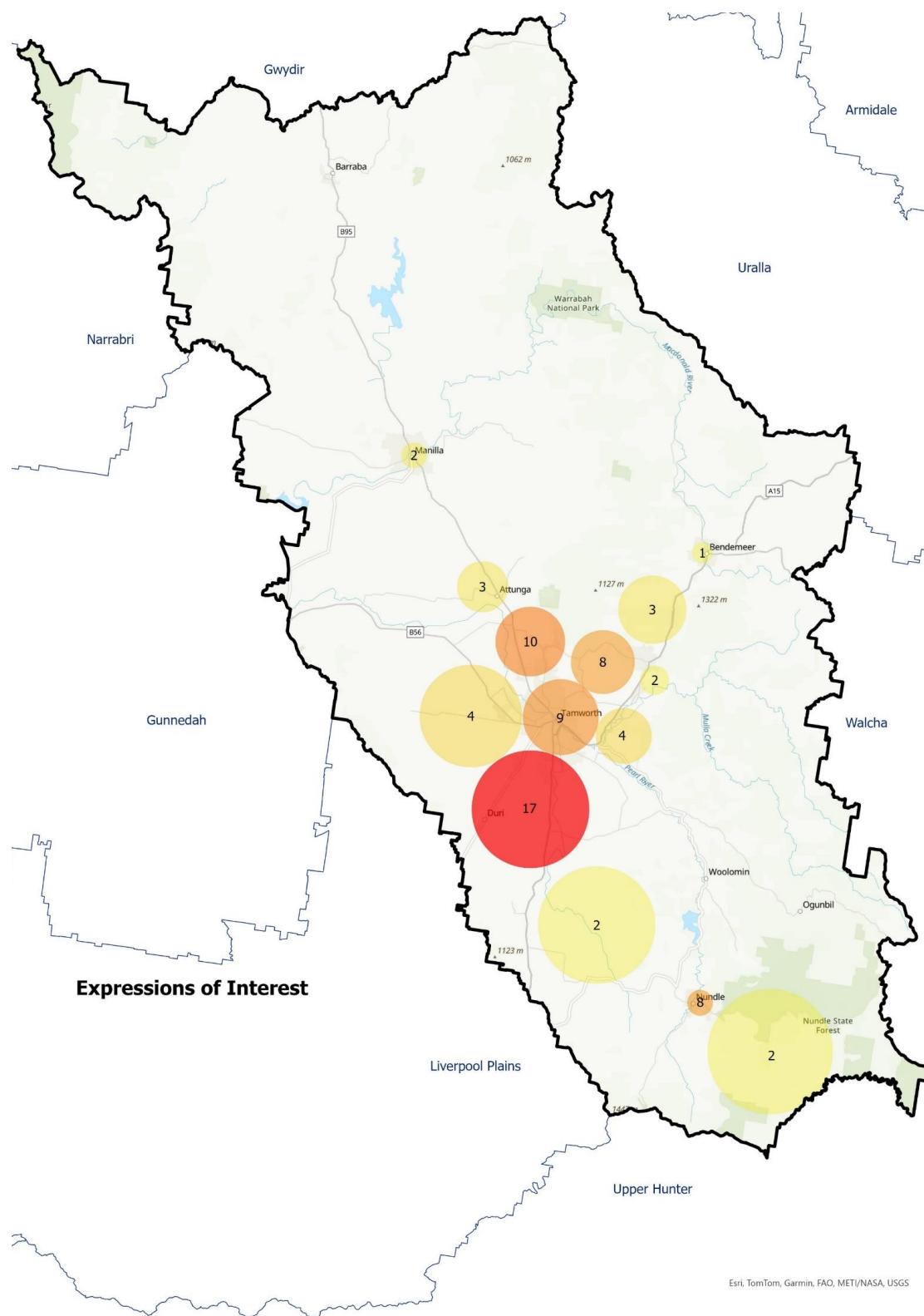


Figure 3: Landowner Expressions of Interest.

4 Rural Lands Focus Areas



Focus Area 1: Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands

The Tamworth Regional LGA is renowned for high quality and productive rural lands.

Agriculture forms a major part of the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy, with a total value of agricultural output in 2020/21 of \$305 million.

Approximately three quarters of this value came from livestock processing, primarily beef cattle, poultry and lambs.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands should be principally planned and managed for agriculture and other identified complementary uses.

Prioritising agriculture and preserving the productivity of our rural lands is crucial for strengthening the local economy, supporting jobs, ensuring food security, and enabling sustainable environmental outcomes.

Competing land uses in rural areas can put pressure on agricultural activities, constraining farming operations or reducing the amount of land available to support viable production.

Reducing potential land use conflicts, such as by introducing buffers around productive agricultural lands, can protect primary production from incompatible land uses and maintain farming potential.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands must be managed so as to prioritise the protection of the agricultural industry and preserve important farmland principally for agriculture.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 2 - Protect the viability and integrity of rural land (Strategy 2.1 and 2.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 1 – Smart Growth and Housing Choices (Action SG5);
- Planning Priority 2 – Create a Prosperous Region (Action PR6); and
- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Actions RC2 and RC8).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 5 – Promote rural communities (Actions 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4).

Important Agricultural Land

The clear identification of important agricultural land with inherent capability for primary production is key to ensuring its protection and planning for its sustainable future.

Identifying important agricultural land will assist Council and the community to:

- Minimise the potential for land use conflict in rural areas
- Protect finite resources and essential agricultural assets
- Support orderly development in appropriate land use zones
- Provide greater stability for primary producers
- Encourage collaboration and support emerging industry clusters
- Make the most of future opportunities for agricultural industries
- Support the objectives of the *NSW Right to Farm Policy*.

A range of statewide studies have been undertaken to date to identify and map land that is best suited for agricultural productivity.

Figure 4 and Figure 5 illustrate important agricultural lands that have been identified within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land

Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) is land with high quality soil and water resources capable of sustaining high levels of productivity.

BSAL has been identified and mapped by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) across the state, and includes portions of land in the Tamworth Regional LGA, as shown in Figure 4.

These lands intrinsically have the best quality landforms, soil and water resources which are naturally capable of sustaining high levels of productivity and require minimal management practices to maintain this high quality.

Land and Soil Capability Mapping for NSW

The NSW Land and Soil Capability Mapping provides a broad-scale, regional view as to the dominant land and soil class present across the state.

The study identifies key soil and landscape limitations, including water erosion, wind erosion, salinity, topsoil acidification, shallow soils/rockiness, soil structure decline, and waterlogging and mass movement.

Table 2 sets out the eight class mapping system, with values representing varying capability of the land to sustain certain land uses.

Estimated Inherent Soil Fertility of NSW

Prepared by DPHI, the mapping of Estimated Inherent Soil Fertility of NSW links soil fertility classes to particular soil types that have been identified throughout the state.

The mapping system describes soil fertility based on five different classes:

- Low
- Moderately low
- Moderate
- Moderately high
- High.

Figure 5 illustrates estimated inherent soil fertility across the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Table 2: Land and Soil Capability.

Class	Soil Capability	Capability Description
1	Very slight to negligible limitations	Land capable of sustaining high impact land uses (e.g. cultivation) and no special land management practices required.
2	Slight but significant limitations	Land capable of sustaining high impact land uses which can be managed by readily available, and easily implemented management practices.
3	Moderate limitations	Land capable of sustaining high impact land uses using more intensive, readily available and accepted management practices.
4	Moderate to severe limitations	Land generally not capable of sustaining high impact land uses unless using specialised management practices with high level of knowledge, expertise, inputs, investment.
5	Severe limitations	Land not capable of sustaining high impact land uses except where resources allow for highly specialised land management practices to overcome limitations (e.g. high value crops).
6	Very severe limitations	Land incapable of sustaining many land use practices (e.g. cropping, moderate to high intensity grazing and horticulture). Highly specialised practices can overcome some limitations.
7	Extreme limitations	Land incapable of sustaining any land use and best left undisturbed and managed for conservation.
8	Extremely severe limitations	Land incapable of sustaining most land uses. Limitations cannot be overcome.

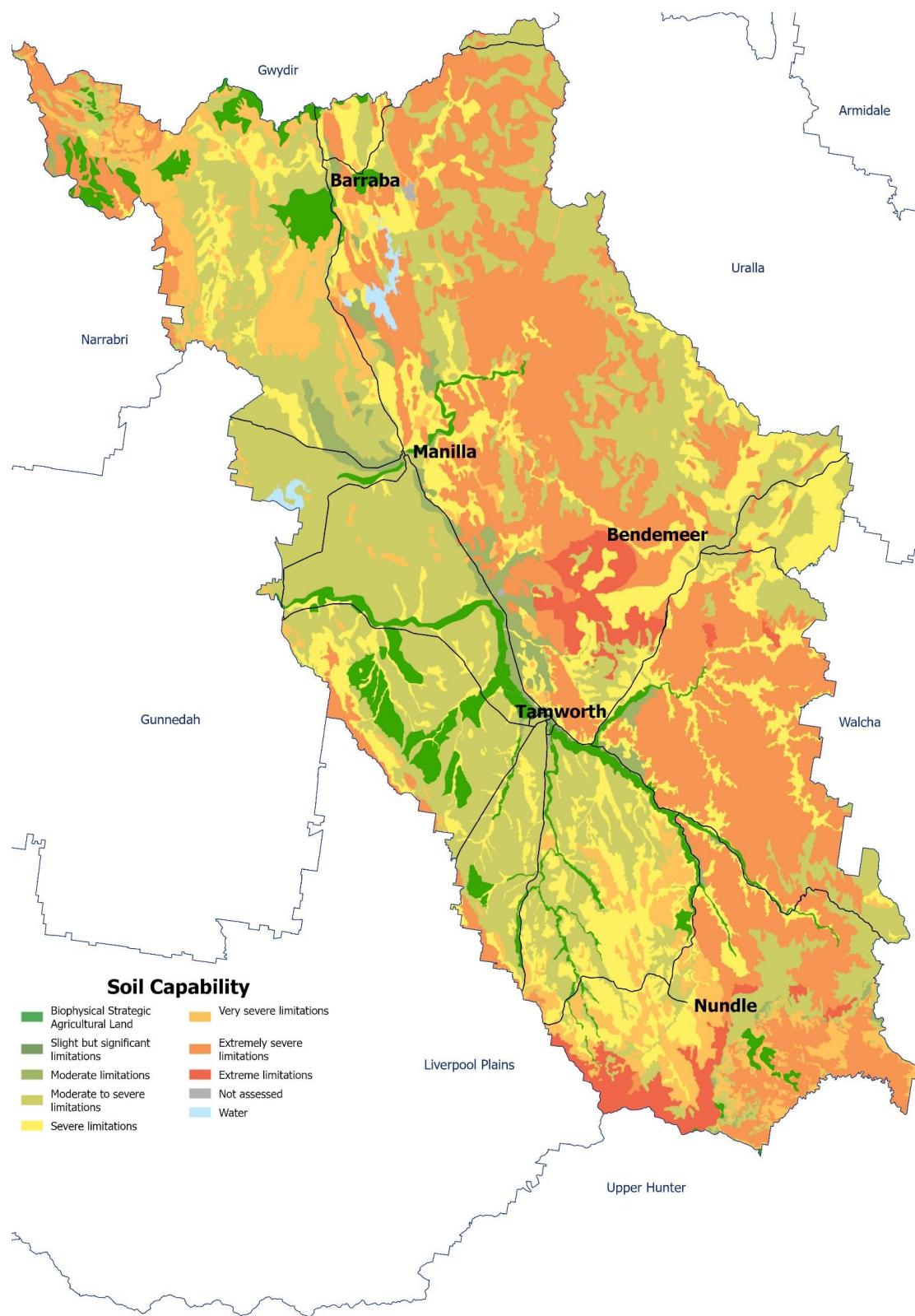


Figure 4: Soil Capability.

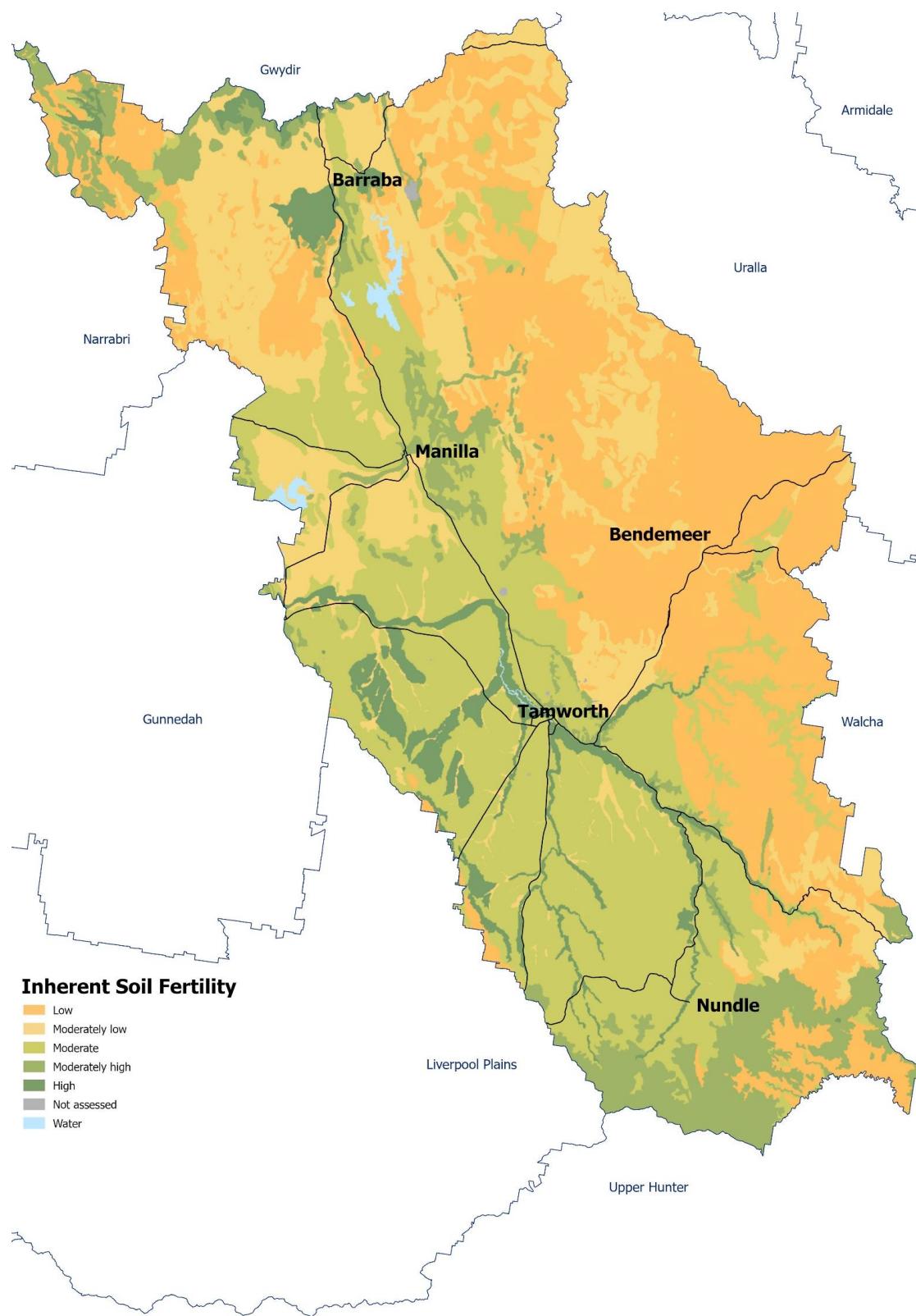


Figure 5: Inherent Soil Fertility.

Rural Subdivision

The smaller the rural lot size, the greater the potential for land use conflict because the less opportunity there is to provide a suitable buffer between uses.

Subdivision which enables new dwelling opportunities to be created in rural areas has the potential to result in fragmentation and increases the likelihood of land use conflict.

Nevertheless, the changing nature of large-scale farms; including farm succession planning, the need for larger farms for productivity, and demand for other uses such as rural lifestyle purchasers, means farming land is being lost and productivity declining. Without the flexibility of subdivision, the growth and evolution of agricultural industries is restricted.

In order to preserve the productivity of our agricultural lands, addressing rural subdivision and minimum lot sizes is crucial to both protecting our agricultural lands from fragmentation whilst also enabling growth and necessary change to support diverse rural industries.

Lot Size

Council implements minimum lot size controls to manage subdivision in the Tamworth Regional LGA. Appropriate minimum lot size controls ensure that lots are able to be developed at a size that best supports their function, reflecting opportunities and limitations of their physical characteristics, availability of resources and access to infrastructure.

Minimum lot sizes of agricultural lands are particularly important in land use planning to preserve the viability and productivity of farming operations. By setting a minimum lot size, Council can help to ensure that agricultural activities have sufficient space for productivity, noting that different agricultural industries may have different lot size requirements depending on factors such as the intensity of their operations and the requirement for buffer zones.

Current minimum lot sizes in rural areas under the *TRLEP 2010* include:

- 800ha in the north, east and south of the Tamworth Regional LGA
- 400ha in the central and western areas
- 100ha and 40ha closer to the regional city of Tamworth
- 40ha near rural communities.

Figure 6 illustrates the current minimum lot size controls of the Tamworth Regional LGA. This mapping illustrates a significant difference in minimum lot size between the Tamworth Regional LGA and surrounding LGAs.

Figure 7 identifies the actual size of lots in the Tamworth Regional LGA and Figure 8 identifies the size of property holdings.

This analysis illustrates that both the actual size of lots and the size of property holdings vary across the Tamworth Regional LGA, and vary again from the relevant minimum lot size controls.

Notably, the larger lot and property holding sizes correlate with the eastern rural lands which generally have a low soil fertility, limited soil capability, steeper topography and high biodiversity values.

Agricultural corporations are heavily influencing a trend towards larger rural holdings. Research undertaken by The University of Sydney in 2020 showed that the share of Tamworth Regional LGA owned by corporate entities rose from 20% in 2004 to 30% in 2019.

Primary Production Small Lots

The RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land use zone encourages diverse primary industry enterprises that may require smaller lots or more intensive land use practices.

The objectives of the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone are:

- To enable sustainable primary industry and other compatible land uses.
- To encourage and promote diversity and employment opportunities in relation to primary industry enterprises, particularly those that require smaller lots or that are more intensive in nature.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.

In the Tamworth Regional LGA, the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land use zone generally occurs in rural areas that are in the vicinity of centres.

A significant area of RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land is located to the south of Tamworth, where a cluster of equine related land uses is emerging.

A diversity of lot sizes in the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone will enable choice and facilitate the growth of emerging industries.

Council will look to support the delivery of 10ha lots within proximity to the Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC) and other equine related facilities, encouraging the growth and development of this industry, and diversifying the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural economies.

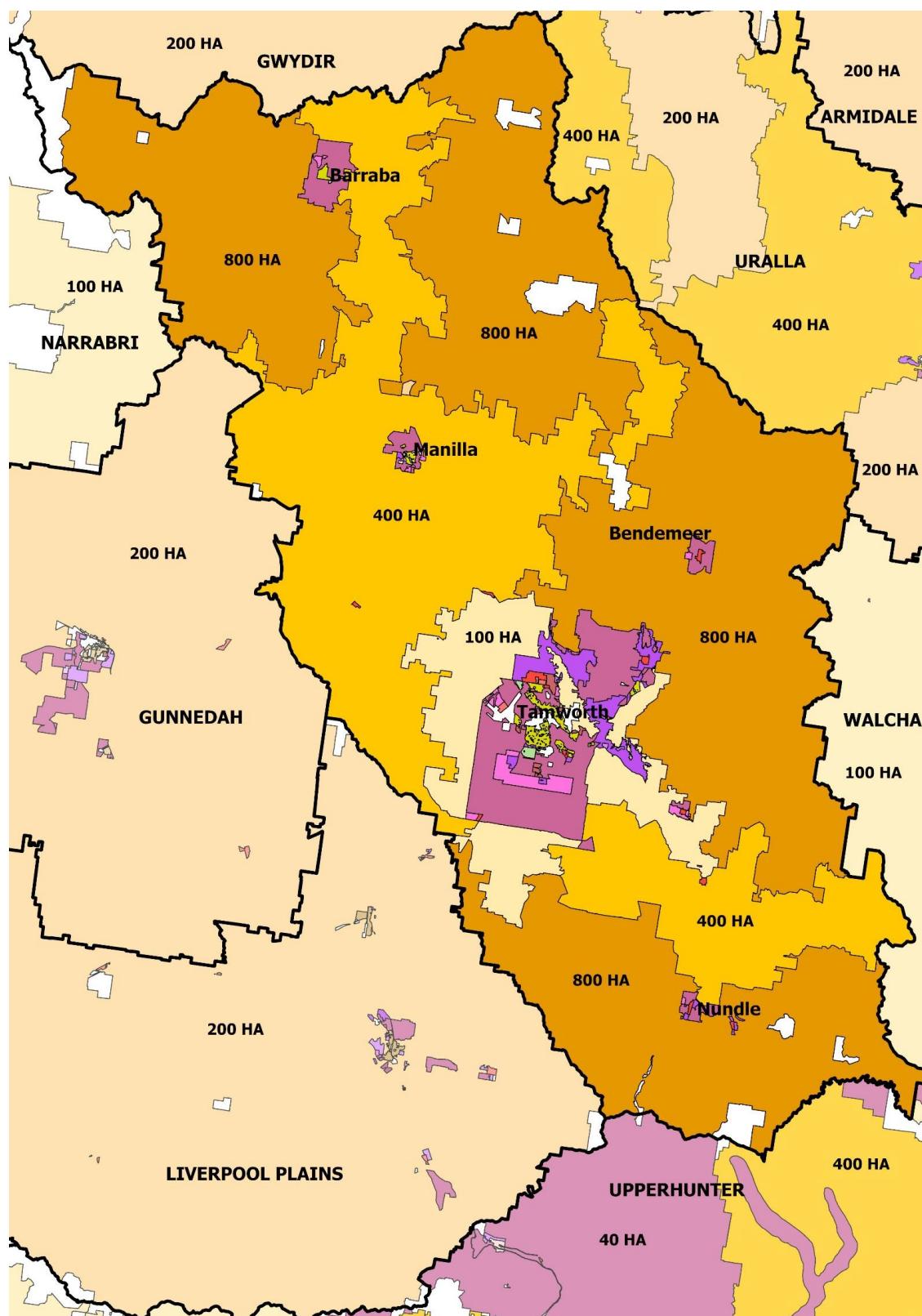


Figure 6: Current TRLEP 2010 minimum lot size in rural areas.

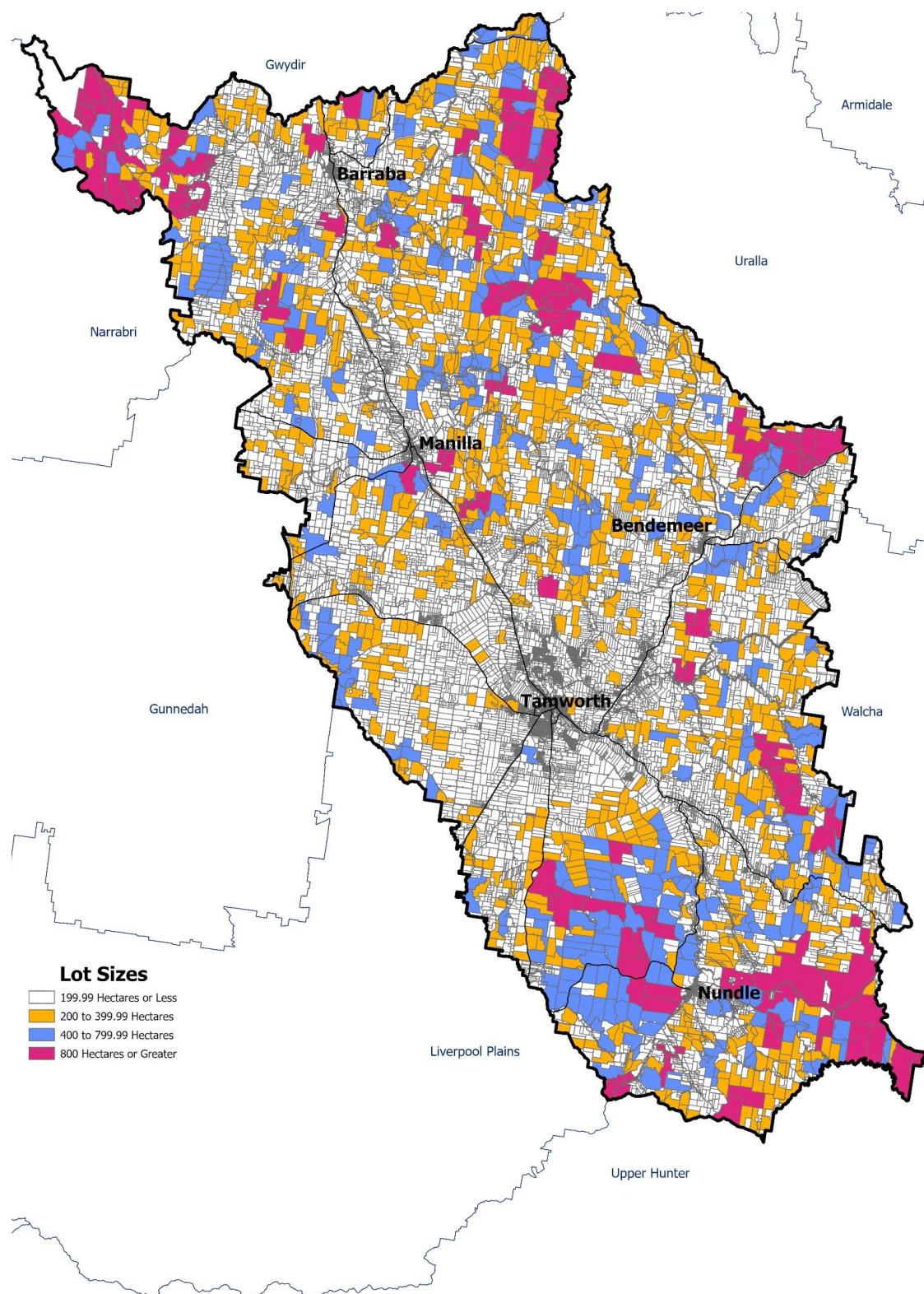


Figure 7: Individual Lot Size.

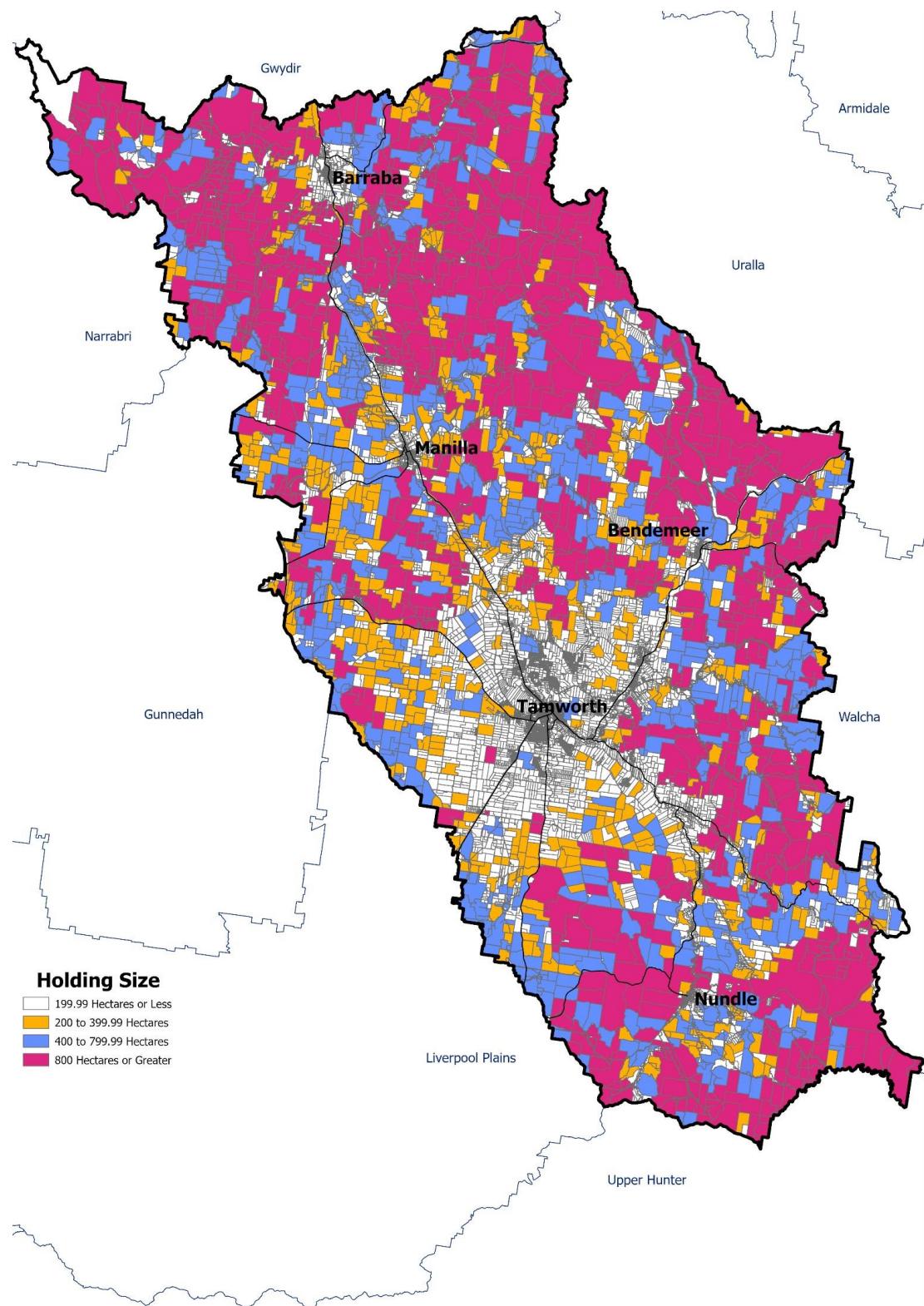


Figure 8: Holding Lot Size.

Proposed Land Use Planning Amendments in Rural Areas

Parts of the Tamworth Regional LGA contain highly productive agricultural lands, used for growing cereal crops, intensive agriculture and pasture for cattle and sheep, amongst other uses. It is essential that the existing land use controls relevant to such lands are retained to preserve their ongoing productivity.

However, in certain areas of the Tamworth Regional LGA, amendments to relevant land use planning controls would enable both current and intended future rural land uses and rural living opportunities.

Figure 9, 10 and 11 set out proposed strategic amendments to certain Areas of the Tamworth Regional LGA, summarised in Table 3.

An indicative lot yield analysis has been prepared for the each of the Areas (refer Table 3). This analysis includes the quantity of land identified, as well as the derived developable area, calculated at an efficiency of 75% to account for services (i.e. roads) and environmental constraints (i.e topography, biodiversity, flood and bushfire risk).

These amendments will be further refined as part of the Planning Proposal process in accordance with the *Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline* prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment.

Kingswood / Warral (Area 1a and 1b)

Areas to the south of Tamworth City, particularly areas around Kingswood and Warral, contain an emerging cluster of equine and equestrian related land uses. These areas benefit from relative proximity to Tamworth, and are growing with the support of facilities such as the nearby Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC).

Many of these land uses are facilitated by lots with a current minimum lot size of 9.9ha. Such lots provide sufficient space for paddocks, stables and yards, yet are also a small enough to allow the property to be well-managed on a part-time basis.

The growth of this emerging equine industry is proposed to be supported by reducing the minimum lot size of land bound by Meadows Lane, the New England Highway, Kia Ora Lane and Gowrie Road (Area 1a) to 10ha. Land that is currently zoned with a

minimum lot size of 9.9ha (Area 1b) should also be rationalised to 10ha for consistency, refer to Figure 9.

To support this amendment, it is recommended that Council prepare 'Key Sites' mapping for incorporation into the *TRLEP 2010*. Key sites maps are a mechanism that Council can implement to set controls that relate only to a specific site or area. Key sites may be identified for their strategic importance and unique characteristics, and may be subject to specific planning provisions that can enable certain development in order to deliver key economic, social or environmental benefits.

The incorporation of 'Key sites' mapping into the *TRLEP 2010* would be accompanied by site-specific controls requiring that use for equine purposes is demonstrated prior to the approval of any proposed subdivision of land in that area.

It is noted that parts of Kingswood are the subject of separate structure planning process currently being undertaken by Council, with future land use planning amendments to be a potential outcome of this process.

Kootingal / Moonbi (Area 2)

The communities of Kootingal and Moonbi are located less than 5km apart. Land between the two communities is currently zoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots, although viable agriculture in these areas is constrained due to proximity to the two centres and the potential for land use conflict. As a consequence, much of this land has been used not for primary production, but for residential living on large lots.

It is therefore proposed that certain areas between Kootingal and Moonbi are rezoned to R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha (Area 2), refer to Figure 9. This amendment will contribute diverse housing choice to the Tamworth Regional LGA, in accordance with the Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy, which states that "*reviewing planning controls to promote lifestyle living and in-fill housing development for rural communities will promote diverse and affordable housing.*" The final extent of rezoning will need to be informed by detailed studies as part of any future Planning Proposal process.

It is also noted that parts of Kootingal are the subject of separate structure planning process currently being undertaken by Council, with future land use planning

amendments to be a potential outcome of this process.

Daruka (Areas 3a and 3b)

Despite extensive areas of land zoned for rural residential development in the Tamworth hinterlands, much of the land remains unsubdivided. While a number of site-specific physical constraints prevent subdivision, such as bush fire, biodiversity, slope or access, the primary obstacle appears to be the cost-prohibitive requirement for reticulated town water to be provided to a subdivision.

Allowing 2ha lots to be created in Daruka without reticulated town water is not supported due to the presence of community groundwater schemes. Any increase in 2ha lots in this area has potential to create demand for further groundwater access that would adversely impact these community schemes.

In recognition of this issue, Council recently amended the *TRDCP 2010* to remove the requirement to provide reticulated town water for lots with an area of 5ha or greater at Daruka and Tintinhull. A 5ha lot provides greater scope for rainwater harvesting and results in reduced lot yield and demand for groundwater access.

In recognition of the long-standing issue of water supply in Daruka and the need to encourage sustainable rural residential development, it is proposed that land in Daruka currently zoned for rural residential development with a minimum lot size of 2ha (Area 3a) has the minimum lot size increased to 5ha under the *TRLEP 2010* to align with the *TRDCP 2010*.

This change to the minimum lot size will also extend part way along Upper Moore Creek Road for land between the Moore Creek waterway and area of protected vegetation.

A review of the land at Daruka has also identified an area of smaller lots along Woonooka Road that are better suited for the R5 large Lot Residential zone. It is proposed to extend the R5 Large lot Residential zone and 5ha minimum lot size along both sides of Woonooka Road (Area 3b) for this short distance.

Refer to Figure 9

Nundle (Area 4)

Minor amendments to areas of Nundle are proposed to provide additional rural living opportunities and ensure that land use zones are consistent with existing land uses. This will involve the rezoning of some land to R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha, refer to Figure 10.

Loomberah (Area 5)

It is proposed that land in the rural residential community of Loomberah (Area 5) is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha to ensure that the principal planning controls are consistent with existing land uses, refer to Figure 9. These amendments will not create opportunities for subdivision or dwellings.

Administrative Changes to Minimum Lot Sizes (Areas 6a and 6b)

For consistency across the Tamworth Regional LGA, it is proposed that areas at Dungowan and Tamworth (Area 6a) with a minimum lot size of 9.9ha have this minimum lot size increased to 10ha, refer to Figure 9.

A small area of land north of Manilla (Area 6b) currently has a minimum lot size of 200ha. This is intended to be increased to 400ha consistent with the surrounding area, refer to Figure 11.



Figure 9: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (Tamworth City surrounds).

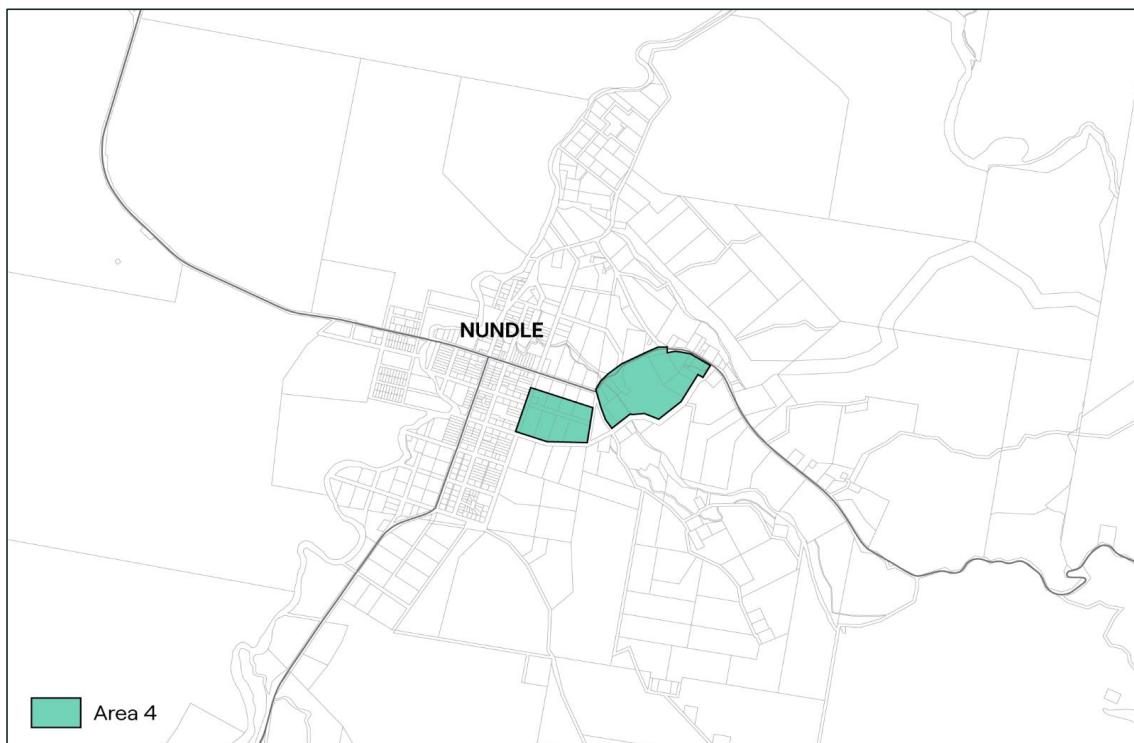


Figure 10: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (Nundle surrounds).



Figure 11: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (Manilla surrounds).

Action 1.1	Ensure State Significant Agricultural Land, Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land and Important Agricultural Land are used as key criteria in the assessment of Planning Proposals and Development Applications pertaining to rural zoned land.
Action 1.2	Implement land zoning and minimum lot size changes as recommended, accounting for landscape characteristics, viability of agricultural productivity and strategic objectives for the zones.
Action 1.3	Introduce a RU2 Rural Landscape zone in identified areas to distinguish rural lands with high scenic value from those with higher soil fertility.

Table 3: Lot Yield Analysis of Proposed Land Use Planning Amendments.

Area Name	Land Zoning		Minimum Lot Size (ha)		Indicative Lot Yield		
	Existing	Recommendation	Existing	Recommendation	Total Area (ha)	Developable Area (ha) (75%)	Lot Yield
Area 1a	Kingswood-Warral	RU4	RU4	40	10	1,210.5	907.9
Area 1b	Kingswood-Warral	RU4	RU4	9.9	10	-	-
Area 2	Kootingal/Moonbi	RU4	RU4	40	2	366	274.5
Area 3a	Daruka	R5	R5	2	5	1,683.5	1,262.7
Area 3b	Daruka (Wooncoka Road)	RU4	R5	40	5	124.1	93.1
Area 4	Nundle	RU4	R5	40	2	41.9	37.7
Area 5	Loomberah	RU1	R5	100	2	-	-
Area 6a	Dungowan/Tamworth Airport	RU1	RU1	9.9	10	-	-
Area 6b	Manilla (northern surrounds)	RU1	RU1	200	400	-	-

Focus Area 2: Reduce and Manage Land Use Conflicts

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands host a wide range of important land uses, activities and industries.

Land use conflict can occur when demand for the same resources arises from competing, and sometimes incompatible, sources. This can include, for example, demand for space, demand for assets, or the generation of impacts that invade neighbouring uses, such as noise or odour.

One common example of rural land use conflict occurs with urban expansion into agricultural lands in fringe areas of towns and villages. Everyday farming practices can result in impacts such as noise, odour or spray drift. New residential neighbours may lack understanding of farming practices and can present challenges to the operations of farming businesses.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands contain critically important primary producers and key employers. Protecting these industries from potential land use conflict is vital to ensuring their ongoing operations, viability and future growth.

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains one of the state's most significant poultry industry clusters. Incompatible land uses such as residential encroachment or insufficient separation distances, can lead to conflict arising from issues such as noise, odour, or biosecurity concerns.

In order to preserve the productivity of our rural lands, mitigating land use conflicts is a key priority of this Rural Lands Strategy and remains an important focus of Council.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 2 - Protect the viability and integrity of rural land (Strategy 2.1); and
- Objective 3 - Expand agribusiness and food processing sectors (Strategy 3.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 2: Create a Prosperous Region (Action PR7);
- Planning Priority 3 – Build Resilient Communities (Action RC1); and
- Planning Priority 7: Deliver Durable Infrastructure (Action DD1).

Renewable Energy Projects

The New England Renewable Energy Zone (NEREZ) is partly located within the Tamworth Regional LGA (refer to Focus Area 4 for further detailed discussion).

While renewable energy may present an opportunity for some farmers to diversify their income, increasing land use conflict is expected to be a confronting reality for many rural landholders and communities, and might result in the loss or displacement of agricultural land or intrusion on rural landscapes.

The report *Renewable energy generation and agriculture in NSW's rural landscape and economy – growth sectors on a complementary path*, prepared by the NSW Agriculture Commissioner, notes that land use conflict is a serious problem in NSW, and is widely considered to be getting worse with population growth, distribution changes, and energy policy developments (among other things), increasing the demand for conversion of agricultural land for industrial and residential uses.

Land use conflict concerns identified within the report included impacts to neighbouring landholders such as the risk of reduced property values, increased insurance liabilities, production practice changes to improve compatibility, changed water flows and increased pest and weed management requirements. Local and cumulative impact on food and fibre production, and impact on upstream and downstream businesses in the community and wider regions were also noted.

In November 2024, DPHI developed the *Renewable Energy Planning Framework* to assist the State's transition to renewable energy. The Framework is comprised of several guidelines to inform the development and assessment of large-scale wind and solar energy, battery energy storage systems, hydrogen and large-scale transmission infrastructure.

The Framework sets out controls related to matters such as noise, health, visual, fire, environmental, traffic and decommissioning impacts, and requires cumulative impact assessment and land use conflict risk assessment for proposed development

land use conflicts that arise from lawful agricultural practices.

The policy aims to increase certainty for existing agricultural use and promote innovation and investment in agriculture.

As stated in the Policy:

- People who want to live in rural and agricultural areas need to understand that land is used for productive purposes, such as agriculture. The reality is that normal farming practices can have impacts on neighbours, ranging from residual noise, light, dust and other impacts.
- In some local government areas, complaints occur frequently, in some areas on a weekly basis. Land use conflict can be a considerable issue for local government, and creates uncertainty for farm businesses, as it can increase costs and exert pressure on some farmers to relocate or leave the industry.

Consequently, it is essential to establish and maintain best practice approaches to minimising land use conflict, including via upfront strategic land use planning.

Biosecurity

Maintaining biosecurity is an increasingly important consideration for primary producers. Recent cases of avian influenza affecting the Victorian and NSW poultry industries demonstrate the dire consequences of disease outbreaks to agriculture and food supply chains.

Ensuring adequate buffer zones are maintained around poultry farms is one way to mitigate against this biosecurity risk.

Weed control is another form of biosecurity that requires vigilance, education and resourcing to protect the productivity of agricultural land.

NSW Right to Farm Policy

The *NSW Right to Farm Policy* was published by the Department of Primary Industries in 2015 to address

Land Use Buffers

One measure to minimise land use conflict involves physically separating uses with specified buffer distances; minimising opportunity for conflict between the source of an impact and the sensitive receptor.

Incorporating appropriate buffer zones into the planning process, particularly at the early stages of a development, can provide clarity for landowners, neighbours and consent authorities and ongoing benefits for primary producers and the public.

Buffer Zone: An area of land set aside to minimise the impacts of land uses on each other.

Separation Distance: The distance between the point of generation of an environmental impact and a receptor that is sensitive to that impact.

Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture (2018)

In 2018, DPI released the guideline *Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture* to provide buffer zone advice to agricultural industries, development proponents and consent authorities so as to reduce land use conflict between agriculture and other land uses.

The guideline provides suggested evaluation distances between agriculture and sensitive receptors. However, it is clearly stated that issues surrounding land use conflict and the separation of incompatible land uses through buffer zones is not an exact science, and site specific considerations such as topography, vegetation and the nature of the proposed and adjacent development all need to be considered.

Council will look to implement all relevant parts of the *Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture* into the *Tamworth Regional Development Control Plan 2010 (TRDCP 2010)*, including referring to the suggested evaluation distances to initiate an assessment of land use buffers, when assessing agriculture developments.

Intensive Livestock Agriculture

Clause 5.18 of the *TRLCP 2010* provides for the assessment of development for the purpose of intensive livestock agriculture.

The clause requires consideration for matters such as adverse impacts that may occur as a result of odours,

surface and groundwater pollution, and the degradation of soils, as well as site suitability, mitigation measures, animal health and welfare, and compliance with other relevant state government guidelines and requirements.

Clause 5.18 sets out certain types of intensive livestock agriculture development (up to certain capacity thresholds) which, subject to the satisfaction of certain controls, do not require development consent. These include:

- Cattle feedlots with fewer than 50 cattle
- Goat feedlots with fewer than 200 goats
- Sheep feedlot with fewer than 200 sheep
- Pig farms with fewer than 20 breeding sows, or fewer than 200 pigs (of which fewer than 20 may be breeding sows)
- Dairies with fewer than 50 dairy cows,
- Poultry farms with fewer than 1,000 birds for meat or egg production (or both).

Clause 5.18 identifies certain requirements and land use buffers to enable such development without consent, requiring that the development will not be located:

- In an environmentally sensitive area
- Within 100 metres of a natural watercourse
- In a drinking water catchment
- Within 500 metres of any dwelling that is not associated with the development, or a residential zone
- For a poultry farm used for breeding poultry - within 5km of another poultry farm
- For a poultry farm not used for breeding poultry - within 5km of a poultry farm used for breeding poultry, or within 1km of a poultry farm not used for breeding poultry
- For a pig farm—within 3km of another pig farm.

Namoi Regional Job Precinct

As discussed in Section 2 of this Rural Lands Strategy, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has identified a primary regional intensive agriculture investigation area centred largely over the Tamworth Regional LGA's fertile western rural lands as a part of the Namoi Regional Job Precinct (RJP). This analysis provides an important basis upon which Council can refer to in order to reduce land use conflict that has the potential to impact important intensive livestock agriculture in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

For example, Council will seek to preserve the primary use of lands within the Namoi RJP for agriculture by permitting the construction of secondary dwellings only in certain rural areas that are not identified important agricultural land, such as those outside the proposed Namoi RJP.

Poultry Industry

In 2019-20, the Tamworth Regional LGA was the second biggest producer of poultry meat in NSW, with the gross value of poultry exceeding \$96M.

Poultry meat producer Baiada has a strong presence in the region and is moving ahead with major expansion plans including:

- New \$203M Oakburn Processing Plant to be completed in 2026 with the capacity to process 3 million chickens per week
- New \$84M feedmill at Wallamore
- New \$28M broiler farm at Appleby featuring 16 poultry sheds with capacity for 960,000 birds.

The poultry industry is of critical importance to the economy of the Tamworth Regional LGA, providing significant employment in both primary production and secondary manufacturing and processing industries.

The majority of poultry farms in the Tamworth Regional LGA are located within the Namoi RJP, where primary agriculture is to be prioritised and preserved.

Council will look to continue to enable the strength of the poultry industry in the Tamworth Regional LGA; preserving jobs, capitalising on investment and enabling sustainable growth.

Infrastructure Sites

The orderly and appropriate development of key infrastructure to support the Tamworth Regional LGA requires forward consideration for concerns such as incompatible land uses and/or necessary separation distances to avoid potential land use conflicts and preserve the viability of a number of important industries and essential infrastructure.

Tamworth Regional Airport

The Tamworth Regional Airport and its surrounding precinct is the home of an expanding centre for aviation related industries. Preserving the potential for this precinct to grow as a training, business and tourist gateway will include ensuring that potentially incompatible land uses (such as noise sensitive receptors) aren't introduced, and that land in proximity to the airport is preserved for supporting or related employment purposes.

Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The majority of Council's wastewater treatment facilities are located on rural lands. Development near some of these facilities is currently regulated by 'Sewer Treatment Plant' buffer via clause 7.5 of the *TRLEP 2010* which requires new developments to consider adverse impacts on the operation of these critical pieces of infrastructure. Other wastewater treatment facilities do not currently require the protection of a buffer.

It is considered that as part of a future review of the *TRLEP 2010* that all buffers are reviewed to determine if they are fit for purpose, and new buffers are required of existing wastewater treatment facilities.

Waste Management

Council operates a total of eleven (11) waste management facilities in the Tamworth Regional LGA comprising four (4) landfills and seven (7) rural transfer stations.

The Forest Road Waste Management Facility (FRWMF) located in Tamworth is the largest facility operated by Council. The site is the primary landfilling and organics processing facility servicing the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Development near the facility is currently regulated by a 'Waste Disposal Buffer' via clause 7.5 of the *TRLEP 2010* which requires new developments to consider adverse impacts on the operation of this critical piece

of infrastructure. This buffer extends approximately 500m around the site, with the exception of the north-east boundary which is 300m. The FRWMF itself is zoned SP2 Infrastructure. The lands surrounding the FRWMF are zoned RU6 Transition and encompass the balance of the buffer.

There are a number of existing residences within the buffer and substantial housing growth to the north, northwest and northeast of the FRWMF. Council recently engaged an external consultant to undertake an odour impact assessment based on the current and future operation of the FRWMF. This assessment identified the required buffer distances around the waste management facility to minimise any potential odour impacts on the nearest sensitive receptors.

Based on the findings of the assessment, existing and future operations of the FRWMF have the potential to cause odour impacts on the surrounding environment within the existing buffer zone. Therefore, it is not proposed to reduce the size or extent of the buffer or associated RU6 Transition zone.

Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment

In the assessment of development in the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands, Council will continue to undertake comprehensive Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) to identify and assess the potential for land use conflict to occur between adjacent land uses.

Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide (2011)

In 2011, DPI released the guideline *Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide* to provide guidance on the practical measures to use when conducting a LUCRA.

The guideline sets out that a LUCRA aims to:

- Accurately identify and address potential land use conflict issues and risk of occurrence before a new land use proceeds or a dispute arises
- Objectively assess the effect of a proposed land use on neighbouring land uses
- Increase the understanding of potential land use conflict to inform and complement development control and buffer requirements
- Highlight or recommend strategies to help minimise the potential for land use conflicts to occur and contribute to the negotiation, proposal,

implementation and evaluation of separation strategies.

The guideline identifies the following four key steps to undertake a LUCRA:

1. Gather information about proposed land use change and associated activities
2. Evaluate the risk level of each activity
3. Identify risk reduction management strategies
4. Record LUCRA results.

Council will seek to continue to undertake a comprehensive LUCRA in accordance with DPI's *Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide* when assessing potential land use conflicts. It is recommended the requirement for a LUCRA is included in the *TRDCP 2010* to provide clear expectations to developers.

Action 2.1	Update the <i>TRDCP 2010</i> to include all relevant parts of DPI's <i>Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide</i> (2011, or its update) when assessing potential land uses conflicts.
Action 2.2	Update the <i>TRDCP 2010</i> to establish appropriate buffer areas and separation distance for a range of rural land uses. This should be consistent with DPI's <i>Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture Interim Guidelines</i> (2018, or its update).
Action 2.3	Advocate for renewable energy and/or extractive industries to be located away from the Tamworth Regional LGA's highest quality agricultural lands in order to retain their use for primary production.
Action 2.4	Implement the Namoi Regional Job Precinct into the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> where applicable to promote intensive agriculture and minimise land use conflicts.
Action 2.5	Investigate expanding the Namoi Regional Job Precinct to include high value agricultural land and established intensive agricultural clusters.

Focus Area 3: Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages

Tamworth is a hub for regional and inter-state connections, being ideally located on the New England Highway in between Sydney and Brisbane.

Tamworth enjoys direct flights to Sydney and Brisbane, rail services to Newcastle and Sydney, and access to overseas freight.

The efficiency of the region's freight network directly influences productivity, collaboration, growth and access to markets.

Tamworth is positioned along the New England Highway and Fossickers Way (Manilla Road), which form a key spine north-south, as well as the Oxley Highway, which extends generally east-west (Figure 12). Collectively, these routes serve as key freight routes underpinning the region's economic productivity.

In order to support anticipated population and economic growth in the region, additional transport infrastructure will be required, especially to encourage the growth of emerging agribusiness by providing strong connectivity to logistic and distribution centres.

According to the National Road Transport Association, operational costs for trucking have surged over 20% between 2018 and 2024, driven by cost of diesel, labour and rising interest rates.

This has resulted in significant freight cost increases for primary producers and reduced profit margins for freight companies.

This Rural Lands Strategy aims to support better transport links and infrastructure to connect the region by improving State and regional freight, active and public transport networks, and growing emerging transport technologies.

Council will continue to collaborate with TfNSW, EnergyCo and Tamworth Regional Airport to promote transport opportunities, improving regional transport across various modes to enhance connectivity throughout the region.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 20 - Improve state and regional freight connectivity (Strategy 20.1 and 20.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 2 – Create a Prosperous Region (Actions PR3 and PR8)
- Planning Priority 4; Connect Our Region and its Citizens (Actions CRC1, CRC2, CRC3 and CRC6).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 4 – Facilitate liveable communities
 - Priority 4.3 – Connected communities (Action 4.5).

Tamworth Regional Airport

The Tamworth Regional Airport is an important asset to the Tamworth Regional LGA, providing regionally significant connectivity for residents, visitors and industry.

The airport precinct is also the location of a growing regional centre for aviation and aviation related industries, including flight training, and recreational and tourist aviation activity. The airport is home to Qantaslink, Sigma Aviation, Aviskills, Sydney Flight College, Airspeed Aviation, AirMed, New England Flight Training, Tamworth Aero Club, 310 Squadron Australian Air Force, Civil Aviation Safety Authority Regional Office and the International Flight Training Tamworth pilot training facilities.

The Tamworth Regional Airport currently offers direct flights to Sydney and Brisbane, connecting travellers to international destinations.

Long term growth opportunities may include capacity for international air freight, further connecting local and regional industries to global markets. This would place the Tamworth Regional Airport at the centre of an aviation, logistics and food processing hub.

Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility

The Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility, strategically located within the Tamworth Global Gateway Park adjacent to the Tamworth Regional Airport, provides efficient and convenient conveyance of freight to the ports of Newcastle, Sydney and beyond to global markets.

The Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility opened in March 2024, and is managed by Qube Logistics. The facility was constructed on Council-owned land and required re-commissioning of 5km of the branch line from Tamworth which had been disused for decades.

Rail offers an economical transport option for bulk commodities and reduces heavy vehicle movements from roads and highways. Access to rail unlocks significant efficiency; delivering goods and produce faster and fresher, better connecting producers to broader and larger markets, and expanding opportunity for partnerships and cooperation.

The Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility offers both containerised and bulk transfer opportunities.

The facility has opened up international import and export markets for local businesses and primary producers by providing for the transfer of products and commodities from truck, to rail, and on to global ports.

Western Freight Link

Council is committed to enabling the delivery of the future Western Freight Link on the south-western edge of Tamworth.

The Western Freight Link will provide a bypass for trucks and heavy vehicles, enabling a connection to the New England Highway at Burgmanns Lane and to the Oxley Highway at Country Road.

The link will improve the overall resilience of the transport network around the Tamworth LGA, particularly when flooding at Timbumburi Creek cuts the Oxley Highway. The link will improve road efficiency and freight movement, with significant benefits to regional productivity including greater employment capacity and enhanced connectivity to support agricultural and manufacturing logistics throughout the region.

Eastern Detour

Construction of Tamworth's Eastern Detour is under investigation. This link would enhance the function, safety and efficiency of Tamworth's roads, with significant benefit to the broader state network.

The project would connect the southern approach of the New England Highway with the eastern branch at Nemingha, enabling a connection that bypasses Tamworth centre.

The delivery of the Eastern Detour would support the development of the NEREZ throughout the wider New England region, enabling the movement of significant infrastructure on road networks outside the city centre.

The Eastern Detour would also provide a substantial improvement to Tamworth's road safety and function, particularly as existing options are subject to regular flooding during periods of significant rainfall.

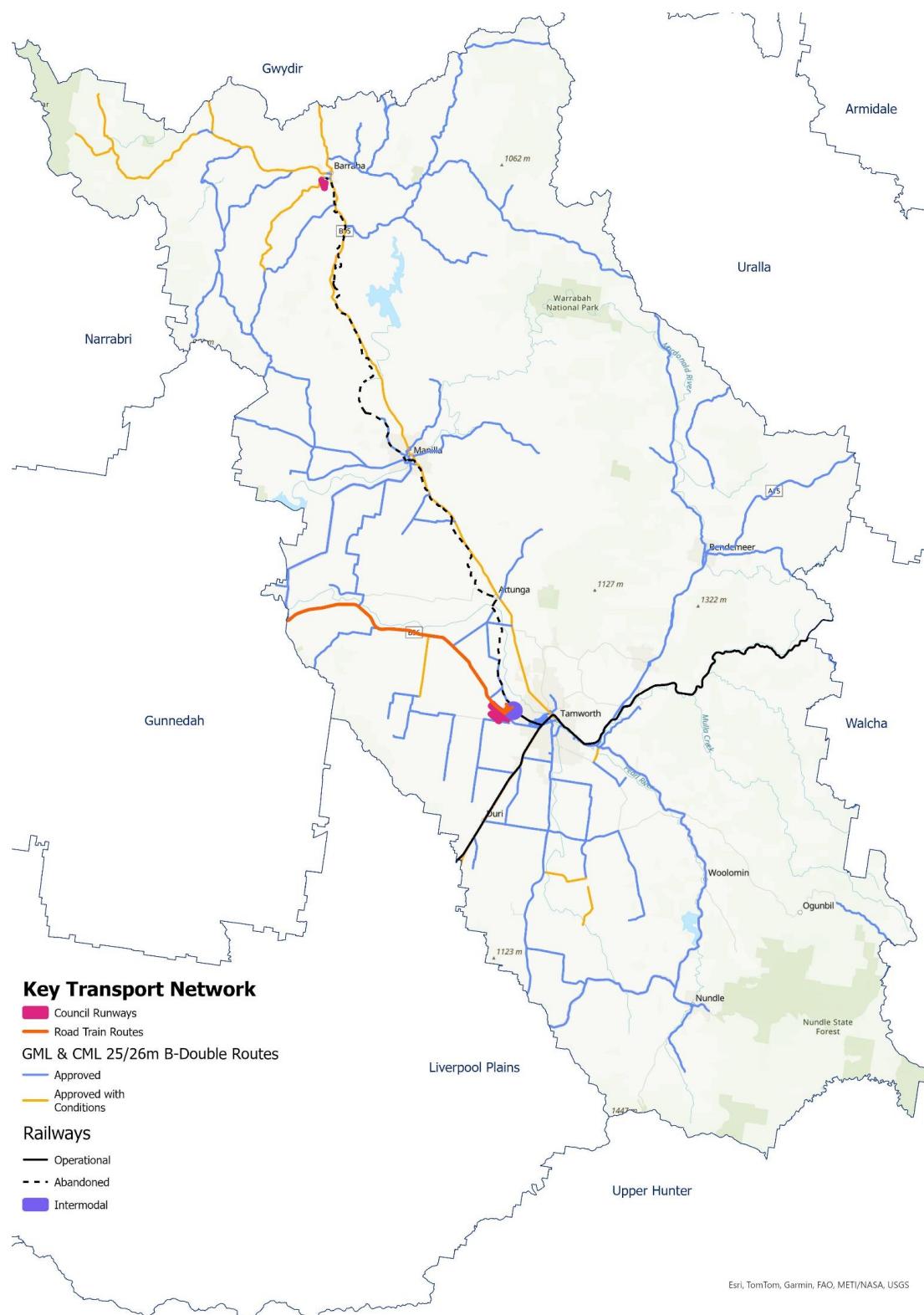


Figure 12: Key transport network.

Action 3.1	Lobby the NSW Government to fund local and regional road projects, such as B-Double and Road Train routes, to strengthen regional transport connections.
Action 3.2	Continue to engage with Transport for NSW to deliver the Western Freight Link to enable freight to move safely and efficiently throughout the region.
Action 3.3	Continue to engage with EnergyCo and Transport for NSW to investigate routes for the Tamworth Eastern Detour with consideration for both the immediate demands of the New England REZ and the long-term connectivity objectives of the Tamworth region and State road network.
Action 3.4	Continue to investigate and protect the Tamworth Regional Airport as a future air freight hub for agricultural produce.
Action 3.5	Identify opportunities for rural industries that may benefit from the Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility including the export of local agricultural products.

Focus Area 4: Support and diversify the rural economy

Diversifying the rural economy will enable the region to adapt to population growth, extreme weather events and shifting global economies.

Opportunities exist to diversify Tamworth's rural land uses, including agritourism, sports (particularly those related to the equine industry), culture and education.

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 3 - Expand agribusiness and food processing sectors (Strategy 3.1 and 3.2); and
- Objective 7 - Support a diverse visitor economy (Strategy 7.1 and 7.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 2 – Create a Prosperous Region (Actions PR2, PR4, PR5 and PR6);
- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Actions RC4, RC6 and RC7); and
- Planning Priority 5: Design with nature (Action DN7).

Equine Industry

The Tamworth Regional LGA is emerging as a regional centre for equine and equine sports related enterprises. The equine industry is a major and growing contributor to the economy of the Tamworth region, and offers significant opportunity to compatibly diversify the sectors of our rural economy beyond primary production.

The Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC) is a leading multipurpose equine and livestock facility, the largest of its kind in the southern hemisphere. Located on the southern fringe of Tamworth, AELEC is designed to host competitions and events attracting visitors from all over the country.

Each year, the venue attracts:

- 7,000 annual competitors
- 9,000 horses
- 16,000 head of cattle
- 120,000 visitor nights
- Over \$43 million in economic contribution to the NSW economy.

AELEC operates 365 days of the year, with events occupying AELEC for an average of 320 days of the year during 2022-2023, an average utilisation rate of 88%.

To the south of Tamworth is a growing cluster of equine enterprises and other equine related land uses. These are primarily occurring on approximately 10ha lots within close proximity to the AELEC, on generally flat or gently undulating land with fertile soils.

Equine related activities, horse studs and the like represent a complementary land use within the rural surrounds of Tamworth, contributing high quality scenic rural character, job creation, tourism and recreational opportunities, and attracting national and international investment.

Council will look to continue to support the growth of equine related uses in the Tamworth Regional LGA by identifying and rezoning land suitable for equine industry expansion, including the delivery of additional 10ha lots in strategic locations, supporting the industry to be retained and encouraged to grow within the region.

Tourism

Tourism plays an important role in the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy with attractions including festivals, sporting events, restaurants, museums and galleries.

The Tamworth Country Music Festival attracts more than 50,000 festival goers each year and the region is regarded as a major inland sports capital.

The tourist economy is a key focus for economic growth and prosperity in the region, and opportunities exist for further growth within this sector, particularly growth in agritourism for our productive rural lands.

Promoting the growth of the tourist industry and attracting diverse visitors and businesses to the region will also require well planned infrastructure, services and safety measures to ensure sustainable growth.

The growth of the tourist industry must be carefully considered so as to not negatively impact the productivity and liveability of rural lands, and mitigate the potential for land use conflict.

Agribusiness & Agritourism

Agribusiness and agritourism are key sectors that will help to diversify the region's economy, promoting employment and economic resilience.

Agribusiness includes industries such as food and fibre production, agrichemicals, seed supply, farm machinery wholesale and distribution, freight, logistics, processing, marketing and retail sales.

Chicken meat production and processing is the largest intensive agribusiness employer in the region and is centred around the Baiada processing plant in Tamworth.

Agritourism and small-scale agricultural development in the region contribute to a diverse and unique tourist offering, and may include food and wine trails, farm stays, farmers markets, and farm gate experiences.

These offerings can support the recovery and resilience of agribusinesses, growing the region's economy, attracting tourists and promoting job creation.

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPCI) has recently introduced clear

planning terms for agritourism-related activities. These include:

- **farm gate premises** where visitors interact with produce from the farm, such as through fruit picking, sales, tastings, workshops and cafés.
- **farm experience premises** where visitors can experience life on a farm, including tours, horse riding, weddings, functions and retreats.
- **farm stay accommodation** which includes camping, caravanning and glamping.

DPHI has enabled fast-track planning pathways for agritourism, including introducing new standards to enable exempt and complying development, and has enabled agritourism to be permitted with consent in all RU1 Primary Production and RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land use zones.

Recreation

There are significant sporting facilities within the Tamworth Regional LGA, including the AELEC, an indoor sports dome, athletics facilities, a velodrome, netball courts, and hockey fields.

The AELEC attracts visitors regionally and nationally, as well as having strong links with local farming communities. The *Blueprint 100 - Part 1* outlines the opportunity to position Tamworth as a regional leisure and sports destination.

Education

The New England North West region has a strong education sector, based around the University of New England (UNE) and TAFE NSW, as well as ongoing demand for skilled labour.

UNE offers numerous animal science and agriculture-related degrees and short courses. According to the university, the proposed new UNE Tamworth Central campus will provide access and study facilities for the entire catalogue of courses offered by UNE, where students may choose to access a mixture of learning online and face to face.

In addition, UNE has been working closely with the Tamworth community to develop academic programs that will be delivered in place, supported by market research and planning. Two short courses have already been developed in response to requests for equine-focused offerings.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's prime agricultural lands and robust industries have attracted a number of other agriculture-related educational and research establishments. These include the Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, Australia's only selective agricultural day and boarding school for boys, and DPI's Tamworth Agricultural Institute, a principal research institute dedicated to ensuring agricultural industries and rural communities remain economically viable and sustainable.

Council will look to continue to support the growth, innovation and economic diversification presented by the agricultural education sector in the Tamworth Regional LGA, facilitating operational needs, encouraging opportunity and collaboration, and ensuring well planned growth and compatible land uses.

Renewable Energy

The NEREZ is in the early stages of planning by the NSW Government, and the Tamworth Regional LGA is partly located within the zone (Figure 13).

The NEREZ will contribute to the diversification of land uses occurring in our rural lands, presenting many opportunities and some challenges as it is developed across the region.

The NEREZ is expected to deliver up to \$24 billion in private sector investment and support around 2,000 operational jobs and 6,000 construction jobs. This development is also expected to bring a large influx of workers and families to the area, potentially within a relatively short timeframe, which may present challenges such as additional strain on the housing market, local infrastructure and services.

In order to leverage the opportunities of investment from the NEREZ, the Tamworth Regional LGA needs upfront strategic planning that will ensure it can attract complementary land uses and industries, accommodate a short term influx in workers, and mitigate any potential land use conflict or incompatibilities to continue to support the diverse and valuable range of activities that occur throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Mining

The Tamworth Regional LGA borders one of the largest coal basins in the country at Gunnedah. Growth in extractive industries will continue to be anticipated throughout the region into the future, and mining is expected to remain one of the key industries of the region's economy.

Manilla is a commuting base for miners and their families due to the town's proximity to a number of mines. Ensuring that Manilla and surrounding areas can accommodate demand for housing and infrastructure as a result of mining activities is a key consideration for Council, and includes providing and maintaining a high quality of life for residents, ensuring the provision of key services and amenities, and continuing to attract and diversify the economy to support employment and opportunity into the future

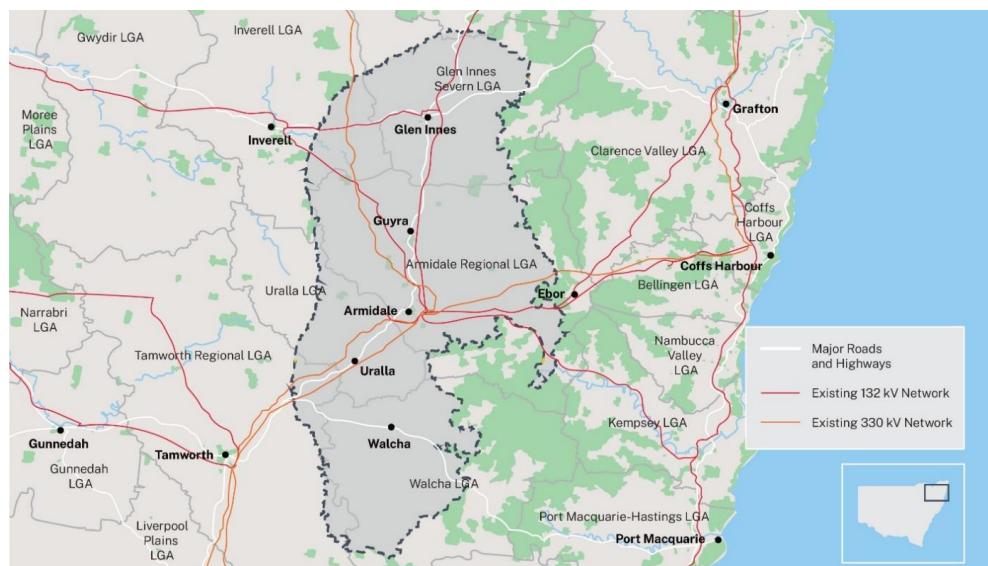


Figure 13: New England Renewable Energy Zone (NEREZ).

Action 4.1	Promote attractions to encourage growth in key tourism market segments such as food and agritourism, farm-stay, or experience-based holidaymaking.
Action 4.2	Strengthen innovation and industry diversification throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA, by exploring new avenues for support through partnerships and funding with TAFE NSW and Universities.

Focus Area 5: Support rural housing in the right locations

Providing a diverse range of suitable housing is essential to balancing growth and meeting the needs of the Tamworth community.

In order to achieve this, a mix of dwelling types, sizes and locations needs to be delivered, and this will include well-planned infill and greenfield housing, as well as some housing in rural areas. This will support a diversity of housing choice for the region's population now and into the future.

Rural zones in the Tamworth Regional LGA support agriculture, industry and employment, as well as lifestyle and residential opportunities.

Housing in rural areas can, however, increase the potential for land use conflict and may undermine some of Council's other important objectives for rural lands, such as those relating to agriculture, biodiversity or scenic value. With considered planning, the delivery of rural housing can avoid conflict with other important rural land uses.

Enabling some housing in appropriate rural areas will support diverse housing choice, such as enabling older people to be comfortably housed as they age.

Housing for the region's seasonal and itinerant workers will be another essential consideration to support ongoing agricultural industry and major projects under construction. An undersupply of accommodation options for such workers could result in upward pressure on rents, and health and safety concerns from overcrowding and makeshift housing.

Council will continue to balance the delivery of housing in rural areas with careful consideration for orderly development, the provision of services and infrastructure, the preservation of key rural industries, and the mitigation of potential land use conflict.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 13 - Provide well located housing options to meet demand (Strategy 13.2 and 13.3).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 1: Facilitate Smart Residential Growth and Housing Choices (Actions SG1 and SG5); and
- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Action RC2).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 1 – Provide for sustainable growth that is supported by infrastructure (Action 1.5);
- Priority 2: Increasing diversity and choice in housing (Actions 2.5 and 2.6); and
- Priority 5: Promote Rural Communities (Actions 5.1 and 5.4).

Rural Residential Development

Rural residential lands typically contain low density dwellings in rural or urban fringe areas. In the Tamworth Regional LGA, rural residential is principally zoned R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha.

The delivery of rural residential housing requires careful and considered planning to ensure that development avoids land use conflict and minimises potentially detrimental urban sprawl.

Future development of any residential areas requires careful consideration of key infrastructure requirements to support the community, including potential connections to water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure.

Subdivision of areas currently zoned for rural residential development in the Tamworth Regional LGA has been limited, particularly in the Tamworth hinterlands (areas around Hallsville/Moore Creek, Moonbi Hinterland, Tintinhull/Daruka and Piallamore/Nundle Road).

The primary constraint to this development is the cost-prohibitive requirement for reticulated town water to be provided to R5 Large Lot Residential areas with a 2ha minimum lot size.

It is recommended that in order to unlock housing within close proximity to existing services and amenities, requirements for reticulated water in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone with a 2ha minimum lot size is removed from the *TRDCP 2010*.

Exceptions to this update would include the Daruka locality, which have been previously identified for revised minimum lot size to 5ha due to the significant impracticality of supplying town water to these areas, with constraints including existing community water schemes, vegetation, bushfire prone land and significant topography. The other exception is Nundle Road between Nemingha and Oaklands Estate given water infrastructure exists or can be augmented to service this locality.

Figure 9 and 10 set out proposed land use planning amendments to rural residential development in the Daruka, Kootingal/Moonbi, Nundle and Loomberah areas.

Dwelling Opportunities

A 'dwelling opportunity' refers to the ability for a landowner to build a dwelling on a rural lot or holding.

Not all properties in rural zones have the opportunity to build a dwelling. Clause 4.2B of the *TRLEP 2010* outlines standards for the construction of dwellings on land zoned RU1 Primary Production, RU4 Primary Production Small Lots and RU6 Transition.

The clause requires that development consent must not be granted for a dwelling on land in such zones, unless the land is:

- a lot that is at least the current specified minimum lot size
- an existing holding
- a lot on which the construction of a dwelling house was permissible under previous relevant environmental planning instruments such as the *Barraba Local Environmental Plan 1990*, *Manilla Local Environmental Plan 1988*, *Nundle Local Environmental Plan 2000*, *Parry Local Environmental Plan 1987* or *Tamworth Local Environmental Plan 1996*.

Despite being on lots that are smaller than the prescribed minimum lot size, some lots in the Tamworth Regional LGA may currently be eligible for a dwelling opportunity under a previous environmental planning instrument or due to an existing holding.

These historical dwelling opportunities can result in 'ad hoc' development in rural areas, fragment the rural landscape, introduce sensitive receptors, and undermine strategic planning objectives, increasing the potential for land use conflict and uncertainty by introducing incompatible land uses into rural areas.

The report *Improving the Prospects for Agriculture and Regional Australia in the NSW Planning System*, prepared by the NSW Agriculture Commissioner, found that the potential for dwellings to pop up randomly throughout rural zones due to historical settings presents a real risk to effective local strategic planning. The continued use of these dwelling eligibilities has seen adverse outcomes for agriculture and the integrity of the planning system generally. Not only are more sensitive receptors introduced to the rural landscape, but agricultural assets can be impaired.

It is recommended that the *TRLEP 2010* is updated to include a three (3) year sunset provision whereby the dwelling opportunity on vacant lots below the

minimum lot size and holdings would lapse. Furthermore, clause 4.2B of the *TRLEP 2010* should be amended to include Conservation Zones.

Secondary Dwellings

In November 2024, Council prepared a planning proposal to amend the *TRLEP 2010* to permit the construction of secondary dwellings with consent in areas of RU1 Primary Production and RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land uses zones that are outside of the proposed Namoi RJP, as shown in Figure 14.

The intended outcome of this amendment was to:

- Increase housing diversity in rural areas in a manner that is unlikely to have a significant impact on agricultural lands or primary production
- Support primary producers by providing additional options for succession planning and ageing in place.

The option to construct secondary dwellings on rural lands could enable residents to retain family, community and cultural connections. While housing in urban centres will be a suitable option for many due to proximity to services, many rural areas of the Tamworth Regional LGA are also well serviced by rural communities.

The definition of a secondary dwelling under the *TRLEP 2010* requires that it can only be undertaken in conjunction with another dwelling (the principal dwelling). While a secondary dwelling is an additional residence, it is co-located with an existing principal residence. So, the residential land use already exists (the principal dwelling) and the secondary dwelling is a small-scale intensification.

Land use conflict for secondary dwellings will also be managed through clause 5.5 of the *TRLEP 2010*, including that:

- Secondary dwellings must not exceed either 130sqm or 25% of the total floor area of the principal dwelling (whichever is the greater)
- The distance between the secondary dwelling and the principal dwelling must not exceed 100m.

The potential for land use conflict on important agricultural land is to be minimised by directing secondary dwellings away from identified important agricultural land, including the proposed Namoi RJP and by controlling the size and location of any secondary dwelling in a rural area.

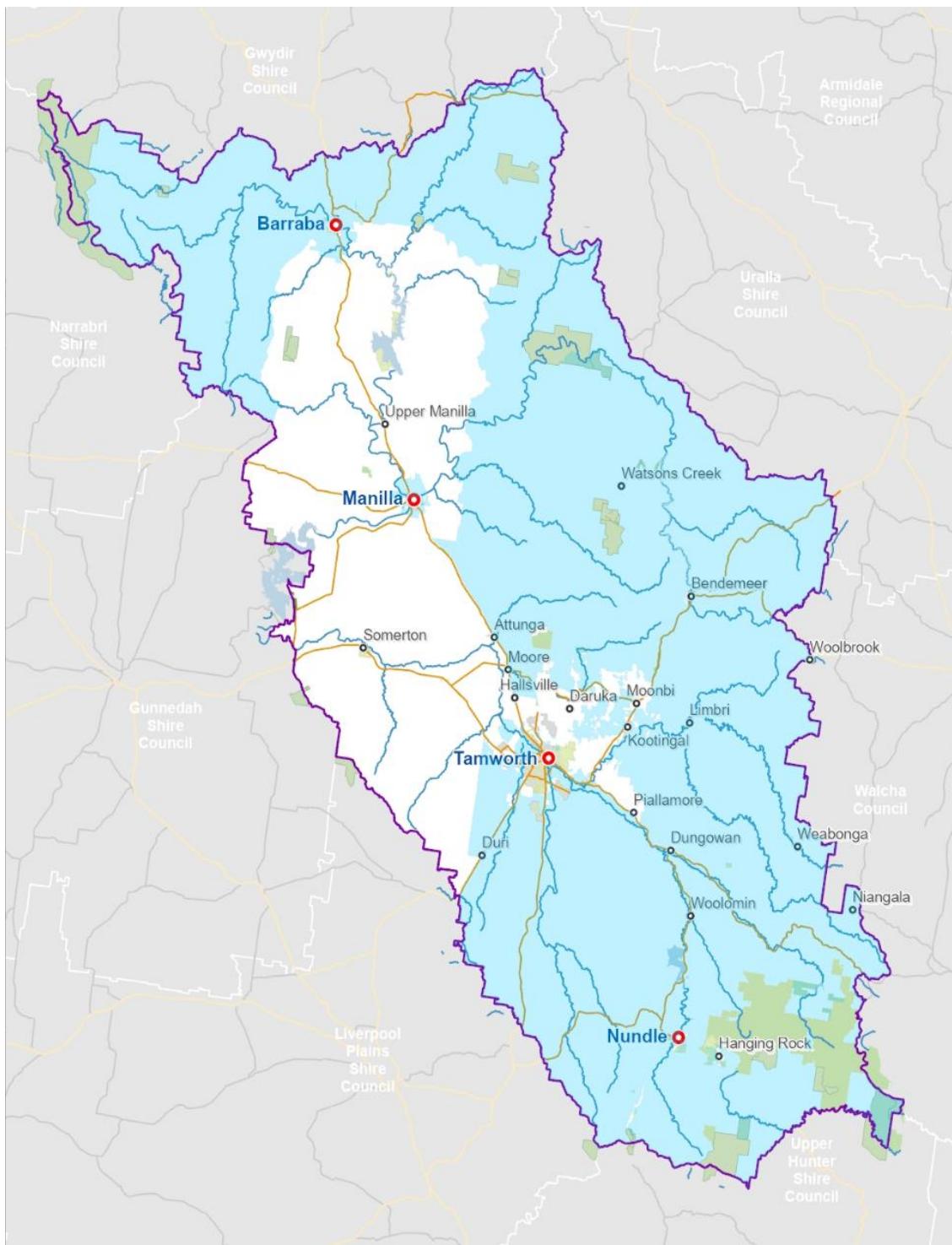


Figure 14: Secondary dwelling inclusion zone.

Temporary Worker Accommodation

The regional city of Tamworth is a major centre of service and manufacturing for agriculture, mining, housing, commercial and industrial industries within the New England North West region.

As a result, the Tamworth Regional LGA experiences large influxes of workers each year, many on a temporary basis. In the Tamworth Regional LGA, this can include seasonal workers associated with the region's agricultural and manufacturing industries, temporary visa holders associated with food processing, mining workforce from extractive industries occurring in nearby LGAs, and construction workers associated with major projects underway throughout the region.

Demand for temporary worker accommodation is expected to increase substantially with the anticipated influx of construction workers associated with the NEREZ, which covers part of the Tamworth Regional LGA and the ongoing expansion of food processing facilities such as the under-construction Baiada Oakburn processing plant.

An insufficient supply of accommodation for temporary or seasonal workers can put upward pressure on housing rental markets and risks overcrowding or makeshift housing. Whilst temporary workers can use boarding houses, hostels, or caravan parks, this is a less than desirable outcome as it competes and puts pressure on the visitor and tourism economy which are large economic drivers for the Tamworth region.

Providing temporary worker accommodation with access to the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural areas will support the region's regular influxes of seasonal and itinerant workers.

The NSW Government published the draft *Temporary and Seasonal Workers' Accommodation Toolkit* in August 2023 and the *Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation* in May 2025. The Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy recommends collaboration with DPHI to identify local solutions for temporary workers accommodation. The timely and sufficient coordination of temporary and seasonal workers accommodation, particularly in renewable energy and agricultural areas, is a key priority of Council to ensure sufficient accommodation is made available to safely support worker needs.

- **Temporary workers accommodation** is a place of residency for individuals employed on a short-term, periodic or seasonal basis.
- **Rural workers accommodation** is housing (usually permanent) that is provided on a farm on a year-round or seasonal basis for agricultural or rural workers on that land.

In January 2025, the NSW Government announced reforms to fast-track housing for construction workers in renewable energy zones. These reforms permit temporary worker accommodation in all residential zones, and in some non-residential zones, including rural zones near renewable energy infrastructure or business zones with convenient amenities and transport links.

Council will continue to collaborate with DPHI, TfNSW and key industry stakeholders to enable temporary worker accommodation in suitable locations across the Tamworth Regional LGA. This will include preparation of a temporary workers accommodation strategy.

Action 5.1	Permit secondary dwellings in certain rural lands to support housing diversity in rural areas in a manner that is unlikely to have a significant impact on agricultural lands or primary production.
Action 5.2	Update the <i>TRDCP 2010</i> to remove the requirement for the provision of reticulated water in the R5 Large Lot Residential Zone with a 2ha minimum lot size, with the exception of the Daruka and Nemingha localities, to unlock housing within close proximity to existing amenities and services.
Action 5.3	Include a three (3) year sunset provision in the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> whereby the dwelling opportunity on vacant existing holdings and rural and conservations lots below the current minimum lot size would lapse.
Action 5.4	Prepare a Temporary Workforce Accommodation Strategy to support the rural industries and NEREZ.

Focus Area 6: Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural communities offer unique local character and lifestyle attractions, set within distinctive scenic landscapes.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is home to a number of lively rural communities, including Barraba, Bendemeer, Hanging Rock, Kootingal, Manilla, Moonbi, Nemingha and Nundle. Many other rural villages are located across the region.

These centres importantly provide essential goods, services and amenities for their communities and for the surrounding rural populations.

The rural communities also support a diverse range of rural industries, such as the emergence of a distinct 'poultry precinct' at Manilla.

Council will continue to work towards ensuring that our rural communities are attractive and connected, with good access to services, infrastructure and amenity, and thriving economies.

Retaining and celebrating local character is important as places evolve, enabling more compatible and sustainable development, contributing to quality of life for residents, and attracting investment. Community values and ambitions for the future character of a place can be at the heart of creating unique, locally recognisable places.

A sense of place can be created through celebrating the regions distinctive features and unique character, such as historic buildings or cultural assets.

Place-based planning and local character statements can identify and support the needs of rural communities, and can ensure that new development complements local landscapes and styles.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan

- Objective 17 - Celebrate local character; and Strategy 17.1 - Ensure strategic planning and local plans recognise and enhance local character through use of local character statements in local plans and in accordance with the NSW Government's Local Character and Place Guideline.

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS

- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Action RC1).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 4 – Facilitate liveable communities
 - Priority 4.1 Urban design enhances liveability (Action 4.1).

Growth in Rural Communities

Encouraging sustainable growth can foster attractive and resilient places, allowing for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural communities to preserve unique local values while making the most out of local investment and opportunity.

Supporting the strength, local character and economic viability of these important towns is an essential part of ensuring that the Tamworth rural communities are diverse, inclusive and resilient.

Land use planning changes have been proposed in Focus Area 1 of this Strategy that will support growth around Kootingal, Moonbi and Nundle.

The communities of Bendemeer, Manilla and Barraba have historically experienced low demand for development; however, they are uniquely placed to take advantage of future growth associated with the proposed New England Renewable Energy Zone (Bendemeer) and Namoi Regional Jobs Precinct (Manilla and Barraba). This growth may be residential (e.g. workforce accommodation) or commercial (logistics, manufacturing and support industries).

To this end, a high-level constraint mapping of land zoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots within 2km of these communities has been undertaken. A 2km distance is appropriate as it provides both proximity to services for residential development or separation (if required) for an emerging industry.

The purpose of this review is to identify indicative constraints in consideration of proximity to watercourses (e.g. pollution, flooding), proximity to Council infrastructure, the need for separation from the proposed Namoi RJP, presence of large vegetation communities and bush fire protection.

Lands that are indicatively unconstrained may be more suitable for investigation by developers in the first instance, noting that more detailed studies would need to be undertaken to support a Development Application or Planning Proposal.

These high-level Constraints Analysis maps are included as Figure 15, Figure 16 and Figure 17.

Renewable Energy

The Tamworth Regional LGA is experiencing a high level of renewable energy projects, many located outside the NEREZ. These projects have the potential to not only impact communities in close proximity, but also create significant lasting impacts on the wider Tamworth region.

Many renewable energy projects are accompanied with a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) wherein the proponent agrees to provide public amenities or infrastructure, dedicate land at no cost, make monetary contributions, or offer other material public benefits for a public purpose.

Renewable Energy VPAs are essential for capturing public benefits beyond the traditional infrastructure contributions system and can ensure that affected local communities receive direct social, environmental and economic benefits from projects in their area.

In December 2023, Council adopted the *Tamworth Regional Council Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy for Renewable Energy Projects*. However, in November 2024, DPHI developed the *Renewable Energy Planning Framework* (Renewable Energy Framework) to assist the State's transition to renewable energy.

In order to leverage the opportunities of investment from renewable energy projects, Council intends to update its existing a Renewable Energy Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy to establish a clear framework for Council when negotiating and implementing Renewable Energy VPAs with proponents of renewable energy projects.

The policy will seek to ensure that both rural communities within and outside the NEREZ benefit from renewable energy projects and funds collected as part of the Policy will be used to deliver community infrastructure and benefits to rural communities.

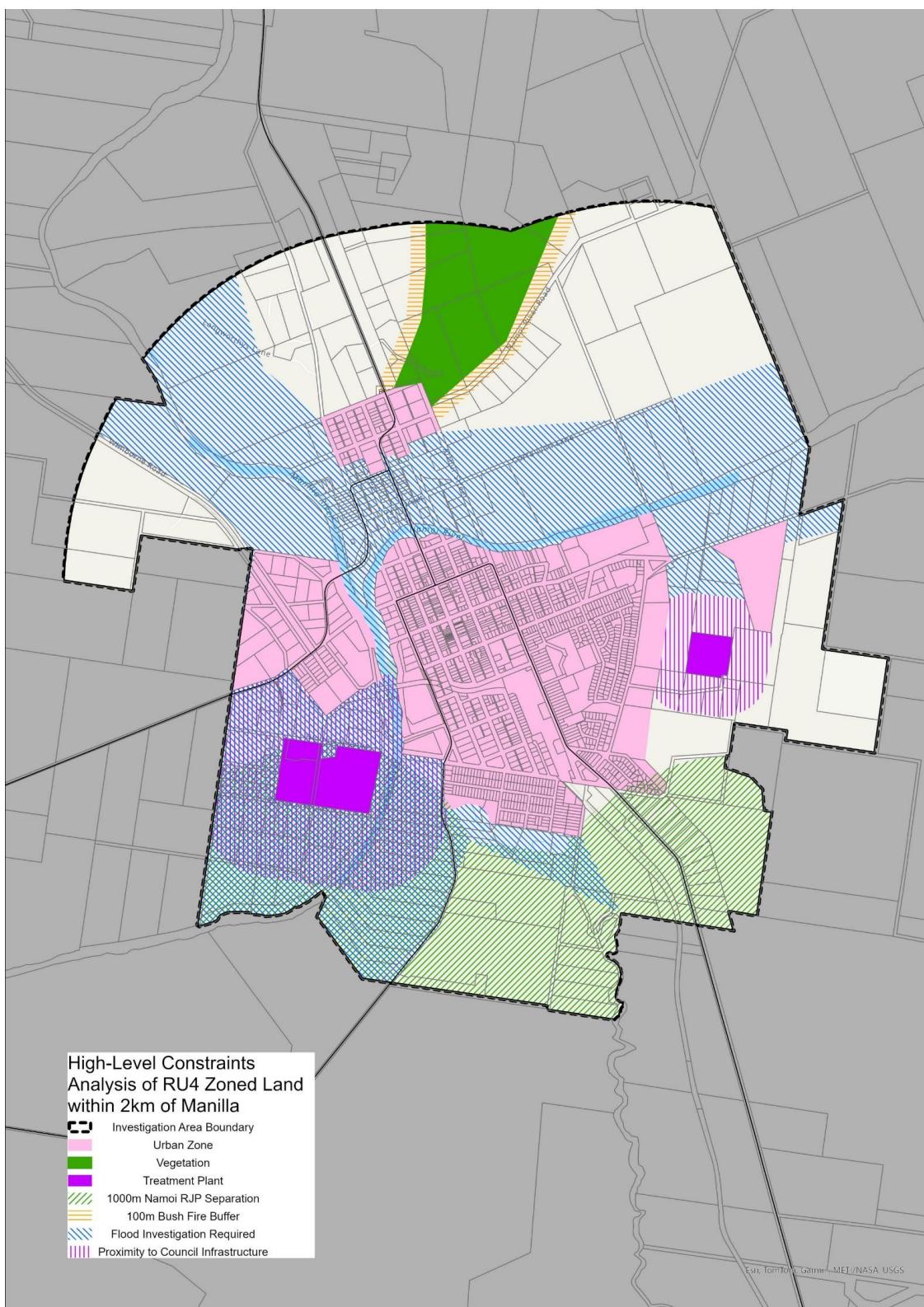


Figure 15: High level constraints map - Manilla.

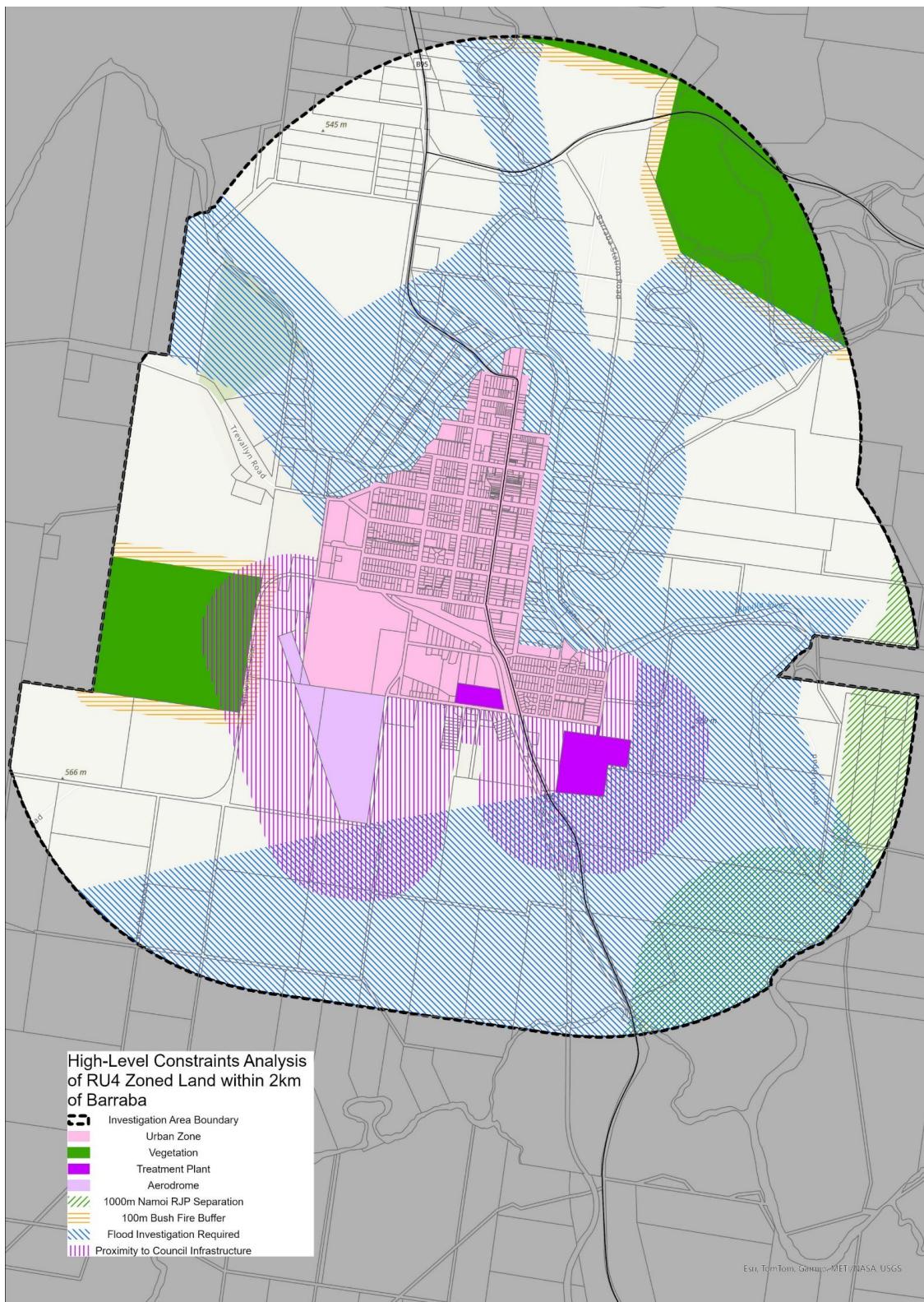


Figure 16: High level constraints map - Barraba.

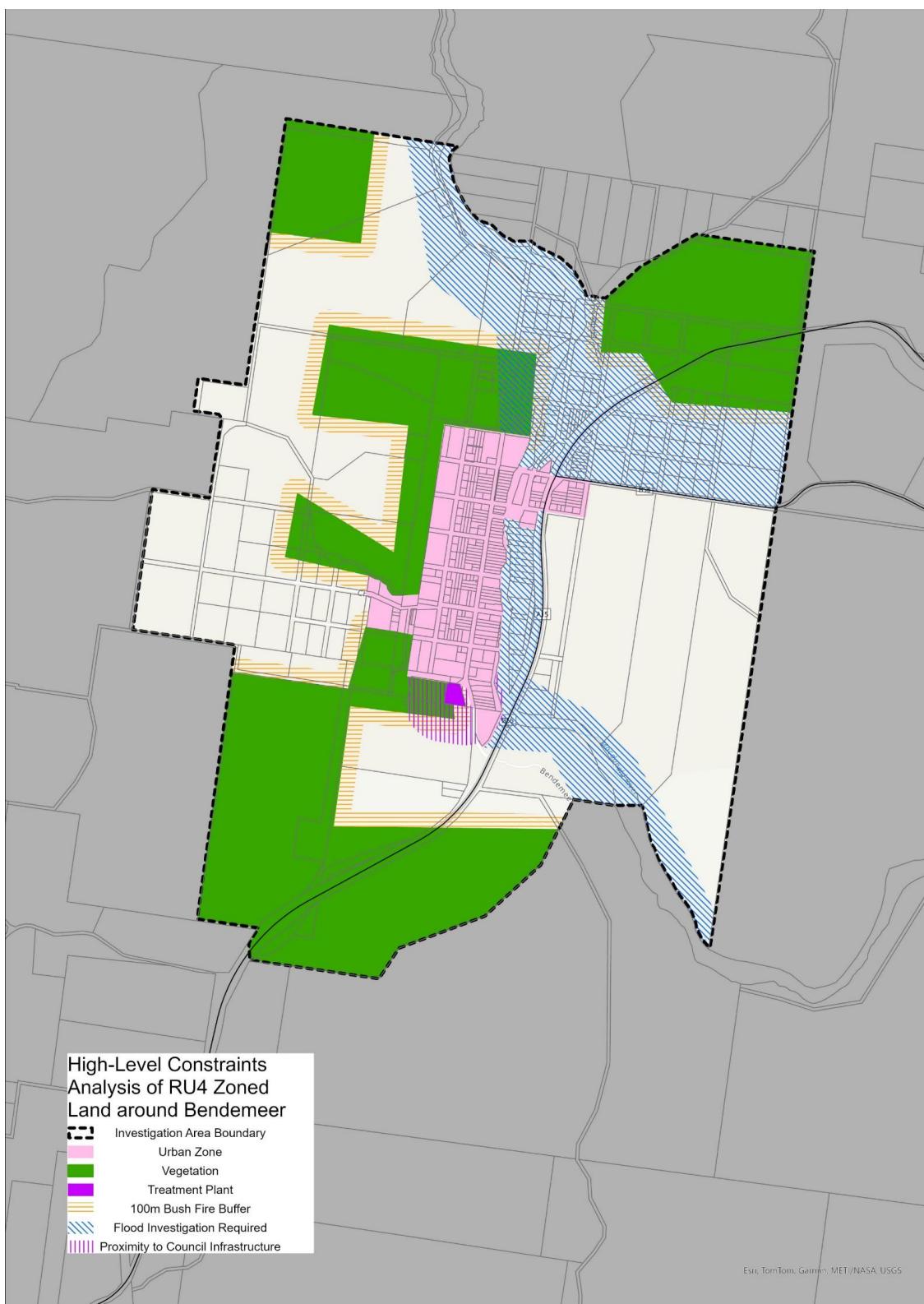


Figure 17: High level constraints map - Bendemeer.

Action 6.1 Implement place-making opportunities that enhance local character, reinforce a sense of community and foster growth in our small towns and villages (e.g. storytelling, public art, street greening, shared spaces, and safe and sustainable design principles).

Action 6.2 Continue to monitor future growth opportunities for Manilla, Barraba and Bendemeer in consideration of the high level constraints map.

Action 6.3 Update Council's existing Renewable Energy Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy to provide a clear framework for negotiating and implementing Renewable Energy Planning Agreements within Tamworth Regional LGA.

Focus Area 7: Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas

The Tamworth Regional LGA is highly valued for its attractive scenic landscapes, rich biodiversity and significant cultural heritage. These qualities contribute to our local identity and liveability.

The design of new development proposed for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural areas is to be complementary to the surrounding setting and rural character, as the introduction of incompatible development has the potential to degrade local landscapes.

It is therefore essential that Council continue to assess and better understand the Tamworth Regional LGA's rich biodiversity, scenic and heritage assets, to inform land use planning and strengthen controls to protect and retain these values.

Preserving such assets can have significant benefits to the economy of our rural communities, supporting place-making efforts, enhancing tourism offerings, and creating distinct local character and community identity.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 12 - Protect regional biodiversity and areas of High Environmental Value (Strategy 12.1, 12.5 and 12.6);
- Objective 15 - Understand, respect and integrate Aboriginal culture and heritage; and
- Objective 17 – Celebrate local character (Strategy 17.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Action RC3);
- Planning Priority 5: Design with nature (Action DN3); and
- Planning Priority 6: Celebrate culture and heritage (Actions C&H1, C&H2 and C&H2).

Environmental Value and Biodiversity

The Tamworth Regional LGA has lands of high environmental value and ecological diversity, including national parks, conservation areas and biodiversity corridors. These environments make the Tamworth Regional LGA a great place to live.

However, the impacts of some industry, urban sprawl and land clearing can threaten important assets and ecosystems.

Progressing biodiversity mapping, on both public and private land, is a key priority of this Rural Lands Strategy to protect land with high environmental values and biodiversity from potentially detrimental future development.

Biodiversity Baseline Study

In 2023, Council commenced a Biodiversity Baseline Study to help monitor the Tamworth Regional LGA's local environment now and into the future.

The study is well underway, and once completed, will present a snapshot of key species and habitats across the Tamworth Regional LGA, including communities or individual sightings of native flora and fauna.

Following is a snapshot of some of the initial findings of Phase 1 of the Biodiversity Baseline Study.

- The north-eastern quarter of the Tamworth Regional LGA (along the western escarpment of the New England Tableland) is a refuge for rare and threatened species, particularly woodland birds.
- Areas around Bendemeer contain high value habitats and strong biodiversity connectivity, including large wetlands with endangered ecological communities. The Macdonald River also forms an important corridor supporting platypus and threatened Bell's Turtles.
- The area between Hanging Rock and Niangala supports three threatened ecological communities and threatened species such as Koalas, Squirrel Glider, and Southern Greater Glider as well as the only populations of the Critically Endangered Dungowan Star Bush.
- Areas around Dungowan, Limbri, Weabonga, Mulla Mulla Creek and Winton have significant native wildlife habitat for several rare and declining species, including many woodland birds.

- The Dungowan – Ogunbil – Woolomin area is likely to support a significant Koala population. Ogunbil in particular contains areas of large and connected bushland, and a diversity of forest ecosystems with suitable habitat for a number of threatened species.
- The Tamworth Regional LGA supports large areas of very high quality critically endangered Box Gum Grassy Woodland, particularly in areas around Dungowan and Ogunbil.

Figure 18 provides an indication of the location of the highest quality biodiversity land.

Once the Biodiversity Baseline Study is completed, mapped areas of high biodiversity value may be managed via the introduction of a terrestrial biodiversity clause in the *TRLEP 2010* with objectives to protect valuable fauna and flora, protect ecological processes, and encourage conservation practices.

Scenic Protection

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands are highly valued for their attractive scenic qualities, which contribute significantly to the identity and character of the region.

The protection of scenic landscapes not only enhances appreciation of rural lands, but can also enhance local heritage, culture and character.

Some industry, urban sprawl and modern infrastructure can degrade valuable scenic landscapes. The construction of solar and wind farms and associated infrastructure within rural areas have the potential to impact the character of our scenic rural lands.

It is therefore a key priority of Council to identify and protect Tamworth's scenic rural vistas, and preserve important scenic qualities now and into the future.

Tamworth Lookout and Surrounding Hills

The Tamworth Lookout and surrounding hills, including Flagstaff Mountain, Bald Hill, Daves Hill and Mount Daruka provide a significant scenic backdrop to the Tamworth City and surrounding rural residential areas. They contain significant native vegetation that contributes to the picturesque views both towards and from the hills. The prominence of these hills behind Tamworth City, commonly known as the Wentworth Mounds, is an important tourism feature for the region.

Moonbi Hills

The New England Highway between Bendemeer and Moonbi is a scenic tourist drive involving a significant change in elevation (350 metres), bounded by a mountain range that rises to approximately 1300 metres. This unique landscape provides impressive views for traffic along the New England Highway. In addition to the visual landscape, this mountain range contains significant native vegetation which contributes to the biodiversity of the region.

Liverpool Range and Mount Royal Range around Nundle and Hanging Rock

The Liverpool Range and Mount Royal Range around the villages of Nundle and Hanging Rock, including the massive face of the quintessential Hanging Rock, are known for their natural beauty. The significant change in elevation (up to 600m) between Nundle and Hanging Rock offers a dramatic change in the landscape and provides panoramic views both towards the range (from Nundle) and from the range (from Hanging Rock Lookout). These views are enhanced by the amount of native vegetation and biodiversity along the hills.

The presence of the mountains and ridgelines provides a sense of place and identity for both the Nundle and Hanging Rock villages. In addition, both Nundle and Hanging Rock are popular tourist destinations for visitors all year round with the scenic landscape a significant attraction for visitors.

Dungowan

Undulating grazing hills that rise to mountain ranges create unique natural landscapes across the Dungowan Valley. The area offers distinct rural character, containing some of the Tamworth Regional LGA's most fertile agricultural lands, as well as a number of historic buildings located in a rural setting.

Potential RU2 Rural Landscape Zone

Land in rural areas of NSW with specific ecological and scenic landscape qualities can be managed within the RU2 Rural Landscape land use zone.

The standard objectives of the RU2 Rural Landscape zone are:

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.

- To maintain the rural landscape character of the land.
- To provide for a range of compatible land uses, including extensive agriculture.

Currently, the Tamworth Regional LGA does not utilise the RU2 Rural Landscape zone. However, this zone could be implemented in areas of identified high scenic value, such as those discussed above, to better protect rural lands from inappropriate development, help to mitigate adverse visual impacts and differentiate it from productive agricultural land.

Council has identified preliminary areas of high scenic amenity in the Tamworth Regional LGA as shown in Figure 18. These areas include visually prominent and/or vegetated landscapes and ridgelines. However, it is recommended that a detailed Scenic Landscapes Study is prepared for the Tamworth Regional LGA to best identify and characterise key areas of scenic value. Once identified, areas of high scenic amenity may be rezoned as RU2 Rural Landscape in order to formalise their protection and/or be managed via the introduction of a scenic protection clause in the *TRLGP 2010* with objectives to protect the environmental and scenic amenity of land that is of high scenic value.

Heritage Values

There are over 540 heritage listed buildings or places in the Tamworth Regional LGA, including many throughout our rural lands (Figure 19). These may include buildings, farmyard structures, trees, views, and cultural landscapes.

Much development and growth on rural land is governed by large industry or state government. It is therefore essential to consult and collaborate with the rural and aboriginal communities in order to protect important heritage assets.

Council has developed the *Innovative Reconciliation Action Plan 2018-2020* to respect and promote Aboriginal culture and engage Aboriginal members of the community in all matters affecting the region.

The *Tamworth Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study* is well underway, and once completed, will identify known Aboriginal cultural values sites and assist in Council's assessment of impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage values in planning decision-making. An outcome of the Study includes places identified with high heritage significance which will be included in Schedule 5 of the *TRLGP 2010*.

Preserving our built and natural heritage is a key priority to ensuring the Tamworth Regional LGA remains a vibrant, distinct and desirable place.

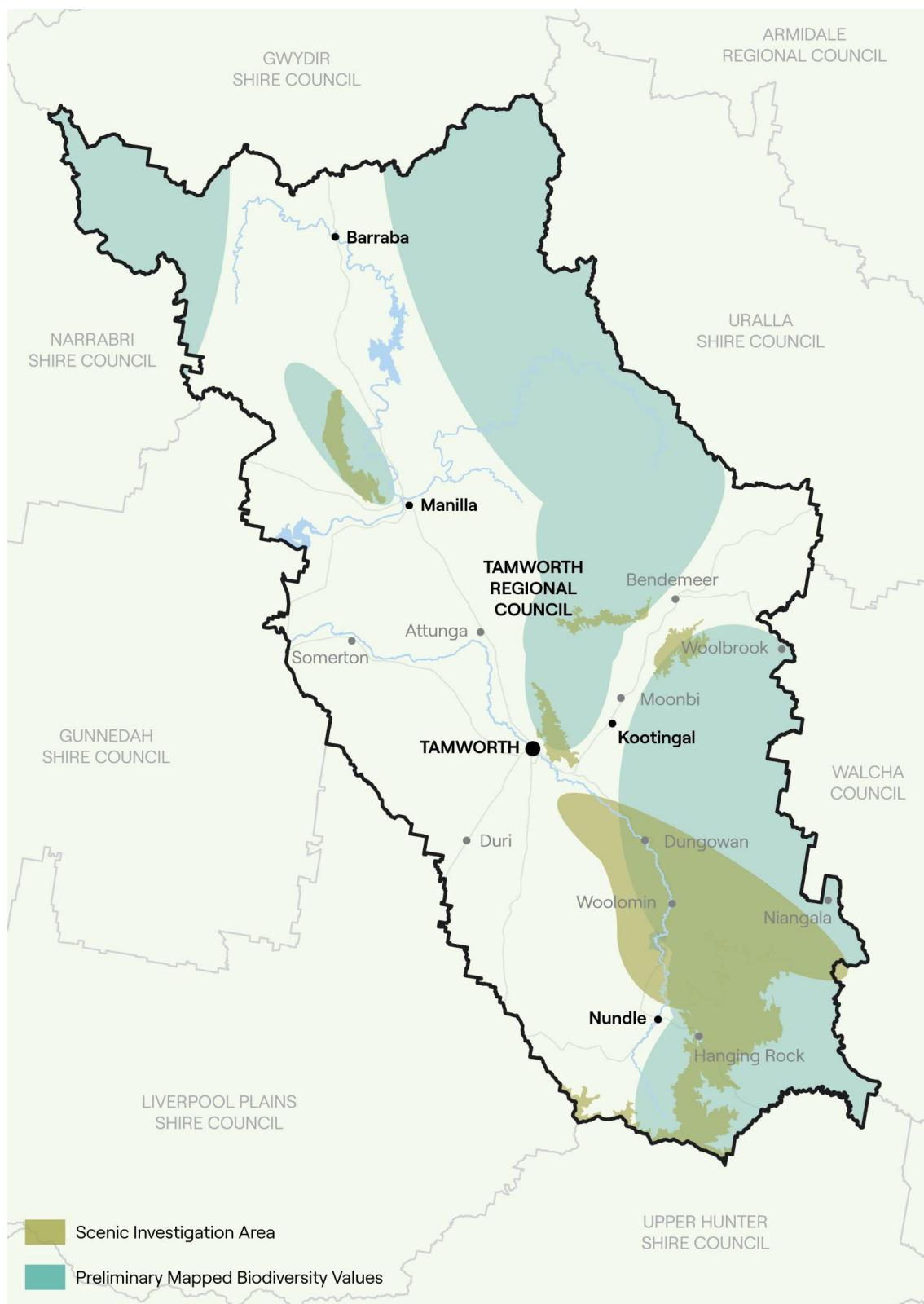


Figure 18: Preliminary mapped scenic and biodiversity values.

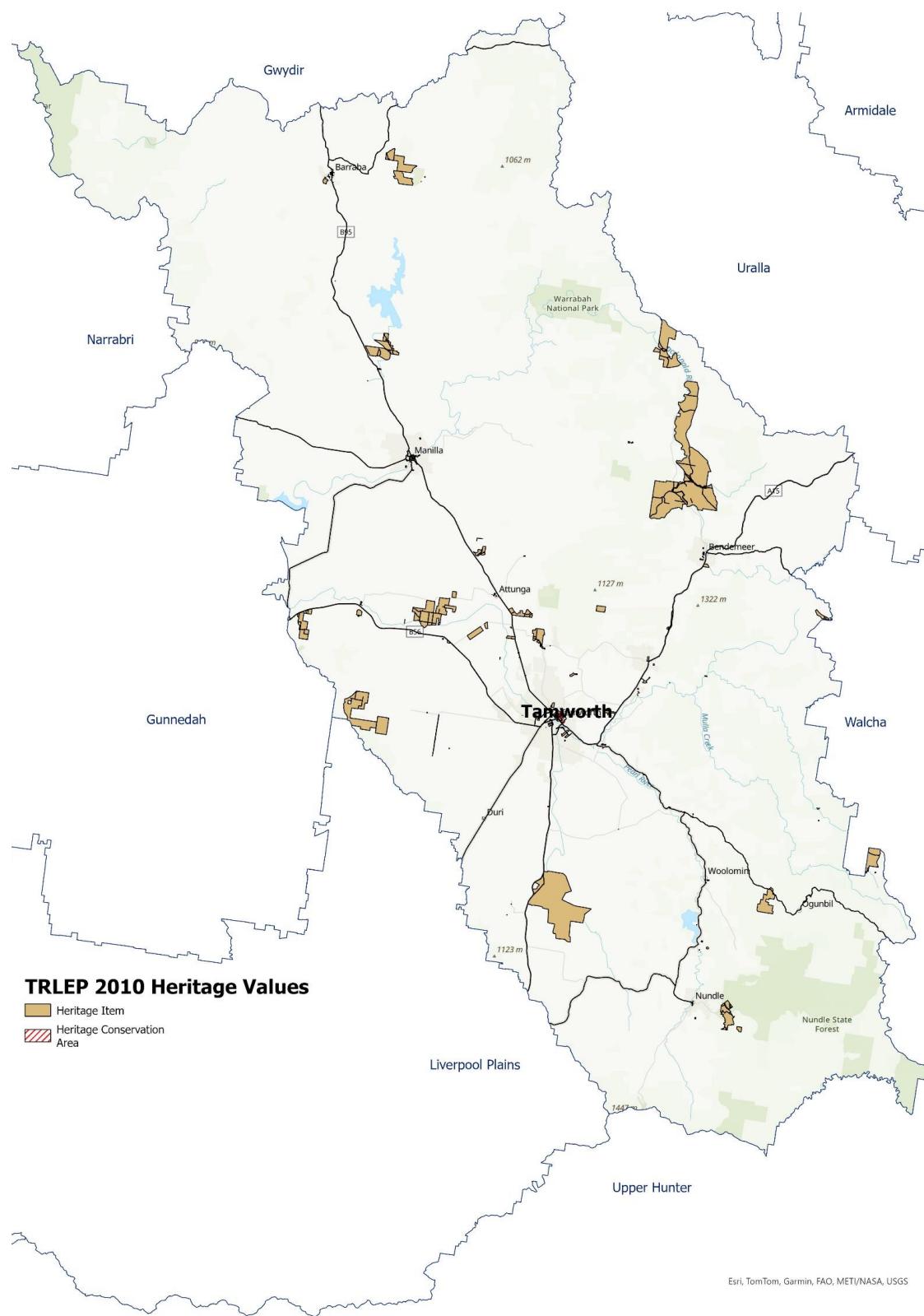


Figure 19: TRLEP 2010 Heritage Values.

Action 7.1	Prepare a Scenic Landscape Strategy and amend the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> by introducing a scenic protection clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the strategy.
Action 7.2	Complete the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Baseline Study and amend the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> by introducing a terrestrial biodiversity clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the study.
Action 7.3	Complete the Tamworth Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study and amend the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> to protect items, landscapes and curtilages of heritage items on rural lands.

Focus Area 8: Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to a changing climate

Sustainable rural land use practices are vitally important to support the long-term preservation, viability and productivity of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Stresses such as natural hazard, water security and resource scarcity can threaten livelihoods, agricultural productivity and prosperity.

Supporting the Tamworth Regional LGA to sustainably develop and diversify will strengthen the region's ability to respond to changing global economic and policy influences, natural hazards, development pressures and population growth.

Council will continue to support opportunities to encourage innovation and industry diversification throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA, and new avenues, such as partnerships, funding arrangements or community-led programs, will continue to be explored.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 8: Adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience (Strategy 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3);
- Objective 9: Lead renewable energy technology and investment (Strategy 9.2);
- Objective 10: Support a circular economy (Strategy 10.1); and
- Objective 11: Sustainably manage and conserve water resources (Strategy 11.1 and 11.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 5: Design with nature (Actions DN5 and DN6).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 1: Provide for sustainable growth that is supported by infrastructure
 - Priority 1.1 – Water Security for continued growth (Action 1.1).

Environmental Hazard

Hazards such as significant topography, flood and bushfire influence the extent to which land in the Tamworth Regional LGA can be responsibly developed.

With a changing climate, the occurrence and severity of natural hazard is expected to increase, and land use planning must respond appropriately to mitigate potential risk to life and livelihood.

Bushfire

Bushfire prone land has been mapped by the NSW Government across the state, identifying the likelihood that certain land is subject to bush fire attack.

Bushfire vegetation categories include:

- **Vegetation Category 1** (highest risk of bushfire)

Areas of forest, woodlands, heaths (tall and short), forested wetlands and timber plantations.

- **Vegetation Category 2** (lower risk of bushfire)

Rainforests, lower risk vegetation parcels, including remnant vegetation or land with ongoing land management practices that actively reduces bush fire risk.

- **Vegetation Category 3** (medium risk of bushfire)

Grasslands, freshwater wetlands, semi-arid woodlands, alpine complex and arid shrublands.

Figure 20 identifies bushfire prone land within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

The majority of lands towards the west of the Tamworth Regional LGA are Category 3 bushfire prone land, while the vegetated hills and bushlands to the east of the LGA are primarily Category 1.

Flooding

Flood prone land in the Tamworth Regional LGA covers a large proportion of the LGA's rural land. These floodplains support rich alluvial soils providing highly productive agricultural land; however, the immediate impacts of flooding can cause loss of human life, damage to soil and property, destruction of crops and loss of livestock.

The *Flood Prone Land Policy* and the *NSW Flood Risk Management Manual 2023* (FRMM) provides the framework to reduce the impacts of flooding and flood liability on communities and individual owners and occupiers of flood prone property, and to reduce private and public losses resulting from floods.

Council has adopted seven (7) flood studies comprising *Tamworth City Wide Flood Study 2019*, *Tamworth Behind the Levees Flood Study 2012*, *Tamworth North and East Drainage Study 2021*, *Manilla Flood Study 2012*, *Barraba Flood Study 2012*, *Bendemeer Flood Study 2012* and *Nundle and Woolomin Flood Study 2012*. Flood Risk Management Plans have also been prepared for Tamworth City, Bendemeer and Nundle and Woolomin.

Council will continue to review its flood studies and prepare Flood Risk Management Plans for rural lands and rural communities. This will provide information and clear directions on the management of the floodplains within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Development on flood affected rural lands will continue to be assessed in consideration of clause 5.21 of the *TRLEP 2010* which aims to minimise the flood risk to life and property associated with the use of land within the flood planning area.

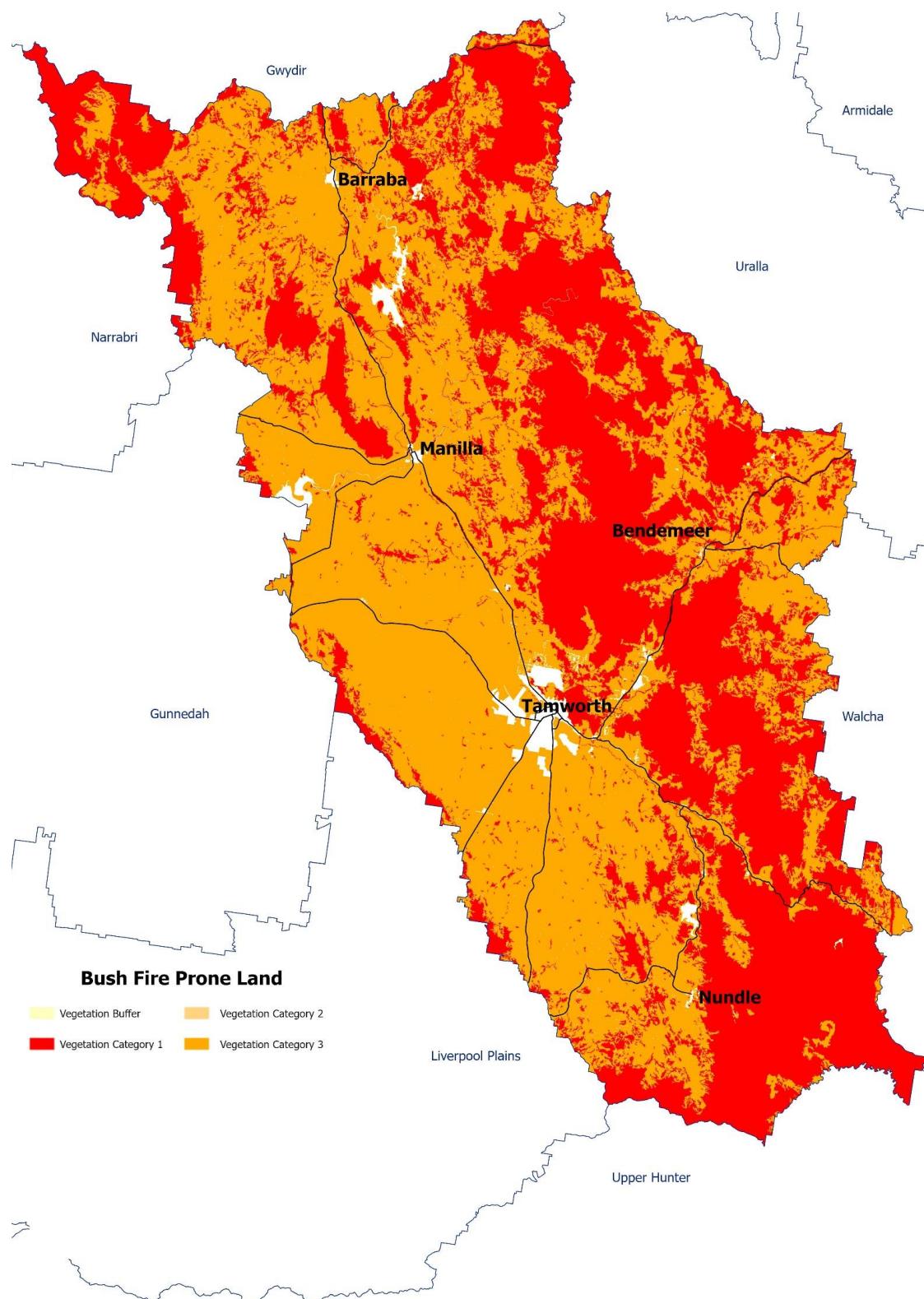


Figure 20: Bush Fire Prone Land.

Water Security

Water security means ensuring reliable access to water resources for current and future generations.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is located in the Namoi catchment. Tamworth's water supply is dependent on the weather, leaving supply particularly vulnerable in periods of drought.

As the population of the Tamworth Regional LGA grows, greater demand will be placed on already limited, vulnerable water resources. Even without growth, the Tamworth Regional LGA is at some risk of running out of water in times of prolonged drought, and the widespread impacts of a warming climate are likely to exacerbate these concerns.

A whole of catchment approach to land use and water management is required across the region, with consideration for climate change, water security, sustainable demand and growth, and the natural environment, as well as investigating options for water management through innovation.

Water security is the number one issue raised in Tamworth's Blueprint 100, the major focus of the *Namoi Regional Water Strategy 2023*, and a concern of local residents.

It is essential to increase supply of Tamworth's water resources in order to meet the needs of a growing population and secure reliable access to water in the region. Council's priority is to deliver durable water infrastructure, including raw water.

Tamworth Water Security Plan

Council is currently developing a *Water Security Plan* (WSP), due for public exhibition in early 2026, to ensure that water supply is able to support future demand.

The plan will describe a range of demand and supply side options, in four categories: surface water, groundwater, water recycling and water efficiency. The plan aligns with priorities identified in the *NSW Water Strategy* and the *Namoi Regional Water Strategy*. The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (DCCEEW) Water Group is currently undertaking two Business Cases which interact with Tamworth's WSP, they are described below. Note that the outcomes of DCCEEW's Intervalley Pipelines and Off-River Storages Project will be fed into this plan.

Tamworth Advanced Water Treatment Facility

DCCEEW's Water Group is developing a business case for a proposed Advanced Water Treatment Plant. The project aims to improve water security in the region, provide sustainable environmental outcomes and support the growing regional economy.

Tamworth Intervalley Pipelines and Off-River Storages Project

DCCEEW's Water Group is currently investigating surface water options to improve water security in the region, provide sustainable environmental outcomes and support the growing regional economy.

Options being considered include:

- Construction of an off-river storage (between 1 – 10 gigalitres) upstream of Tamworth. Water would be extracted from the Peel River at Paradise Weir, with a pump station and a pipeline capacity of 100 megalitres per day for transfers to and from the storage.
- Construction of a new pipeline and pump stations to transfer water from Manning River catchment to Chaffey Dam, including a weir on the Barnard River.
- Construction of a new pipeline and pump stations to transfer water from Keepit Dam to Calala Water Treatment Plant.
- Construction of a new pipeline and pump stations to transfer water from Split Rock Dam to Calala Water Treatment Plant.

NSW Government Strategic Water Management

The NSW Government has a number of relevant water policy initiatives designed to manage the state's water consumption, enhance efficiency and support environments, economies and communities. These include:

- *NSW Water Efficiency Program* and the *Regional Leakage Reduction Program* – encouraging new approaches to secure reliable water sources and build future resilience to climate change and drought.
- *Integrated Water Cycle Management Framework* – coordinating the management of water, land, infrastructure and related resources between all levels of government and including water utilities.

- *Recycled Water Roadmap* – actions to support utilities to consider recycled water where safe, beneficial, and cost effective.
- *Managed Aquifer Recharge* – the intentional recharge of water into groundwater aquifers for recovery or environmental benefit, improving water security by providing a drought reserve, as water stored underground won't evaporate like water stored in surface dams.
- *Namoi Alluvial Groundwater Water Sharing Plan* and *Peel Regulated River Water Sharing Plan* – which provide for the protection of water and groundwater sources and productive extraction.

Climate Vulnerability

The NSW climate is changing, with average temperatures gradually increasing since the 1960s. The impacts of climate change will include:

- increased temperatures
- increased risk of severe drought
- increased bushfire danger
- fewer frosts
- changes to extreme rainfall.

Climate change has the potential to significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands. The economy is heavily reliant on the productivity of its rural lands, particularly the production of beef, lamb and poultry products. Climate change will likely pose a significant challenge to those living and working on rural lands as the availability of necessary natural resources, such as water and high-quality soils, are increasingly at risk.

Understanding, adapting and preparing for a changing climate is crucial to protecting our rural lands, preserving both natural value and productivity.

In 2024, the NSW Department of Primary Industries published their *Climate Vulnerability Assessment Summary Report* documenting the findings of a project designed to help primary industries in NSW understand the implications, both risks and opportunities, of climate change on various agricultural commodities over the medium term to the year 2050.

Findings related to commodities of particular importance to the Tamworth Regional LGA are summarised below.

Wheat

Dryland and irrigated wheat growing regions are expected to maintain moderate to high climate suitability for growing wheat by 2050, however the length of the growing season is likely to be shorter due to higher temperatures, potentially affecting grain yields.

Irrigated Lucerne

NSW irrigated lucerne growing regions are likely to experience a minimal decrease from high to moderate in climate suitability by 2050. The irrigation water requirements of lucerne are likely to increase as a result of higher temperatures meaning the industry may need to be more efficient with water storage and use.

Cattle

Climate suitability for cattle is expected to maintain very high climate suitability across the entire state. Bringing forward joining so that calving occurs in late spring instead of early summer could mitigate heat exposure of calves.

Sustainable Rural Land Use Practices

Sustainable rural practices respond to land use trends and challenges such as the overexploitation and degradation of natural resources. Sustainable rural practices can include reduced reliance on chemicals, diverse planting and increasing biodiversity, and water efficient irrigation.

Sustainable rural practices are critical to protecting and sustaining the health, viability and productivity of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands. An emphasis on sustainability and resilience will be key to sustaining growth and productivity into the future, as well as enhancing the ability to respond to a changing climate and natural disasters.

Circular Economy

As the Tamworth Regional LGA continues to grow, Council will look to encourage the efficient and sustainable consumption of resources by promoting the principles of a circular economy.

In a circular economy, resources are reduced, reused, recycled and recovered, enhancing efficiency and environmental sustainability throughout the supply chain.

Promoting a circular rural economy throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA will strengthen the region's ongoing environmental, economic and social success and will enhance the region's capacity to respond to global economic and natural crisis.

Advances towards a circular economy for the region will ensure the efficient and sustainable consumption of resources, enhancing efficiency and environmental sustainability throughout the supply chain.

Action 8.1	Continue to review and update Council's flood studies and plan in accordance with the NSW Flood Risk Management Manual framework.
Action 8.2	Complete the Tamworth Water Security Plan and where relevant, outcomes should be introduced into the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> .
Action 8.3	Collaborate with Government agencies to educate rural landowners on biodiversity offsets, maintenance and rehabilitation of riparian zones, sustainable land practices and availability of grant funding.

5 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The intent of the Rural Lands Strategy is to provide a framework to guide future decision making for the sustainable planning and management of rural lands within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

The actions of the Strategy have been categorised based on their delivery timeframe; short-term, medium-term, long-term, or ongoing.

Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
0-2 years	2-5 years	5+ years	Ongoing

Collaboration with a number of stakeholders will be required to enable delivery of the actions in this Strategy.

Council will review the Strategy at 5-year intervals from its adoption. This review will ensure that the Strategy continues to reflect the Tamworth Regional LGA, capturing changes over time. Timeframes and priorities will be updated as necessary.

The relevant actions, stakeholders and timeframes are outlined in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Implementation plan.

Action Ref.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Focus Area 1: Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands			
1.1.	Ensure State Significant Agricultural Land, Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land and Important Agricultural Land are used as key criteria in the assessment of Planning Proposals and Development Applications pertaining to rural zoned land.	Future Communities Division Development Division	Ongoing
1.2	Implement land zoning and minimum lot size changes as recommended, accounting for landscape characteristics, viability of agricultural productivity and strategic objectives for the zones.	Future Communities Division	Medium Term
1.3	Introduce a RU2 Rural Landscape zone in identified areas to distinguish rural lands with high scenic value from those with higher soil fertility.	Future Communities Division	Long Term
Focus Area 2: Reduce and manage land use conflicts.			
2.1	Update the <i>TRDCP 2010</i> to include all relevant parts of the NSW DPI's <i>Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide</i> (2011, or its update) when assessing potential land uses conflicts.	Development Division	Medium Term

Action Ref.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
2.2	Update the <i>TRDCP 2010</i> to establish appropriate buffer areas and separation distance for a range of rural land uses. This should be consistent with NSW DPI's <i>Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture Interim Guidelines</i> (2018, or its update).	Development Division	Medium Term
2.3	Advocate for renewable energy and/or extractive industries to be located away from the Tamworth Regional LGA's highest quality agricultural lands in order to retain their use for primary production.	Future Communities Division	Ongoing
		Development Division	
2.4	Implement the Namoi Regional Job Precinct into the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> where applicable to promote intensive agriculture and minimise land use conflicts.	Future Communities Division	Short Term
		Development Division	
2.5	Investigate expanding the Namoi Regional Job Precinct to include high value agricultural land and established intensive agricultural clusters.	Future Communities Division	Short Term
		Development Division	

Focus Area 3: Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages

3.1	Lobby the NSW Government to fund local and regional road projects, such as B-Double and Road Train routes, to strengthen regional transport connections.	Office of the General Manager Regional Services Directorate Transport for NSW	
3.2	Continue to engage with Transport for NSW to deliver the Western Freight Link to enable freight to move safely and efficiently throughout the region.	Regional Services Directorate Liveable Communities Directorate Office of the General Manager Transport for NSW	Ongoing / Long Term
3.3	Continue to engage with EnergyCo and Transport for NSW to investigate routes for the Tamworth Eastern Detour with consideration for both the immediate demands of the NEREZ and the long-term connectivity objectives of the Tamworth region and State road network.	Regional Services Directorate Liveable Communities Directorate Office of the General Manager	Short / Medium Term

Action Ref.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
3.4	Continue to investigate and protect the Tamworth Regional Airport as a future air freight hub for agricultural produce.	EnergyCo Transport for NSW Economic Development and Investment Division Tamworth Regional Airport	Long Term
3.5	Identify opportunities for rural industries that may benefit from the Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility including the export of local agricultural products.	Economic Development and Investment Division	Long Term

Focus Area 4: Support and diversify the rural economy

4.1	Promote attractions to encourage growth in key tourism market segments such as food and agritourism, farm-stay, or experience-based holidaymaking.	Communities and Experiences Directorate	Short Term / Ongoing
4.2	Strengthen innovation and industry diversification throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA, by exploring new avenues for support through partnerships and funding with TAFE NSW and Universities.	Office of the General Manager Universities TAFE NSW	Ongoing / Long Term

Focus Area 5: Support rural housing in the right locations

5.1	Permit secondary dwellings in certain rural lands to support housing diversity in rural areas in a manner that is unlikely to have a significant impact on agricultural lands or primary production.	Future Communities Division	Short Term
5.2	Update the <i>TRDCP 2010</i> to remove the requirement for the provision of reticulated water in the R5 Large Lot Residential Zone with a 2ha minimum lot size, with the exception of the Daruka and Nemingha localities, to unlock housing within close proximity to existing amenities and services.	Development Division	Short Term
5.3	Include a three (3) year sunset provision in the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> whereby the dwelling opportunity on vacant existing holdings and rural and conservations lots below the current minimum lot size would lapse.	Future Communities Division	Short Term

Action Ref.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
5.4	Prepare a Temporary Workforce Accommodation Strategy to support the rural industries and NEREZ.	Liveable Communities Directorate	Medium Term

Focus Area 6: Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities

6.1	Implement place-making opportunities that enhance local character, reinforce a sense of community and foster growth in our small towns and villages (e.g. storytelling, public art, street greening, shared spaces, and safe and sustainable design principles).	Liveable Communities Directorate Communities and Experiences Directorate	Ongoing
6.2	Continue to monitor future growth opportunities for Manilla, Barraba and Bendemeer in consideration of the high level constraints maps.	Future Communities Division Development Division	Ongoing
6.3	Update Council's existing Renewable Energy Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy to provide a clear framework for negotiating and implementing Renewable Energy Planning Agreements within Tamworth Regional LGA.	Future Communities Division	Short Term

Focus Area 7: Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas

7.1	Prepare a Scenic Landscape Strategy and amend the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> by introducing a scenic protection clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the strategy.	Future Communities Division	Medium Term
7.2	Complete the <i>Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Baseline Study</i> and amend the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> by introducing a terrestrial biodiversity clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the study.	Future Communities Division Water and Waste Division	Short Term

7.3	Complete the <i>Tamworth Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study</i> and amend the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> to protect items, landscapes and curtilages of heritage items on rural lands.	Development Division Future Communities Division	Short Term
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Focus Area 8: Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to a changing climate

8.1	Continue to review and update Council's flood studies and plan in accordance with the NSW Flood Risk Management Manual framework.	Regional Services Directorate	Medium Term
8.2	Complete the Tamworth Water Security Plan and where relevant, outcomes should be introduced into the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> and <i>TRDCP 2010</i> .	Water and Waste Directorate	Short Term
8.3	Collaborate with Government agencies to educate rural landowners on biodiversity offsets, maintenance and rehabilitation of riparian zones, sustainable land practices and availability of grant funding.	Liveable Communities Directorate Sustainability Division Government Agencies Rural Landowners	Long Term

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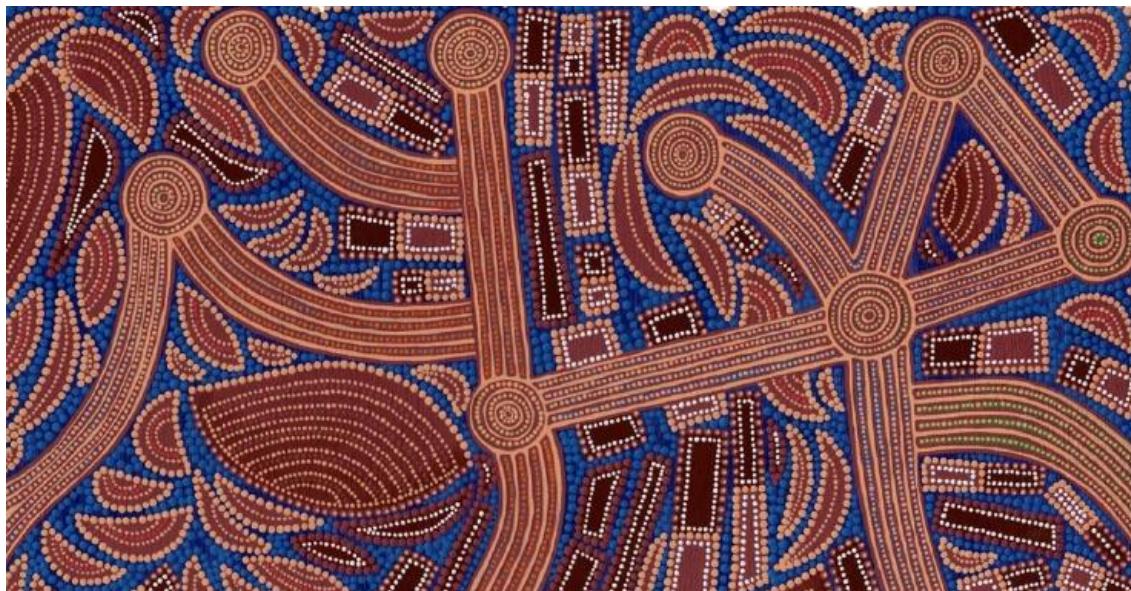
Prepared for Tamworth Regional Council
Issued April 2025

Acknowledgment of Country

Gyde Consulting acknowledges and pays respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past, present, Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise the deep and ongoing connections to Country – the land, water and sky – and the memories, knowledge and diverse values of past and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities.

Gyde is committed to learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the work we do across the country.

Towards Harmony by Aboriginal Artist Adam Laws



Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy

Date: April 2025

Status: Draft

This report has been prepared by Gyde with input from a number of expert consultants. To the best of our knowledge, the information contained herein is neither false nor misleading and the contents are based on information and facts that were correct at the time of writing. Gyde accepts no responsibility or liability for any errors, omissions or resultant consequences including any loss or damage arising from reliance on information in this publication.

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Executive Summary

The Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy sets the strategic vision for the future of rural lands within the Tamworth Regional Local Government Area (Tamworth Regional LGA).

The Strategy provides a framework to guide decision-making around land use planning and development in rural areas, setting out Tamworth Regional Council's (Council) position on rural land use matters.

Council will continue to support the Tamworth Regional LGA's critically important existing rural industries, provide for the needs of our unique rural communities, and encourage the growth of a range of diverse and emerging rural land use opportunities.

This Rural Lands Strategy identifies key existing and future considerations that are impacting the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural areas, productivity and local character. Key considerations include:

- Managing potential land use conflict as a range of rural uses compete for space and resources
- Preserving valuable and unique local character, scenic landscapes, natural environments and biodiversity
- Ongoing demand for rural subdivision and the construction of dwellings in rural zones
- Ensuring the compatible growth of emerging industries in rural areas, particularly with the proposed development of the New England Renewable Energy Zone (NEREZ) in parts of the Tamworth Regional LGA
- Responding to a changing climate and evolving lifestyle needs through sustainable rural land use practices.

Eight focus areas have been developed to set out Council's strategic position on such matters. The focus areas are underpinned by key actions, which together provide a comprehensive policy framework to plan for

and manage the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands into the future.

Focus Area 1 – Prioritise Agriculture and Preserve the Productivity of our Rural Lands.

This intention of this focus area is to recognise the critical role of productive agriculture for the Tamworth Regional LGA, and ensure its ongoing strength by prioritising and preserving rural land primarily for agricultural purposes.

Actions identified under this focus area relate to the identification and protection of important agricultural land, the role of minimum lot size in supporting diverse rural industries, and the identification of amendments to relevant land use controls to continue to facilitate viable productivity.

Focus Area 2 – Reduce and Manage Land Use Conflicts
Land use conflict can occur when demand for the same space or resources arises from competing or incompatible sources.

Actions set out under this focus area relate to establishing appropriate land use buffer zones and separation distances, protecting high quality agricultural lands from potentially incompatible development, and incorporating land use conflict risk assessment into Council's management of rural lands.

Focus Area 3 – Improve Safety and Efficiency of Inter- and Intra- Regional Linkages

Tamworth is a regional centre, with significant transport infrastructure connecting the New England North West Region to Newcastle, Sydney and beyond. The efficiency of this network directly influences the region's productivity, collaboration, growth and access to markets.

This focus area identifies actions to enhance the function and efficiency of the Tamworth Regional LGA's regional transport infrastructure. Actions include road upgrades to improve vehicular movement, enhance safety and ensure freight connectivity, supporting the Tamworth Regional Airport as a regional gateway and air freight hub, and facilitating

the growth of the Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility.

Focus Area 4 – Support and diversify the rural economy

Diversification of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural industries will enable the region to adapt and grow in response to emerging challenges and opportunities impacting rural economies.

The actions identified under this focus area relate to identifying and supporting diverse agricultural growth industries and facilitating other compatible enterprises in rural areas, such as tourism, agritourism and educational initiatives. This focus area also considers how the Tamworth Regional LGA can leverage opportunity and investment in energy generating and extractive industries.

Focus Area 5 – Support Rural Housing in the Right Locations

Providing a diverse range of suitable housing is essential to balancing growth and meeting the needs of the Tamworth community. Rural housing needs to be carefully considered to ensure logical and sustainable growth, and to avoid potential land use conflicts.

In order to deliver rural housing in the right locations, actions include rationalising dwelling entitlement provisions, permitting secondary dwellings in certain areas, resolving constraints that have limited large lot housing development, and addressing demand for seasonal and temporary workers accommodation.

Focus Area 6 – Facilitate the Prosperity of our Rural Communities

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural communities offer unique local character and valuable industries, set in distinct scenic landscapes.

This focus area seeks to support place-making opportunities that enhance character, reinforce a sense of community and foster growth to contribute to the quality of life of residents and attract visitors and investment.

Focus Area 7 – Protect and Improve Environmental, Scenic and Heritage Values in Rural Areas

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains important scenic, biodiversity and heritage values which contribute significantly to the region's local character and high quality scenic landscapes.

Council has identified key actions to complete existing biodiversity and heritage studies, and commence work on a scenic landscape strategy to better enable their long-term preservation.

Focus Area 8 – Encourage Sustainable and Resilient Rural Practices to Strengthen the Region's Ability to Respond to a Changing Climate

Climate change has the potential to significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands. Understanding, adapting and preparing for a changing climate is crucial to protecting our rural lands, both their natural value and economic productivity.

Actions identified under this focus area include investigating opportunities to diversify the economy, educating rural landowners on sustainable land use practices, and reviewing and updating flooding and water security studies.

This Rural Lands Strategy has been developed to facilitate a consistent approach to the planning and development of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands, meeting the diverse needs of rural communities, primary producers and emerging industries to ensure a prosperous and sustainable future.

1 Introduction

The Tamworth region is home to some of the most productive rural lands in the nation.

The region is well known for its high-quality agricultural lands and favourable climate. It is a leading region for a range of agricultural sectors including intensive livestock, poultry production and broadacre cropping.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands boast vast areas of high environmental value, and contain a range of national parklands, including the Warrabah National Park and part of the Mount Kaputar National Park.

Major river systems within the Tamworth Regional LGA include the Peel River, Namoi Rivers, MacDonald River and Manilla River. The region also contains three major dams; Lake Keepit, on the Namoi River, Split Rock Dam on the Manilla River and Chaffey Dam on the Peel River.

These watercourses and their associated alluvial floodplains are defining landscape structural elements, as well as key assets underpinning ecological systems and agricultural soils.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is home to approximately 65,908 people and spans approximately 9,894 square kilometres.

The regional city of Tamworth (Tamworth City) is the largest centre in the New England North West region of NSW. It is positioned along the New England Highway and Manilla Road, which form a key spine north-south through the LGA, as well as the Oxley Highway, which extends generally east-west.

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains many diverse and attractive rural towns; including Manilla, Kootingal, Barraba and Nundle, and a number of rural communities; including Moonbi, Attunga, Bendemeer, Duri, Dungowan, Hanging Rock, Niangala, Somerton, Woolbrook and Woolomin.

The Tamworth region is the traditional land of the Gomeroi / Kamilaroi people, who have cared for and been sustained by its rich waterways and vast lands for over 60,000 years.



Figure 1: Tamworth Regional LGA.

Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS

1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of this Rural Lands Strategy is to provide a framework to guide decision making for the ongoing planning and management of the rural lands within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Rural lands are a crucial part of the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy and character. With a growing population, a range of diverse rural industries and emerging development, including the construction of the NEREZ within the region, Council needs to ensure that land use policy continues to support existing and future rural land uses, while providing for the needs of rural communities.

Key focus areas of this Rural Lands Strategy are:

- Focus Area 1: Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands
- Focus Area 2: Reduce and manage land use conflicts
- Focus Area 3: Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages
- Focus Area 4: Support and diversify the rural economy
- Focus Area 5: Support rural housing in the right locations
- Focus Area 6: Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities
- Focus Area 7: Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas
- Focus Area 8: Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to a changing climate

1.2 What land does the Strategy consider?

In this Strategy, 'rural lands' refers to land in the following land use zones:

- RU1 – Primary Production
- RU3 – Forestry
- RU4 – Primary Production Small Lots
- RU5 – Village
- RU6 – Transition
- C1 – National Parks and Nature Reserves
- C2 – Environmental Conservation
- C3 – Environmental Management
- R5 – Large Lot Residential.

This Strategy does not consider all other urban or employment lands, nor land zoned for recreation. Figure 2 indicates the land use zones to which this Strategy applies.

1.3 Structure of the Strategy

Section 1: Introduction

This section provides an overview and context of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands and outlines the purpose of this Rural Lands Strategy.

Section 2: Planning & Policy Context

This section identifies the planning policy and legislation relevant to the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Section 3: Key Considerations

This section identifies key existing and future issues impacting land use, productivity and character within the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Section 4: Focus Areas

This section outlines the key focus areas to effectively plan for and manage the Tamworth's Regional LGA's rural lands going forward, each underpinned by key actions.

Section 5: Implementation, Monitoring and Review

This section outlines how the key focus areas and actions will be implemented, including identifying responsible stakeholders, progress reviews and timeframes.

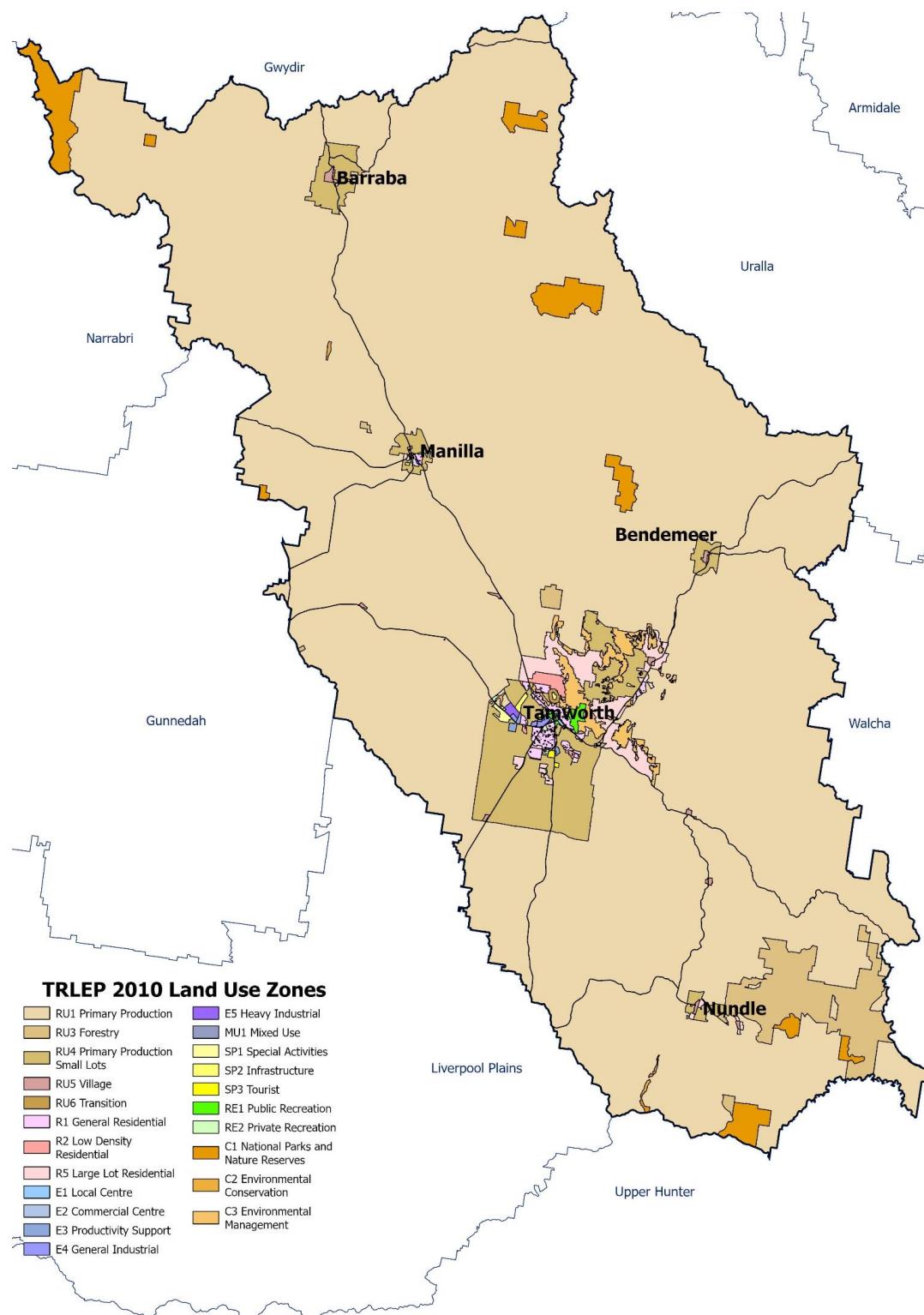


Figure 2: Land use zones in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

1.4 Overview

The Tamworth Regional LGA plays an essential role in the wider New England North West as a national agricultural producer and regional centre for employment, education, tourism and health services.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is surrounded by the rural shires of Gunnedah, Narrabri, Gwydir, Uralla, Walcha, Upper Hunter and Liverpool Plains.

This Strategy covers 99% of land in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Of that, 89% is zoned RU1 Primary Production and 55% has a minimum lot size of 800ha.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is well-known for its natural resources and high-quality agricultural lands. Agriculture is one of the Tamworth Regional LGA's key industries, and the LGA is a centre for the production and processing of beef, lamb and poultry products.

The agricultural industry in the Tamworth Regional LGA generated \$305.46m total gross value for agricultural commodities in 2020/21 and employs approximately 1,440 people.

The Tamworth Regional LGA ranks No. 1 in NSW for cattle livestock (meat) and No. 2 for poultry livestock and broadacre crops based on the value of agricultural commodities.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is generally characterised by highlands to the east and low river flats to the west. The steeper land to the east generally contains lands used for some grazing, forestry and national parks, while the lower lands provide valuable arable lands, better suited for productive farming.

Other key industries include retail, manufacturing, tourism, aviation, education, health and retail services, which contribute to significantly diversifying the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy.

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains vast lands that are already afforded permanent conservation status as national parks and nature reserves, as well as environmental and biodiversity values across public and privately owned lands, and as crucial corridors for habitat.

The natural environment is highly varied across the New England North West region, with diverse native flora and fauna reflecting the range of geology, soils, topography and climate across the area.

Tamworth Rural Economy At A Glance



65,246

Total population (2023)

39

Median age



27,640

Total dwellings (2021)

2.51

Average household size

84.3% Of residents were born in Australia

7.5% Of residents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

6.6% Of residents required assistance with core activities

49.5% Of residents aged over 15 years hold tertiary qualifications



\$4.13

BILLION
Gross Regional Product

6,138

Local businesses

32,905

Local jobs

Leading Industry Sectors By Employment:

Healthcare & Social Assistance	18.1%
Construction	12.2%
Education & Training	9.0%
Retail Trade	9.0%
Manufacturing	8.8%
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	6.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	5.8%
Public Administration and Safety	5.8%
Other Services	4.8%
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	4.5%

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing has the largest number of businesses in the Tamworth Regional LGA, comprising 24.9% of total businesses

\$305 **723**

MILLION

Total gross value of agricultural commodities

Total agricultural businesses

1,440 **1,594**

Total people employed in agriculture

Total people employed in manufacturing industries related to agriculture

An estimated

88%

of land within the Tamworth Regional LGA is used for agricultural production (8,712km²).

Top 10 highest value agricultural commodities produced in Tamworth Regional LGA, 2020-2021

Cattle and calves	39.5%
Poultry	31.5%
Hay	5.3%
Milk	4.9%
Sheep and lambs	4.4%
Wool	3.3%
Wheat for grain	3.1%
Eggs	2.7%
Barley for grain	1.9%
Other broadacre crops	1.4%



No. 1 in NSW for Cattle and calves



No. 2 in NSW for Poultry



No. 2 in NSW for Broadacre crops

2 Planning & Policy Context

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

The *New England North West Regional Plan 2041* (the 'Regional Plan') sets a 20-year strategic land use planning framework for the region, aiming to protect and enhance the region's assets and plan for a sustainable future.

The Regional Plan sets out 22 objectives and a series of supporting strategies and actions to guide the delivery of the plan's vision for *"healthy and thriving communities, supported by a vibrant and dynamic economy that builds on the region's strengths."*

Following are key objectives of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy:

- Objective 1 - Coordinate land use planning for future growth, community need and regional economic development
- Objective 2 - Protect the viability and integrity of rural land
- Objective 3 - Expand agribusiness and food processing sectors
- Objective 7 - Support a diverse visitor economy
- Objective 8 - Adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience
- Objective 9 - Lead renewable energy technology and investment
- Objective 10 - Support a circular economy
- Objective 11 - Sustainably manage and conserve water resources
- Objective 12 - Protect regional biodiversity and areas of High Environmental Value
- Objective 20 - Improve state and regional freight connectivity.

Namoi Regional Water Strategy 2023

The *Namoi Regional Water Strategy 2023* is a catchment-based strategy identifying critical challenges impacting water supply in the Namoi Region and outlining priorities and actions to respond to those challenges.

The Strategy states that the Tamworth Regional LGA is of statewide significance to the industries of agriculture and manufacturing, with the largest number of agricultural employees for an LGA in NSW and the highest number of food manufacturing employees outside metropolitan Sydney.

The majority of Tamworth's water supply comes from the Chaffey and Dungowan dams, with a very small proportion coming from Peel Alluvium groundwater. When there is no rain and low river flows, groundwater levels drop quickly. This means that during severe drought, groundwater cannot sustain the needs of Tamworth for extended periods of time.

The Water Strategy recognises that, even without growth, Tamworth is at significant risk in a severe and prolonged drought, and there could be extended periods when Tamworth residents are on high or persistent water restrictions.

The Water Strategy sets out the following three key priorities supported by a series of detailed actions to deliver the vision of healthy, reliable and resilient water resources for the region:

- Supporting the long-term water needs of towns across the region
- Supporting regional communities under a more variable and uncertain future climate
- Improving the health and resilience of water dependant ecosystems.

Lower North West Regional Economic Development Strategy – 2023 Update

Published by the NSW Department of Regional NSW, the 2023 update to the *Lower North West Regional Economic Development Strategy* (REDS) reported the following headline statistics in relation to agriculture in the region (comprising Tamworth Regional, Gunnedah Shire and Liverpool Plains Shire LGAs):

- +7.2% year-on-year growth from 2011-2020
- \$475 million Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2020
- 3,123 jobs supported in 2021.

Stakeholders from the Lower North West highlighted housing availability, water security and addressing skills and workforce shortages as key priorities for the region.

The REDS update noted the following significant events impacting major industries since 2018, including drought, floods and mouse plague.

The REDS update identified the following strengths, vulnerabilities and opportunities in relation to the region's agricultural sector:

Strengths

- Highly productive agricultural land with a favourable climate.
- Well known for high quality produce
- Significant road and rail investments have enhanced infrastructure and connectivity
- Strongly developed links between agriculture and key downstream processing facilities.

Vulnerabilities

- Supply chain disruptions, high input costs and workforce shortages
- Uncertain water availability.

Opportunities

- Investment in high-value, diverse agricultural activities targeted for export, such as high-value crops, food processing and packaged produce.
- Namoi Regional Job Precinct will provide additional support for intensive agriculture and livestock production.
- Agritourism promoting the region as a premium food producing region and provide income opportunities for producers.

- Innovation in agribusiness and agricultural engineering can drive productivity and output.
- Leveraging export efficiencies of the Tamworth Intermodal Freight Terminal.
- Upgrading water infrastructure and implementing water efficiency measures.

Draft Namoi Regional Job Precinct

Prepared in May 2024 by the Department of Regional NSW, the draft *Namoi Regional Job Precinct* (RJP) aims to explore opportunities for sustainable growth of the intensive agriculture sector by identifying locations for production clusters where amended planning controls can be applied.

This initiative should deliver faster planning approvals to provide local councils, regional communities, industry and businesses with greater confidence around future investment and development.

The Namoi RJP is comprised of five LGAs, including Gunnedah Shire, Gwydir Shire, Liverpool Plains Shire, Tamworth Regional and Walcha Shire.

The Namoi RJP contains six identified primary regional intensive agriculture investigation areas and two secondary investigation areas with a focus on industrial and agricultural processing.

'Area 2' is a primary regional intensive agriculture investigation area centred largely over the Tamworth Regional LGA, with some encroachment into Gunnedah Shire.

'Area 8' is a secondary investigation area with a focus on industrial and agricultural processing, located at the Tamworth Global Gateway Park.

The Namoi RJP proposes that each of the investigation areas are adopted as 'Identified Protection Areas' under Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and prioritised over the long-term as predominantly productive agricultural land.

Blueprint 100 Part One 2020

Published in May 2020, Blueprint 100 is a series of plans and strategies developed to guide the Tamworth region towards its vision of a prosperous economy and

high living standards with a population of 100,000 people.

Blueprint 100: Part One is an overarching policy that ties together all of Council's strategies and policies to guide the development of the Tamworth Regional LGA to 2041.

Blueprint 100: Part One identifies eight Priority Themes to support the realisation of the vision:

- Deliver durable infrastructure including raw water
- Facilitate smart growth and housing choices
- Create a prosperous region
- Build resilient communities
- Connect our region and its citizens
- Design with nature
- Celebrate our culture and heritage
- Strengthen our proud identity.

Blueprint 100 Part Two: Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020

Adopted in May 2020, the *Blueprint 100 Part Two: Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020 (LSPS 2020)* sets out the following 20-year vision for land use planning in the LGA:

"Tamworth is a prosperous, resilient and liveable region that:

- *Is the Northern Inland Capital of New South Wales*
- *Is well connected with the New England-North West and surrounding towns, villages and the rural communities; and*
- *Boasts well designed living, play and work areas."*

The *LSPS 2020* is set out under the same Priority Themes as Blueprint 100 Part One. Of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy are:

1 – Facilitate Smart Residential Growth and Housing Choices

The *LSPS 2020* acknowledges that there will be continuing demand for large lot and rural residential living in the region. Rural residential areas require careful and considered planning and management, as their delivery can often conflict with other rural land uses.

The *LSPS 2020* notes that planning should consider reducing minimum lot sizes and setting minimum dwelling per hectare standards to support diversity, control sprawl, and provide for the efficient use of infrastructure.

Analysis was undertaken as a part of the development of the *LSPS 2020* to assess the supply and demand of rural residential land which is principally zoned R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha.

This analysis showed that while in theory Council has an abundance of rural residential land zoned, the practical supply is much less and heavily influenced by the requirements for reticulated water and environmental factors. Furthermore, the analysis indicated market demand is present for lifestyle lots in the range of 5ha-20ha, with a deficiency in the 5ha supply.

The key vision for strong economic and population growth is through a smart growth strategy, that produced sustainable outcomes, through efficiency and connectedness.

2 - Create a Prosperous Region

The *LSPS 2020* notes that Tamworth is an important centre for the production and processing of beef, lamb, poultry and grain products for supply across NSW and beyond.

The proximity of grain, livestock, feedlots, sale yards and processing facilities provides a competitive advantage for producers in the sector, and further expansion could be promoted through appropriate controls, especially at the Tamworth Global Gateway.

3 - Build Resilient Communities

The *LSPS 2020* emphasises the importance that options are provided for the use of rural lands, recognising variable land use and economic trends.

Support for the 'poultry precinct' that has begun to form in the Manilla district is one such option, which has the potential to significantly grow on the back of expanding poultry processing facilities in the region.

The *LSPS 2020* also prioritises options for the LGA's rural centres; to be supported with lifestyle opportunities and appropriate land use controls to support their various ongoing needs.

The Tamworth Regional LGA includes several rural communities including Moonbi, Attunga, Bendemeer, Somerton, Dungowan, Wollomin, Woolbrook, Niangala and Duri.

The *LSPS 2020* recognises that the villages deserve a review of existing provisions to identify any suitable options going forward. While zone changes are not likely, the plan notes that lot size amendments in areas near rural communities could provide further lifestyle opportunities without greater servicing burdens. The plan notes that lot sizes in the range from 5ha to 20ha could be considered.

5 – Design With Nature

The *LSPS 2020* identifies priorities to protect high-quality blue/green corridors, better protect biodiversity and undertake joint water, energy and waste projects between food processors and Council.

The *LSPS* sets out plans to investigate the formulation of development controls to address large scale renewable energy proposals and mitigate environmental impact.

6 – Celebrate culture and heritage

The *LSPS 2020* prioritises the recognition and protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites from inappropriate development, recommending that an *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan* is prepared and that appropriate measures are adopted to protect Aboriginal heritage including protocols on processes for Development Applications, Planning Proposals, Development Control Plans etc.

Blueprint 100 – Our Community Plan 2023-2033

Published in June 2022, *Blueprint 100 – Our Community Plan* provides more detail of how the strategies from *Blueprint 100: Part One* and *Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS* will be pursued.

In accordance with the wider Blueprint 100 documents, the Community Plan lists nine strategic focus areas. While all identified priorities play an inextricable role in contributing to the successful and sustainable future of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands, the following focus areas are of particular relevance:

Focus Area 1 - Water security

- Improve water sustainability across the region.
- Water sustainability is included in strategies, plans and policies.

Focus Area 2 - A liveable built environment

- Manage growth by updating the strategic land use plans and the LEP, and ensure developments meet these requirements.

Focus Area 3 - Prosperity and innovation

- Ensure Tamworth's strategies, plans and policies appropriately enable growth in our food processing industry.
- Establish a high technology agribusiness cluster.

Focus Area 4 - Resilient and diverse communities

- Establish local strategies and community groups for towns and villages, including Kootingal, Manilla, Barraba and Nundle.
- Improve drought resilience of regional communities.
- Support our region's prevention, preparedness, response and recovery measures to help build our resilience to disasters.

Focus Area 6 - Working with and protecting our environment

- Improve environmental sustainability across the region by implementing the initiatives, plans and programs identified within the Sustainability Strategy.
- Ensure that our planning and operational processes minimise and mitigate impacts on biosecurity and our natural environment.

Focus Area 7 - Celebrate our cultures and heritage

- Ensure development controls and zoning protect the heritage significance of items and conservation areas.

Tamworth Tomorrow Economic Development and Investment Strategy 2022

Published in September 2022, the *Tamworth Tomorrow Economic Development and Investment Strategy* sets out a plan to support continued economic development in the Tamworth region.

The Strategy states that the Tamworth Regional LGA will leverage its growing population and strong existing industry base, enhance water security, support future industries and leverage the renewable economy to build on the area's traditional economic strengths.

The Strategy notes that the nature of employment in agriculture is changing, due largely to digital technology, mechanisation and shifting productivity capabilities. The Strategy sets out that the region must be conscious of this shift in order to remain competitive and to maintain employment in agriculture.

Two industries are highlighted of particular relevance to the LGA's rural lands:

- Protein Processing and Production

The Strategy notes that protein processing will continue to expand as a critical employer in the region, with over \$250 million of upcoming private sector investment in the region's protein processing facilities.

- Renewable Energy

The Strategy recognises that the region is well positioned, both strategically and geographically, to capitalise on growing demand for renewable energy as the world transitions away from traditional fuel bases.

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

Adopted in July 2024, the *Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024* (TRHS 2024) presents Council's vision for the future of land use and housing development in the Tamworth Regional LGA, setting a framework for where housing can be delivered to ensure that the needs of the community can be met now and in the future.

The TRHS 2024 identifies that the population of the Tamworth Regional LGA will increase from approximately 65,000 to 80,000 by 2041. The projections suggest that between 3,827 and 7,374 additional dwellings will be required in the Tamworth Regional LGA over the next 20 years. The TRHS 2024 sets out that while the Tamworth Regional LGA should have theoretical capacity under the existing land use planning controls to meet this demand, physical delivery may be constrained by factors such as environmental conditions, land use patterns or infrastructure availability.

The TRHS 2024 sets out a number of priorities to guide the future of housing in the Tamworth Regional LGA. Of relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy are:

Priority 1.1: Water security for continued growth

The TRHS 2024 notes that to sustain an increasing population, it will be essential to increase the supply of, and reduce the demand on, water resources.

Priority 1.3: Rural residential development in the Tamworth Hinterlands

The TRHS 2024 identifies that much land zoned for rural residential purposes appears constrained by a range of environmental factors. The TRHS 2024 recommends investigating the removal of the requirement to provide reticulated water to rural residential lots measuring 5ha or more, where a sustainable and potable alternate water supply is available.

Priority 2.2: Encourage a diverse range of housing

The TRHS 2024 supports the delivery of secondary dwellings in rural areas, which is currently prohibited, to contribute to the supply of diverse housing in the Tamworth Regional LGA. The TRHS 2024 notes that this limits the opportunities for rural property owners to retire on their property. This change may have the potential to undermine the key objectives of the zones

that relate to prioritising primary industry production, and considered planning will be required to ensure a sustainable balance can be found between the two land uses.

Priority 2.3: Provide sufficient temporary workers accommodation

The TRHS 2024 notes that the Tamworth Regional LGA experiences large influxes of workers associated with agriculture, meat processing, manufacturing, construction and the New England Renewable Energy Zone. Consequently, Council has identified a priority to develop local solutions to support the delivery of accommodation suitable for the fluctuating needs of temporary workers.

Priority 5: Promote rural communities

The TRHS 2024 sets out Council's intentions to support the sustainable growth of the LGA's significant rural communities, undertaking targeted precinct planning and promoting lifestyle living around rural townships.

Associated with these objectives, the TRHS 2024 identifies actions to review minimum lot size provisions applicable to the RU5 Village zone and permit 'multi-dwelling housing' and 'residential flat buildings' in the RU5 Village zone and adopt car parking standards appropriate to the zone. These proposed changes would need to be carefully implemented to ensure the continued support of the diverse character of the LGA's rural villages.

Tamworth Integrated Transport Plan 2024

The *Tamworth Integrated Transport Plan 2024* aims to enhance the local transport network, aligning with Tamworth Regional Council's *Blueprint 100 Plan* and Transport for NSW's *Future Transport Strategy*.

It identifies priority projects to guide investment to meet the current and future transport needs of the community and visitors, and includes the following projects which are of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy:

- Western Freight Link
- Southern access route (now known as the Eastern Detour)
- Intermodal freight efficiency improvements

- Fossickers Way and New England Highway higher productivity vehicles.

The vision is to strengthen the partnership between Transport for NSW and Council to enhance the transport network which is critical in supporting the growth of rural industries and freight network within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

State Environmental Planning Policies

State environmental planning policies (SEPPs) are environmental planning instruments prepared by the NSW Government. The following SEPPs are of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy:

State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Primary Production) 2021* (Primary Production SEPP) contains planning provisions to manage primary production and rural development, including supporting sustainable agriculture for the protection of prime agricultural land of state and regional significance, as well as regionally significant mining and extractive resources.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021* (Biodiversity and Conservation SEPP) provides a framework to protect and manage the state's natural environment, which helps support the community's health and wellbeing, economic security and cultural identity.

The Biodiversity and Conservation SEPP sets out approval requirements for vegetation removal in non-rural zones, including environmental zones.

SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021* (Resilience and Hazards SEPP) contains planning provisions in Chapter 3 relating to the development of hazardous or offensive industries and Chapter 4 to promote the remediation of contaminated land to reduce the risk of harm to health or any other aspect of the environment.

Any development of hazardous or offensive material is required to address the provisions of the Resilience

and Hazards SEPP. This is of particular relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy for rural land uses that would, without mitigation measures, result in risks to the locality or emit pollution, including noise. The Resilience and Hazards SEPP is also relevant to the redevelopment of land that may be contaminated from previous hazardous industries.

SEPP (Housing) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021* (Housing SEPP) provides State Significant Development pathways for certain types of housing, including affordable and diverse housing.

Under the Housing SEPP, new planning pathways to fast-track housing for construction workers on major infrastructure projects in renewable energy zones have been announced. Construction worker accommodation has been clearly defined and is permitted in all residential zones, and in some non-residential zones, such as rural zones near renewable energy infrastructure or business zones with convenient amenities and transport links.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008* (Codes SEPP) aims to provide streamlined assessment processes for minor or straightforward development.

Of relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy, the policy sets out the following provisions:

- Part 3D Inland Code, which specifies circumstances where dwelling houses or ancillary developments can be erected as exempt or complying development in rural land use zones.
- Part 9 Agritourism and Farm Stay Accommodation Code, which sets out criteria for the development of “farm experience premises”, “farm gate premises” and “farm stay accommodation” on land zoned RU1, RU2 or RU4 to be classified as complying development.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resource and Energy) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resource and Energy) 2021* (Resource and Energy SEPP) allows for mining and mineral resource extraction on land where agriculture or industry may be carried out, however it

does not apply to environmental conservation zones or Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL), which is mapped and protected under the Resource and Energy SEPP. The Tamworth Regional LGA does contain small areas of BSAL where the highest soil fertility exists.

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains several hard rock quarries and the Attunga Limestone Mine. When assessing applications for extractive industries, the Resource and Energy SEPP requires that consideration be given to the impact of the proposed extractive industry on existing and approved land uses, and conversely that consideration be given to the impacts of the approval of other land uses on the operation of extractive industries.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021

The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021* (Transport and Infrastructure SEPP) provides additional pathways for the delivery of infrastructure for both public authorities and developers.

Of relevance to this Rural Lands Strategy, the policy sets out provisions for types of state significant infrastructure development, such as electricity generating works, which may be prohibited in an LEP but permitted under the Transport and Infrastructure SEPP.

Right to Farm Policy

In 2015 the NSW Government adopted the *Right to Farm Policy*. The policy has been given a statutory reference by inclusion as an objective in the revised *Ministerial Planning Directions* for Rural Lands (Direction 9.2) as part of the Primary Production focus area and accompanying planning framework.

The policy highlights the importance of planning for agricultural industry development and maintaining access to agricultural resources, including access to land. It emphasises the need for appropriate zoning and permissible land uses that are compatible with agricultural activities and supports local strategies that guide land use and minimise conflict.

The Right to Farm Policy brings together a collection of actions including:

- Reinforcing rights and responsibilities

- Establishing a baseline and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of land use conflicts
- Strengthening land use planning
- Ensuring ongoing reviews of relevant environmental planning instruments
- Improving education and awareness on management of land use conflicts.

This Report considers the implications of the growth of renewable energy generation and associated infrastructure in relation to existing agricultural land uses and rural communities. This Report was drafted following growing concerns over land use conflicts related to the growth of the renewable energy sector, particularly the roll out of the NSW Government's renewable energy policy.

This Report makes 29 recommendations to achieve a better balance between the interests of project applicants, landholders and communities. The recommendations relate to improving the knowledge of interested parties, improving their capacity to participate in the planning system and providing clarity of impact management and benefit sharing arrangements.

With the growth of the NEREZ and the strong agricultural economy in the Tamworth Regional LGA, the region is already experiencing such significant land use conflicts.

Local Land Services Act 2013

The *Local Land Services Act 2013* is a governance framework for the efficient management and delivery of local land services, with a statutory corporation (known as Local Land Services) with responsibility for the management and delivery of local land services in the social, economic and environmental interests of the State.

Local land services are programs and advisory services associated with agricultural production, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management.

Agricultural Commissioners Reports

Improving the Prospects for Agriculture and Regional Australia in the NSW Planning System, 2021

The NSW planning system seeks to plan for and manage competing land uses, which in the context of rural lands, often relates to balancing demand for housing and essential services as well as retaining the productivity of agricultural land and conserving areas of high scenic or biodiversity value. With increasingly intensive production practices and an expanding urban footprint accommodating population growth, land use conflicts are accelerating.

This Report includes 12 recommendations to the NSW Government, with short and long-term measures to improve planning outcomes for agriculture, increase confidence for producers and landowners, and provide certainty for nearby residents. The recommendations are also intended to assist councils in managing their planning and conflict management functions.

Renewable energy generation and agriculture in NSW's rural landscape and economy – growth sectors on a complementary path, 2022

Ministerial Planning Directions

The Minister for Planning has set out directions for the assessment of planning proposals. This includes acknowledging the significance of agriculture and primary production lands byway of Directions 9.1 – Rural Zones and Direction 9.2 – Rural Lands.

Several other Directions would also be subject to consideration when dealing with rural land. An important step is that the rezoning of rural land to urban must be identified in a relevant strategy.

Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010

The *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010* (TRLEP 2010) provides the statutory framework for planning, development and building within the Tamworth Regional LGA. It manages land use through zoning development standards, planning controls and other planning provisions.

Principal development standards controlled by the TRLEP 2010 include land use, minimum lot size, height of buildings, floor space ratio and heritage.

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3 Key Considerations in Rural Areas

The following key challenges, opportunities and trends will influence the strategic direction of this Rural Lands Strategy and have contributed to the development of the Focus Areas.



Land Use Conflict in Rural Areas

- Land use conflict can occur when demand for the same resources arises from competing and sometimes incompatible sources.
- A common example of rural land use conflict occurs with urban sprawl into agricultural lands. General farming practices can produce impacts such as noise, odour or spray drift, and nearby residents can present challenges to ongoing farming operations.
- Another source of potential land use conflict occurring in the Tamworth Regional LGA is the development of the NEREZ. This project will see significant investment in renewable energy generating projects across the region, but has the potential to impact other important values in the Tamworth Regional LGA, such as displacing or degrading important agricultural, biodiversity and scenic values. Council will look to balance important advancements towards net zero with the need to protect and preserve many of the Tamworth Regional LGA's other critical values, assets and industries.
- One measure to minimise land use conflict involves physically separating uses with specified buffer distances. Buffer distances, for example specified around particular agricultural uses, could be established as a requirement under Council's planning instruments and enforced prior to development approval.



Preserving Local Character

- The Tamworth Regional LGA is home to a number of lively rural communities, including Barraba, Bendemeer, Hanging Rock, Kootingal, Manilla, Moonbi, Nemingha and Nundle.
- Each rural community offers distinct character and attractive scenic landscapes.
- Preserving the strength, character and economic viability of these important communities is an essential part of ensuring that the Tamworth rural lands are diverse, inclusive and supported with infrastructure and services.



New England Renewable Energy Zone

- A renewable energy zone in the New England region is in the early stages of planning by the NSW Government, and the Tamworth Regional LGA is partly located within the zone.
- The NEREZ is expected to deliver up to \$24 billion in private sector investment and support around 8,000 jobs. Such development is expected to bring a large influx of workers and families to the area within a relatively short timeframe.
- While the NEREZ presents many growth and investment opportunities, its development also has the potential to impact a number of other important values in the Tamworth Regional LGA. Impacts may include the displacement of land available for productive

agriculture, damage to natural environments, key habitat and biodiversity, and the degradation of scenic rural landscapes.

- In order to leverage the opportunities of investment from the NEREZ, the Tamworth Regional LGA needs upfront strategic planning that will ensure it can attract complementary land uses and industries, accommodate a short term influx in workers and their families, and best mitigate potential land use conflict.



Dwellings in Rural Zones

- Residential uses can be one of the most common sources of land use conflict in rural areas, presenting many challenges and a range of impacts to both primary producers and residents.
- A 'dwelling entitlement' refers to the ability for a landowner to build a dwelling on a lot. Where the size of the lot is equal to or greater than the relevant minimum lot size development standard, a dwelling entitlement is assumed to exist.
- Matters to be taken into consideration for development of dwellings in rural zones include surrounding land uses, significant impacts and potential future land use conflict.



Rural Subdivision

- Demand for rural subdivision is persistent in rural areas, particularly arising from residents planning farming succession, or from rural lifestyle purchasers.
- However, subdivision which enables new dwelling entitlements in rural areas has the potential to result in fragmentation and increase the likelihood of land use conflict.
- In order to preserve the productivity of our agricultural lands, appropriately mitigating demand for rural subdivision and minimum lot sizes is a critical consideration for Council and a focus of this Rural Lands Strategy.



Extractive Industries

- Significant activity in extractive industries will continue to be anticipated throughout the region, with mining a key industry of the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy.
- Manilla is a commuting base for miners and their families due to the town's proximity to a number of mines. As the industry evolves, the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy will need to respond, enhancing diversification and flexibility to support miners and their families now and into the future.



Temporary Workers Accommodation

- Tamworth experiences large influxes of workers each year, many on a temporary or seasonal basis. This trend is only expected to increase significantly with the development of the NEREZ.
- An insufficient supply of accommodation for temporary or seasonal workers has the potential to put upward pressure on housing rental markets and risks overcrowding or makeshift housing.

- Council will look to sustainably manage the delivery of temporary accommodation to meet demand, enabling the continued growth of key industries while minimising pressure on the region's existing housing and tourist accommodation market.



Scenic Protection

- The Tamworth Regional rural lands are highly valued for their attractive scenic qualities, which contribute significantly to the identity and character of the region.
- Some industry, urban sprawl and modern infrastructure can degrade valuable scenic landscapes. For instance, solar and wind farms proposed within the NEREZ have the potential to significantly impact the character of the LGA's scenic rural lands and careful, upfront strategic planning must be taken to manage such land use conflict.



Climate Change

- An increase in global temperatures is exacerbating extreme weather events, increasing the incidence and severity of drought, flooding, storms and bushfires.
- The Tamworth Regional LGA's economy is heavily reliant on the productivity of its rural lands. Climate change will therefore likely pose a significant challenge to those living and working on rural lands as the availability of necessary natural resources, such as water and high quality soils, are increasingly at risk.



Water Security

- The Tamworth Regional LGA's water supply is dependent on the weather, leaving supply particularly vulnerable in periods of drought.
- Council is currently developing a *Water Security Plan*, due for public exhibition in late 2025, to ensure that water resources are reliable, sustainable and able to support future demand.



Heritage Values

- There are over 540 heritage listed buildings or places in the Tamworth Regional LGA, including many throughout our rural lands.
- Preserving built and natural heritage is a key priority to ensuring the Tamworth region remains a vibrant, distinct and desirable place.



Environmental Value and Biodiversity

- The Tamworth Regional LGA has lands of high environmental value and ecological diversity, including national parks, conservation areas and biodiversity corridors.
- Parts of the Tamworth Regional LGA contain endangered ecological communities, and are an important refuge for threatened species, including koalas, gliders and many woodland birds.
- However, the impacts of some industry, residential and urban sprawl, and land clearing on areas of high environmental and ecological value, particularly land not protected through planning policy, threatens important assets and ecosystems.
- The current development of the NEREZ has the potential to significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's important biodiversity values, endangering species and displacing habitat. Council must ensure that current and emerging industries in rural areas are developed in a manner that can protect and enhance the integrity and connectivity of the Tamworth Regional LGA's high biodiversity values.



Sustainable Rural Practices

- Council seeks to encourage sustainable rural practices to respond to certain land use trends and challenges such as overexploitation and degradation of natural resources.
- As the climate evolves, and the Tamworth population and economy continue to grow, such practices will be increasingly crucial to ensure a viable and resilient future.



Emerging Industries

- The Tamworth Regional LGA has strong and critically important agricultural foundations, but diversification is essential to enable prosperous and sustainable growth.
- It is essential to ensure that emerging industries remain compatible with existing land uses, retain local character and contribute sustainably to the region.



Tourism

- Tourism plays an important role in the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy, with many attractions including festivals, sporting events, restaurants, museums and galleries. As discussed above, opportunities exist to expand the tourist industry to help diversify the regional economy.
- Enhancing the tourist industry will require well planned infrastructure and services to ensure sustainable and successful growth, and minimise potential land use conflict.
- The growth of the NEREZ has the potential to significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's housing and accommodation market, with an anticipated influx of workers potentially depleting tourist and visitor accommodation options if not appropriately managed. This would significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's capacity to support regionally important visitor events, festivals and shows.

Expressions of Interest in Rural Areas

As part of the comprehensive review of the TRLEP 2010, Council received 74 Expressions Of Interest (EOI) from residents in relation to rural lands. The general location of the EOIs is shown in Figure 3.

These EOIs generally aligned with the following themes:

- Reduction in rural minimum lot sizes to enable subdivision or dwelling entitlements.
- Re-zoning land to R5 Large Lot Residential with corresponding reduction in minimum lot sizes.
- Re-zoning of properties from a rural or conservation zone to a different rural zone.
- Supply of lifestyle lots around rural communities such as Attunga, Bendemeer, Kootingal, Manilla and Nundle.
- Supply of smaller rural lots to support the equine industry.
- Re-zoning of rural zoned land within Tamworth and Nemingha for industrial, commercial or general residential purposes.
- Additional permitted uses on specific properties in rural areas.

The EOIs provide a valuable insight into the views of residents and have been used to inform the Focus Areas of this Strategy in connection with other key considerations and drivers of change.

For clarification, this Rural Lands Strategy does not:

- Propose the reduction or change of conservation zones, which by their nature conserve important areas of the Tamworth Regional LGA.
- Propose to zone any land for industrial, commercial or general residential (excluding land subject to a separate Structure Planning process).
- Assess requests for site specific dwelling entitlements or additional permitted uses, which are subject to a separate Planning Proposal and/or Development Application process.

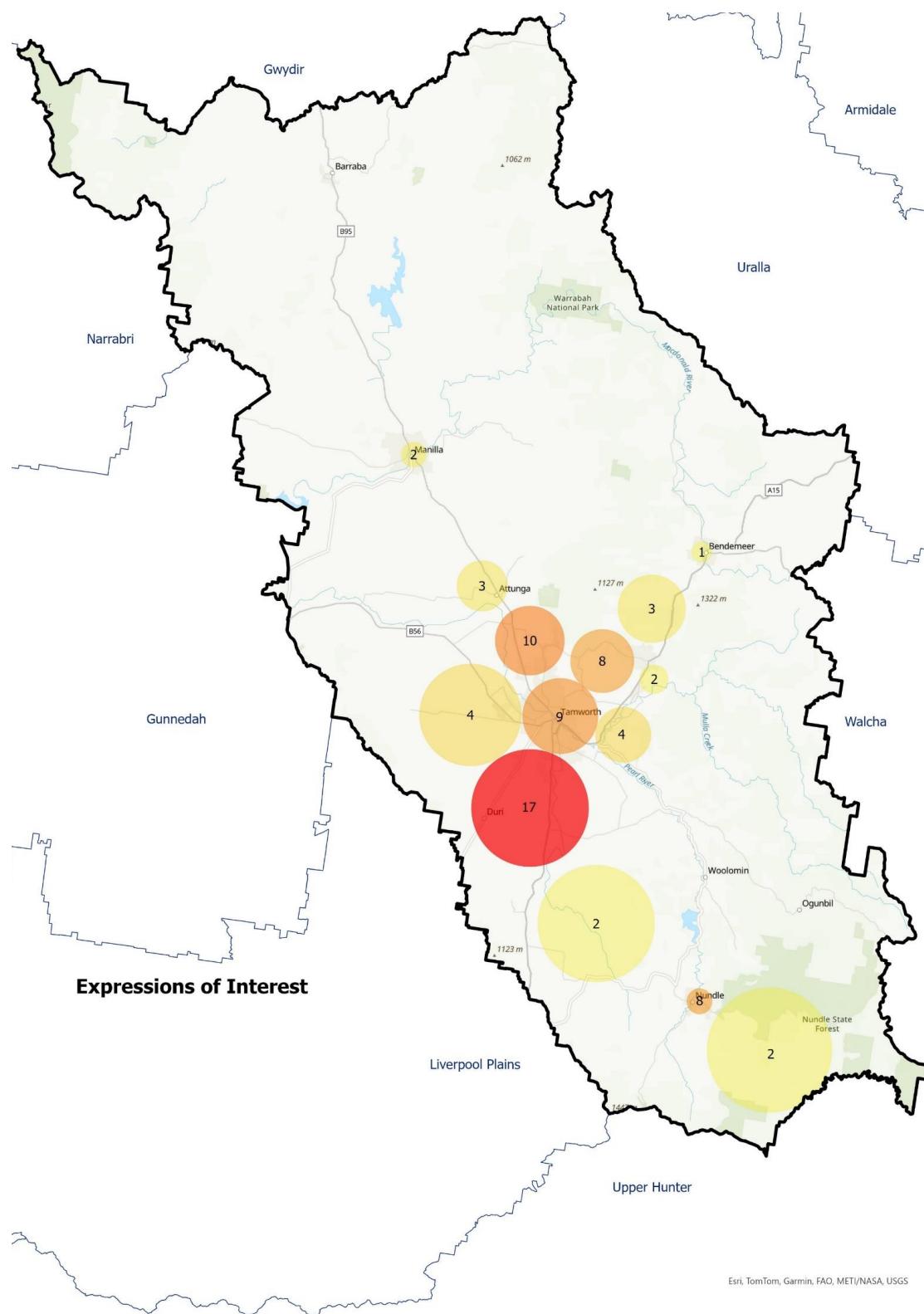


Figure 3: Landowner Expressions of Interest.

4 Rural Lands Focus Areas



Focus Area 1: Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands

The Tamworth Regional LGA is renowned for high quality and productive rural lands.

Agriculture forms a major part of the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy, with a total value of agricultural output in 2020/21 of \$305 million.

Approximately three quarters of this value came from livestock processing, primarily beef cattle, poultry and lambs.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands should be principally planned and managed for agriculture and other identified complementary uses.

Prioritising agriculture and preserving the productivity of our rural lands is crucial for strengthening the local economy, supporting jobs, ensuring food security, and enabling sustainable environmental outcomes.

Competing land uses in rural areas can put pressure on agricultural activities, constraining farming operations or reducing the amount of land available to support viable production.

Reducing potential land use conflicts, such as by introducing buffers around productive agricultural lands, can protect primary production from incompatible land uses and maintain farming potential.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands must be managed so as to prioritise the protection of the agricultural industry and preserve important farmland principally for agriculture.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 2 - Protect the viability and integrity of rural land (Strategy 2.1 and 2.2)

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 1 – Smart Growth and Housing Choices (Action SG5)
- Planning Priority 2 – Create a Prosperous Region (Action PR6)
- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Actions RC2 and RC8).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 5 – Promote rural communities (Actions 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4).

Important Agricultural Land

The clear identification of important agricultural land with inherent capability for primary production is key to ensuring its protection and planning for its sustainable future.

Identifying important agricultural land will assist Council and the community to:

- Minimise the potential for land use conflict in rural areas
- Protect finite resources and essential agricultural assets
- Support orderly development in appropriate land use zones
- Provide greater stability for primary producers
- Encourage collaboration and support emerging industry clusters
- Make the most of future opportunities for agricultural industries
- Support the objectives of the *NSW Right to Farm Policy*.

A range of statewide studies have been undertaken to date to identify and map land that is best suited for agricultural productivity.

Figure 4 and Figure 5 illustrate important agricultural lands that have been identified within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land

Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land (BSAL) is land with high quality soil and water resources capable of sustaining high levels of productivity.

BSAL has been identified and mapped by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) across the state, and includes portions of land in the Tamworth Regional LGA, as shown in Figure 4.

These lands intrinsically have the best quality landforms, soil and water resources which are naturally capable of sustaining high levels of productivity and require minimal management practices to maintain this high quality.

Land and Soil Capability Mapping for NSW

The NSW Land and Soil Capability Mapping provides a broad-scale, regional view as to the dominant land and soil class present across the state.

The study identifies key soil and landscape limitations, including water erosion, wind erosion, salinity, topsoil acidification, shallow soils/rockiness, soil structure decline, and waterlogging and mass movement.



Table 1 sets out the eight class mapping system, with values representing varying capability of the land to sustain certain land uses.

Estimated Inherent Soil Fertility of NSW

Prepared by DPHI, the mapping of Estimated Inherent Soil Fertility of NSW links soil fertility classes to particular soil types that have been identified throughout the state.

The mapping system describes soil fertility based on five different classes:

- Low
- Moderately low
- Moderate
- Moderately high
- High.

Figure 5 illustrates estimated inherent soil fertility across the Tamworth Regional LGA.

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Table 1: Land and Soil Capability.

Class	Soil Capability	Capability Description
1	Very slight to negligible limitations	Land capable of sustaining high impact land uses (e.g. cultivation) and no special land management practices required.
2	Slight but significant limitations	Land capable of sustaining high impact land uses which can be managed by readily available, and easily implemented management practices.
3	Moderate limitations	Land capable of sustaining high impact land uses using more intensive, readily available and accepted management practices.
4	Moderate to severe limitations	Land generally not capable of sustaining high impact land uses unless using specialised management practices with high level of knowledge, expertise, inputs, investment.
5	Severe limitations	Land not capable of sustaining high impact land uses except where resources allow for highly specialised land management practices to overcome limitations (e.g. high value crops).
6	Very severe limitations	Land incapable of sustaining many land use practices (e.g. cropping, moderate to high intensity grazing and horticulture). Highly specialised practices can overcome some limitations.
7	Extreme limitations	Land incapable of sustaining any land use and best left undisturbed and managed for conservation.
8	Extremely severe limitations	Land incapable of sustaining most land uses. Limitations cannot be overcome.

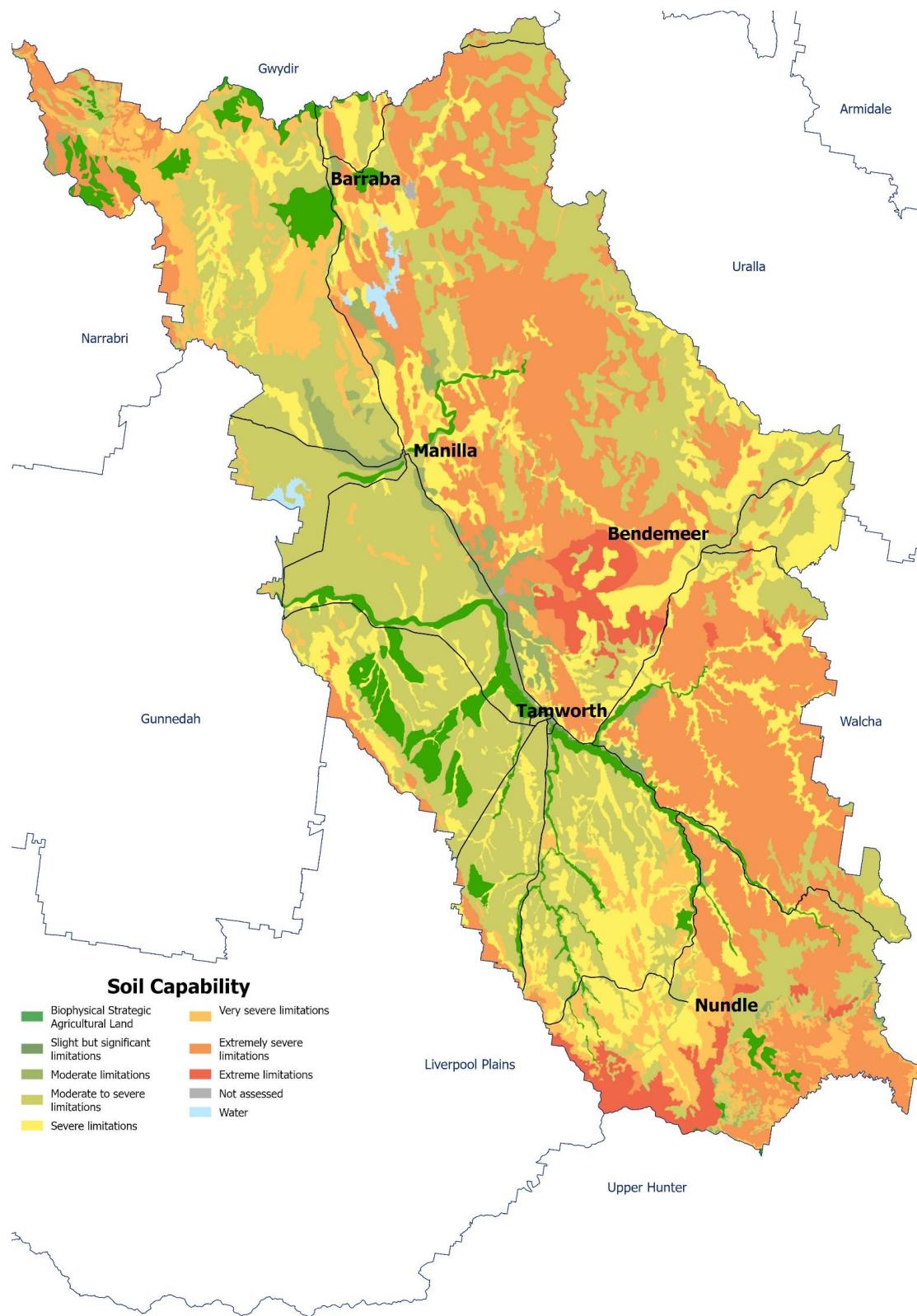


Figure 4: Soil Capability.

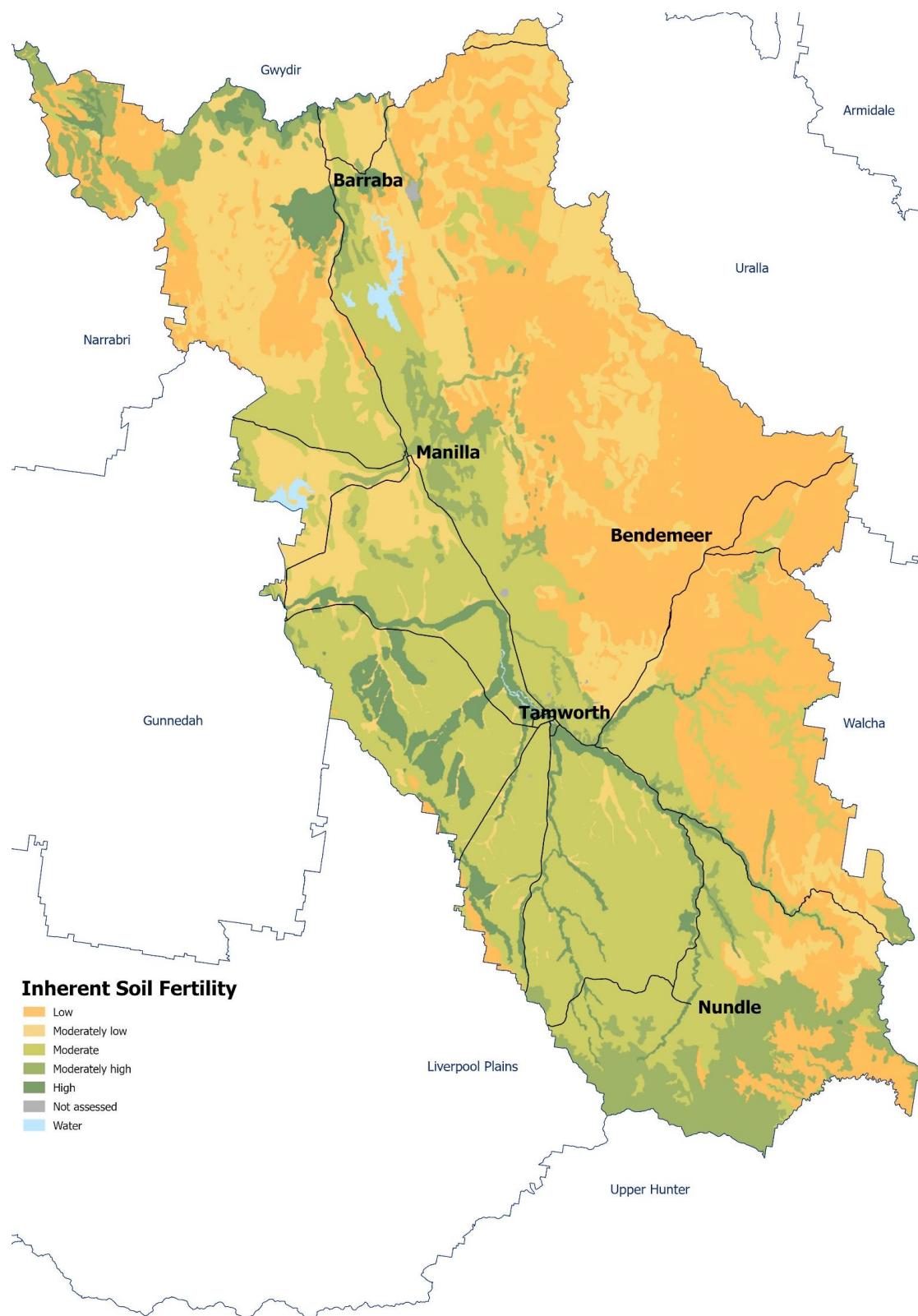


Figure 5: Inherent Soil Fertility.

Primary Production Small Lots

The RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land use zone encourages diverse primary industry enterprises that may require smaller lots or more intensive land use practices.

The objectives of the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone are:

- To enable sustainable primary industry and other compatible land uses.
- To encourage and promote diversity and employment opportunities in relation to primary industry enterprises, particularly those that require smaller lots or that are more intensive in nature.
- To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.

In the Tamworth Regional LGA, the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land use zone generally occurs in rural areas that are in the vicinity of centres.

A significant area of RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land is located to the south of Tamworth, where a cluster of equine related land uses is emerging.

A diversity of lot sizes in the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone will enable choice and facilitate the growth of emerging industries.

Council will look to support the delivery of 10ha lots within proximity to the Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC) and other equine related facilities, encouraging the growth and development of this industry, and diversifying the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural economies.

Rural Subdivision

The smaller the rural lot size, the greater the potential for land use conflict because the less opportunity there is to provide a suitable buffer between uses.

Subdivision which enables new dwelling entitlements to be created in rural areas has the potential to result in fragmentation and increases the likelihood of land use conflict.

Nevertheless, the changing nature of large scale farms; including farm succession planning, the need for larger farms for productivity, and demand for other uses such as rural lifestyle purchasers, means farming land is being lost and productivity declining. Without the

flexibility of subdivision, the growth and evolution of agricultural industries is restricted.

In order to preserve the productivity of our agricultural lands, addressing rural subdivision and minimum lot sizes is crucial to both protecting our agricultural lands (i.e from dwelling entitlements and fragmentation) whilst also enabling growth and necessary change to support diverse rural industries.

Minimum Lot Size

Council implements minimum lot size controls to manage subdivision in the Tamworth Regional LGA. Appropriate minimum lot size controls ensure that lots are able to be developed at a size that best supports their function, reflecting opportunities and limitations of their physical characteristics, availability of resources and access to infrastructure.

Minimum lot sizes of agricultural lands are particularly important in land use planning to preserve the viability and productivity of farming operations. By setting a minimum lot size, Council can help to ensure that agricultural activities have sufficient space for productivity, noting that different agricultural industries may have different lot size requirements depending on factors such as the intensity of their operations and the requirement for buffer zones.

Current minimum lot sizes in rural areas under the TRLEP 2010 include:

- 800ha in the north, east and south of the Tamworth Regional LGA
- 400ha in the central and western areas
- 100ha and 40ha closer to the regional city of Tamworth
- 40ha near rural communities.

Figure 6 illustrates the current minimum lot size controls of the Tamworth Regional LGA. This mapping clearly illustrates the significant difference in minimum lot size between the Tamworth Regional LGA and surrounding LGAs.

While the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands have a minimum lot size of predominantly 400ha and 800ha, surrounding LGAs are significantly lower, predominantly 200ha, with some areas up to 400ha.

Prior to the introduction of the TRLEP 2010, a 200ha minimum lot size generally applied under the now repealed Barraba, Manilla and Nundle LEPs.

Council received strong feedback opposed to the marked increase in the rural minimum lot size during exhibition of the TRLEP 2010, with concerns relating to restrictions on dwelling permissibility, farm succession planning and business opportunities requiring less land but more intensive land use. Limited dwelling permissibility has also been linked with impacts on weed and pest control, stock management and reduced surveillance (increasing risk of stock or property theft).

Notwithstanding opposition to the uncommonly large minimum lot size in Tamworth (compared to the broader region), there is a broader trend for rural properties to be agglomerated to achieve economies of scale. This has resulted in a depopulation of some rural areas as farmers relocate to centres such as the regional city of Tamworth.

Council has identified that the lot size provisions of certain rural lands in the Tamworth Regional LGA warrant review by assessing land capability and constraints such as soil capability, soil fertility, vegetation, biodiversity, bushfire, and topography.

Actual Lot Size and Property Holding Size

Figure 7 identifies the actual size of lots in the Tamworth Regional LGA and Figure 8 identifies the size of property holdings.

This analysis illustrates that both the actual size of lots and the size of property holdings vary across the Tamworth Regional LGA, and vary substantially from the relevant minimum lot size controls.

Notably, the larger lot and property holding sizes correlate with the eastern rural lands which generally have a low soil fertility, limited soil capability, steeper topography and high biodiversity values. Despite Council's 800ha minimum lot size control across the majority of the Tamworth Regional LGA's eastern rural lands, a significant portion of this land contains significantly smaller actual lot sizes, and smaller property holdings, including many 200ha and 400ha property holdings.

Agricultural corporations are heavily influencing a trend towards larger rural holdings. Research undertaken by The University of Sydney in 2020 showed that the share of Tamworth Regional LGA owned by corporate entities rose from 20% in 2004 to 30% in 2019.

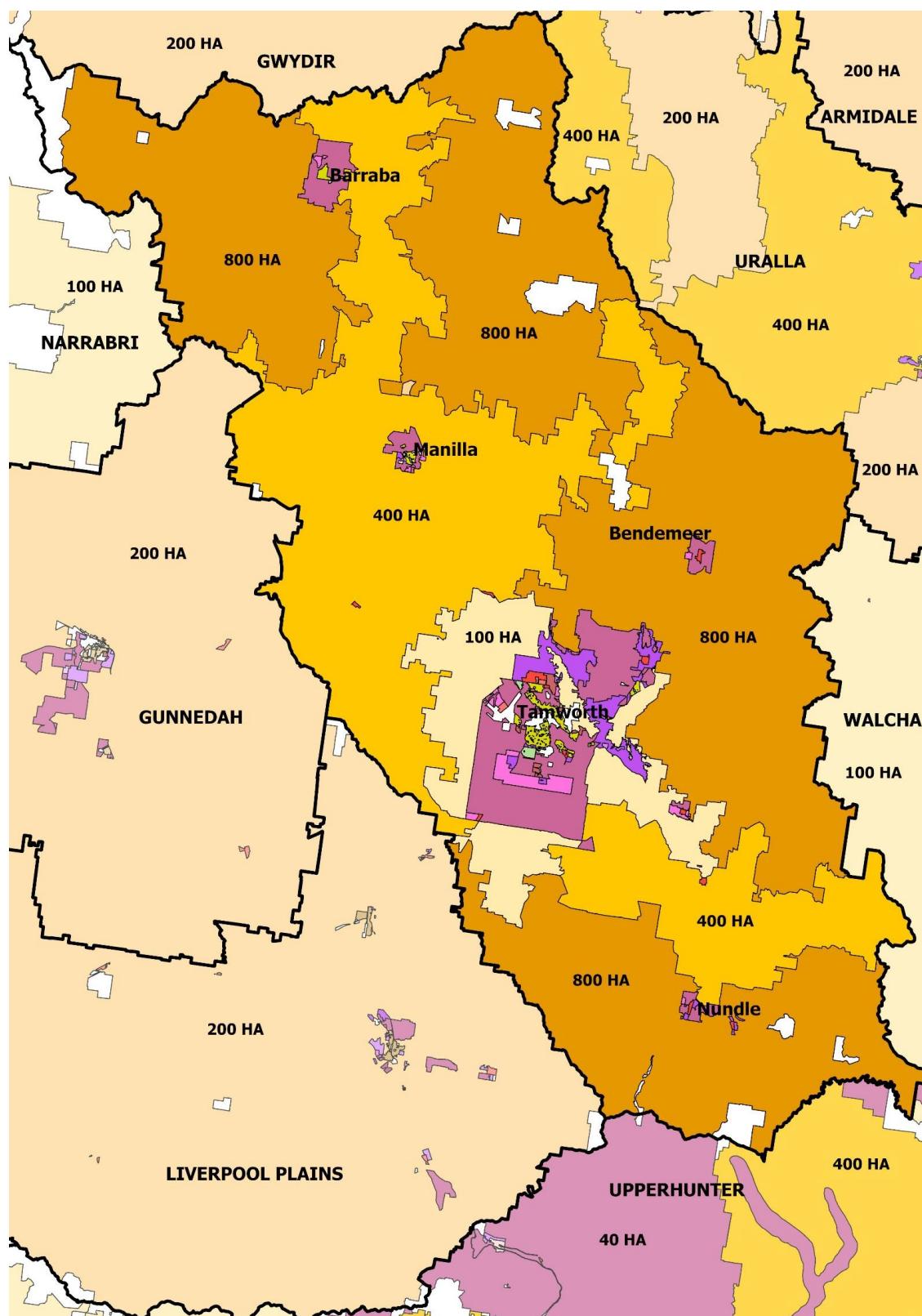


Figure 6: Current TRLEP 2010 minimum lot size in rural areas.

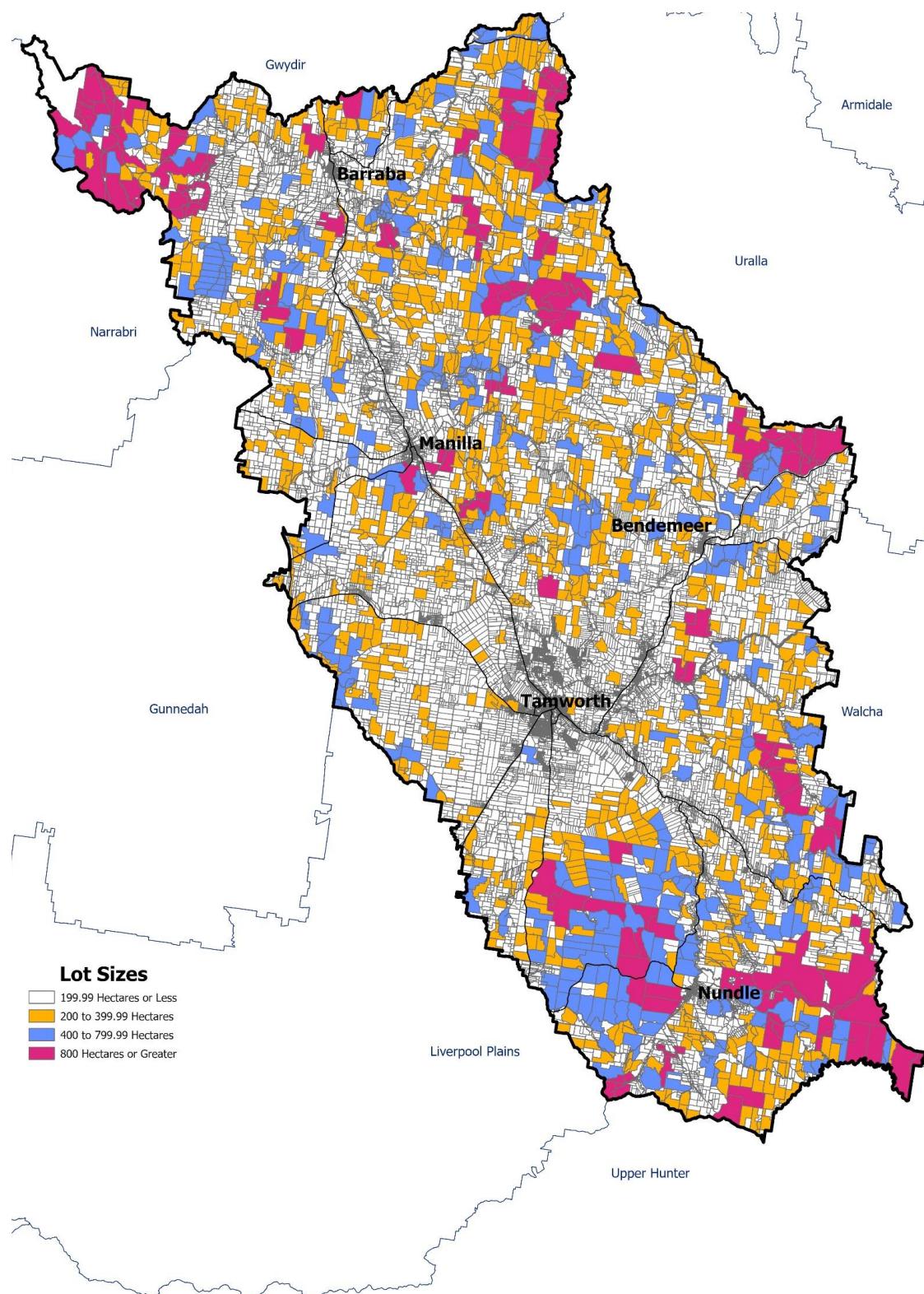


Figure 7: Actual lot size.

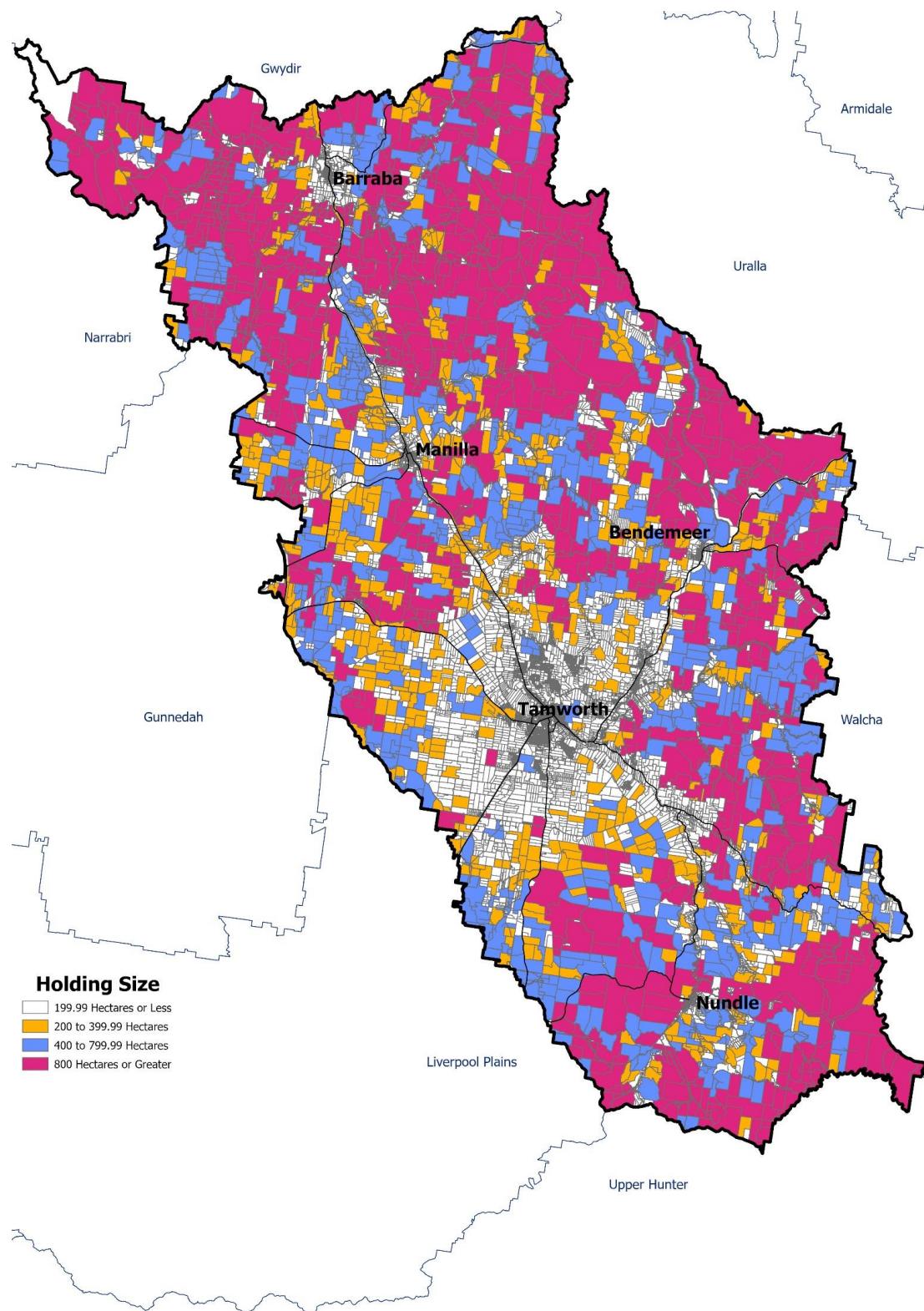


Figure 8: Holding lot size.

Proposed Land Use Planning Amendments in Rural Areas

Parts of the Tamworth Regional LGA contain highly productive agricultural lands, used for growing cereal crops, intensive agriculture and pasture for cattle and sheep, amongst other uses. It is essential that the existing land use controls relevant to such lands are retained to preserve their ongoing productivity.

However, in certain areas of the Tamworth Regional LGA, amendments to relevant land use planning controls would enable both current and intended future rural land uses and rural living opportunities.

Figure 9, Figure 10 and Figure 11 set out proposed strategic amendments to certain Areas of the Tamworth Regional LGA.

These amendments will be further refined as part of the Planning Proposal process in accordance with the *Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline* prepared by the Department of Planning and Environment.

Eastern Rural Lands (Area 1)

There is a substantial range in soil type and land use capability across the Tamworth Regional LGA, as illustrated in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

Notably, lands within the western portion of the Tamworth Regional LGA generally feature higher fertility soils with greater land use capability. Containing the Tamworth Regional LGA's prime agricultural lands, the western rural lands are also the location of the Tamworth Regional LGA's major agricultural producers.

Lands towards the east of the Tamworth Regional LGA are generally of a lower soil quality and reduced land use capability. These lands also broadly contain the Tamworth Regional LGA's areas of higher environmental and scenic value, and impediments to productive agriculture such as remnant vegetation, bushfire prone land and steep topography. Lot and holding sizes in the eastern rural lands are generally larger and on lower fertility soil.

Proposed amendments to the Tamworth Regional LGA's eastern rural lands involve reducing minimum lot sizes to 400ha where land is less arable.

This reduction in minimum allowable lot size recognises that these parts of the Tamworth Regional

LGA are not considered prime agricultural land due to their lower soil capability, hillier topography and more extensive areas of native vegetation.

A reduction in minimum lot size to 200ha across the Tamworth Regional LGA's eastern rural lands was considered in the preparation of this Rural Lands Strategy. However, a minimum lot size of 400ha was determined appropriate to sustain the continued capacity of these lands for productive agriculture, while enabling greater flexibility and a diversity of lot sizes to encourage a variety of rural industries.

The proposed 400ha minimum lot size will be more consistent with that of rural lands in several adjoining LGAs, including Gwydir Shire, Gunnedah Shire, Liverpool Plains Shire and parts of Uralla Shire.

South Western Rural Lands (Area 2)

Lands towards the south west of the Tamworth Regional LGA contain very high quality soils with high inherent soil fertility and high land use capability.

As some of the Tamworth Regional LGA's prime agricultural soils, it is essential that this land be retained for primary production. It is proposed the minimum lot size in this area be reduced to 200ha in recognition of the land's ability to support more intensive agricultural production than other parts of the Tamworth Regional LGA.

This adjusted minimum lot size will contribute to enhancing the range of lot sizes within the Tamworth Regional LGA, improving flexibility for primary producers and contributing to diversifying the mix of viable agricultural businesses within the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Kingswood / Warral (Area 3a and 3b)

Areas to the south of Tamworth City, particularly areas around Kingswood and Warral, contain an emerging cluster of equine and equestrian related land uses (refer Section 0 for further discussion). These areas benefit from relative proximity to Tamworth, and are growing with the support of facilities such as the nearby Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC).

Many of these land uses are facilitated by lots with a current minimum lot size of 9.9ha. Such lots provide sufficient space for paddocks, stables and yards, yet are also a small enough to allow the property to be well-managed on a part-time basis.

The growth of this emerging equine industry is proposed to be supported by reducing the minimum lot size of land bound by Meadows Lane, the New England Highway, Kia Ora Lane and Gowrie Road (Area 3a) to 10ha. Land that is currently zoned with a minimum lot size of 9.9ha (Area 3b) should also be rationalised to 10ha for consistency.

It is noted that parts of Kingswood are the subject of separate structure planning process currently being undertaken by Council, with future land use planning amendments to be a potential outcome of this process.

Kootingal / Moonbi (Area 4)

The communities of Kootingal and Moonbi are located less than 5km apart. Land between the two communities is currently zoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots, although viable agricultural productivity in these areas is constrained due to proximity to the two centres and the potential for land use conflict. As a consequence, much of this land has been used not for primary production, but for residential living on large lots.

It is therefore proposed that certain areas between Kootingal and Moonbi are rezoned to R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha (Area 4). This amendment will contribute diverse housing choice to the Tamworth Regional LGA, in accordance with the Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy, which states that *"reviewing planning controls to promote lifestyle living and in-fill housing development for rural communities will promote diverse and affordable housing."* The final extent of rezoning will need to be informed by detailed studies as part of any future Planning Proposal process.

It is also noted that parts of Kootingal are the subject of separate structure planning process currently being undertaken by Council, with future land use planning amendments to be a potential outcome of this process.

Daruka (Areas 5a and 5b)

Despite extensive areas of land zoned for rural residential development in the Tamworth hinterlands, much of the land remains unsubdivided. While a number of site-specific physical constraints prevent subdivision, such as bush fire, biodiversity, slope or access, the primary obstacle appears to be the cost-

prohibitive requirement for reticulated town water to be provided to a subdivision.

Allowing 2ha lots to be created in Daruka without reticulated town water is not supported due to the presence of community groundwater schemes. Any increase in 2ha lots in this area has potential to create demand for further groundwater access that would adversely impact these community schemes.

In recognition of this issue, Council recently amended the TRDCP 2010 to remove the requirement to provide reticulated town water for lots with an area of 5ha or greater at Daruka and Tintinhull. A 5ha lot provides greater scope for rainwater harvesting and results in reduced lot yield and demand for groundwater access.

In recognition of the long-standing issue of water supply in Daruka and the need to encourage sustainable rural residential development, it is proposed that land in Daruka currently zoned for rural residential development with a minimum lot size of 2ha (Area 5a) has the minimum lot size increased to 5ha under the TRLEP 2010 to align with the TRDCP 2010.

This change to the minimum lot size will also extend part way along Upper Moore Creek Road for land between the Moore Creek waterway and area of protected vegetation.

A review of the land at Daruka has also identified an area of smaller lots along Woonooka Road that are better suited for the R5 large Lot Residential zone. It is proposed to extend the R5 Large lot Residential zone and 5ha minimum lot size along both sides of Woonooka Road (Area 5b) for this short distance.

Moore Creek (Area 6)

Land zoned for rural residential living at Moore Creek currently adjoins land zoned RU1 Primary Production. It is proposed that some of this land is rezoned from RU1 to RU4 Primary Production Small Lots with a minimum lot size of 40ha, providing a more appropriate transition between residential and agricultural land uses.

This amendment will contribute to the diverse range of lot sizes in the Tamworth Regional LGA to support diverse rural industries, including some more intensive agribusiness in proximity to Tamworth City.

Attunga (Area 7)

Land to the north west of the rural community of Attunga is proposed to be zoned to RU4 Primary Production Small Lots with a minimum lot size of 10ha.

This amendment will deliver additional suitable land to support the growth of the equine industry in the Tamworth Regional LGA, in a location that benefits from proximity to the Manilla Showground and Tamworth City.

The final extent of rezoning will need to be informed by detailed studies as part of any future Planning Proposal process.

Nundle (Area 8)

Minor amendments to areas of Nundle are proposed to provide additional rural living opportunities and ensure that land use zones are consistent with existing land uses. This will involve the rezoning of some land to R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha.

Loomberah (Areas 9a and 9b)

It is proposed that land in the rural residential community of Loomberah (Area 9a) is zoned R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha to ensure that the principal planning controls are

consistent with existing land uses. These amendments will not create opportunities for subdivision or dwelling entitlements.

To the south west of the rural residential community of Loomberah is an area of land currently zoned RU1 Primary Production, with a minimum lot size of 400ha. This land adjoins rural land with a minimum lot size of 100ha to the north, and lots zoned for small lot primary production with a minimum lot size of 40ha to the west. It is proposed that the minimum lot size applying to these rural lands (Area 9b) to the south west of Loomberah be reduced to 100ha to provide an appropriate transition between adjacent rural lot sizes.

Administrative Changes to Minimum Lot Sizes (Areas 10a and 10b)

For consistency across the Tamworth Regional LGA, it is proposed that areas at Dungowan and Tamworth (Area 10a) with a minimum lot size of 9.9ha have this minimum lot size increased to 10ha.

A small area of land north of Manilla (Area 10b) currently has a minimum lot size of 200ha. This is intended to be increased to 400ha consistent with the surrounding area.

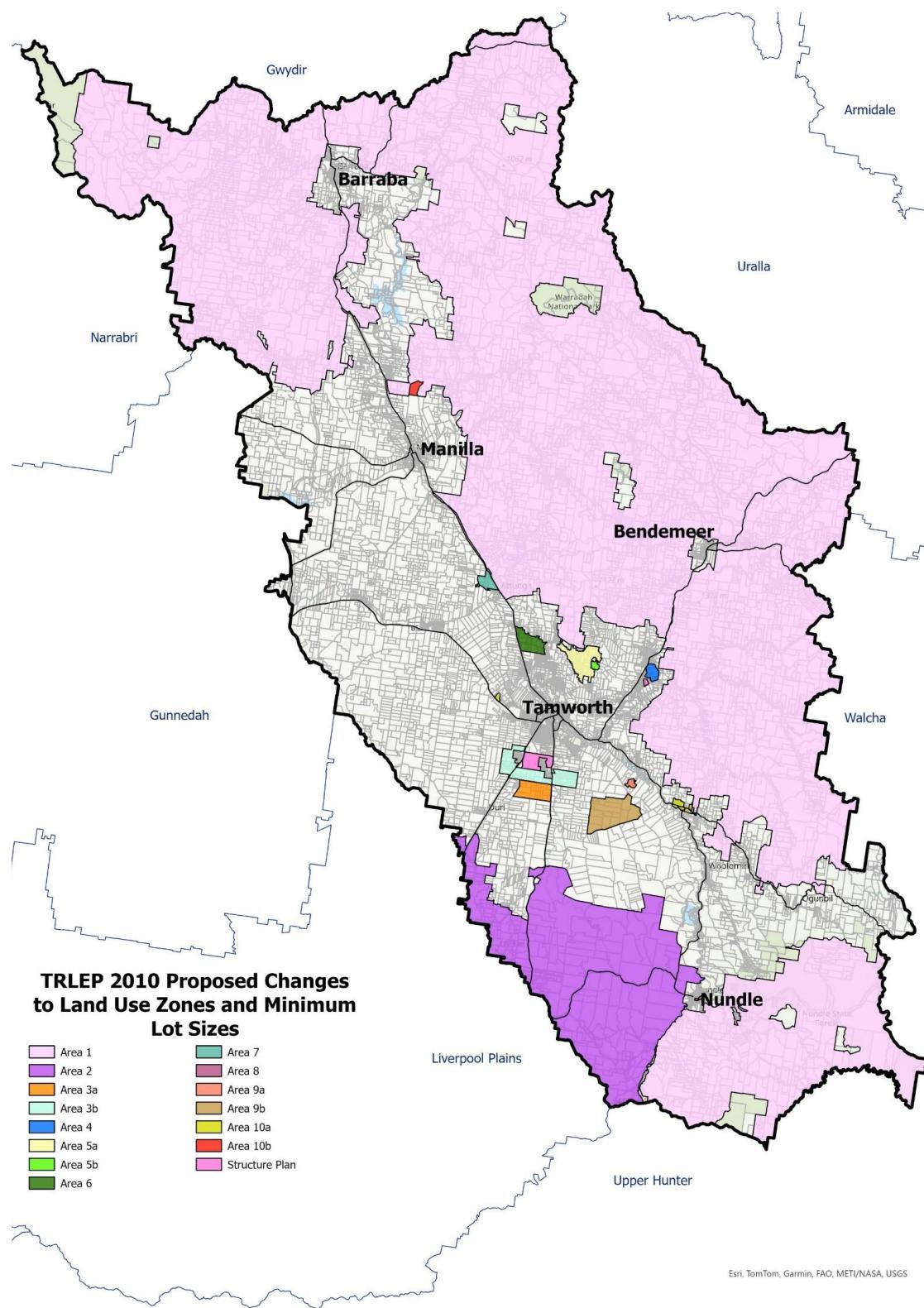


Figure 9: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (LGA-wide).

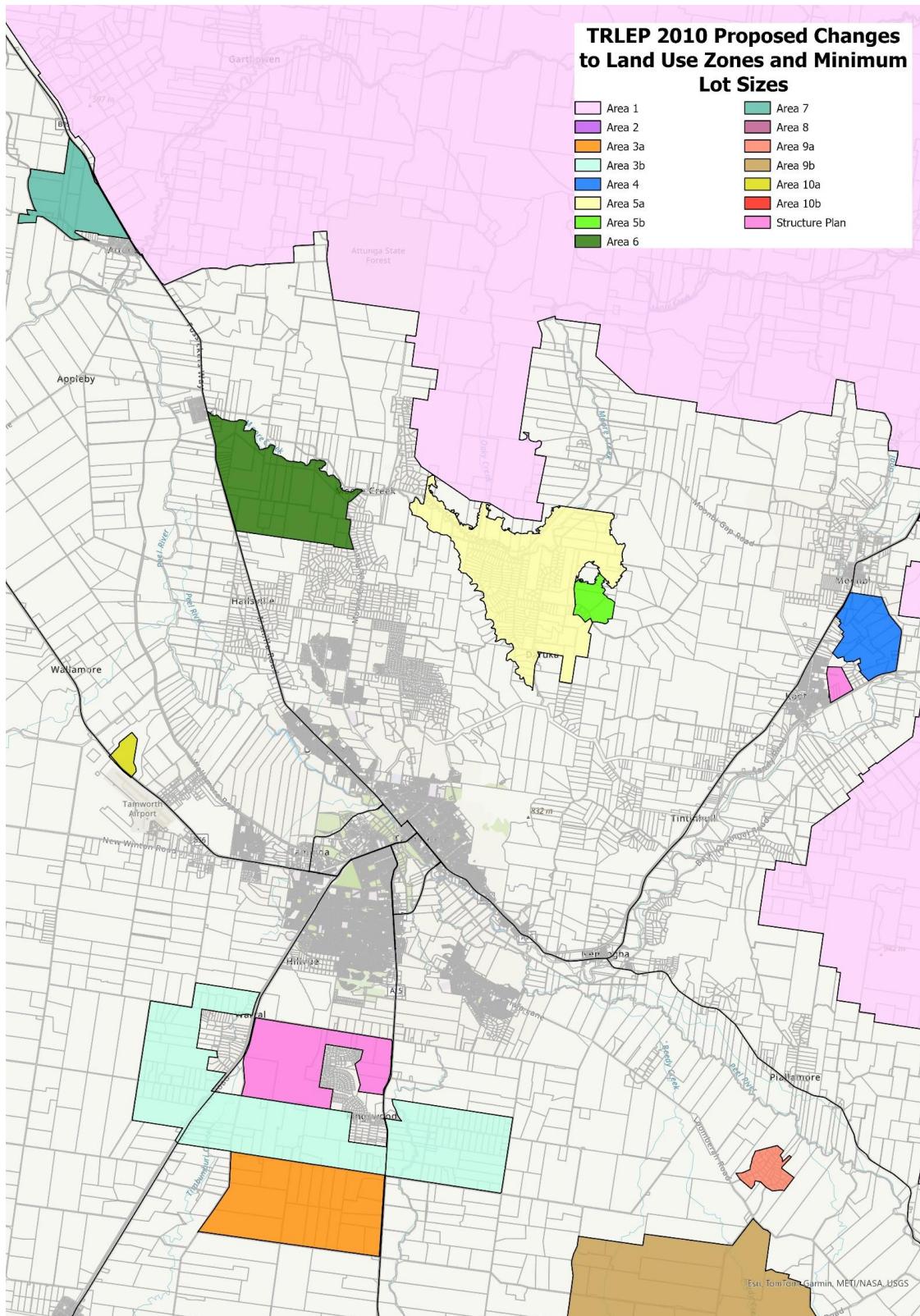


Figure 10: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (Tamworth City surrounds).

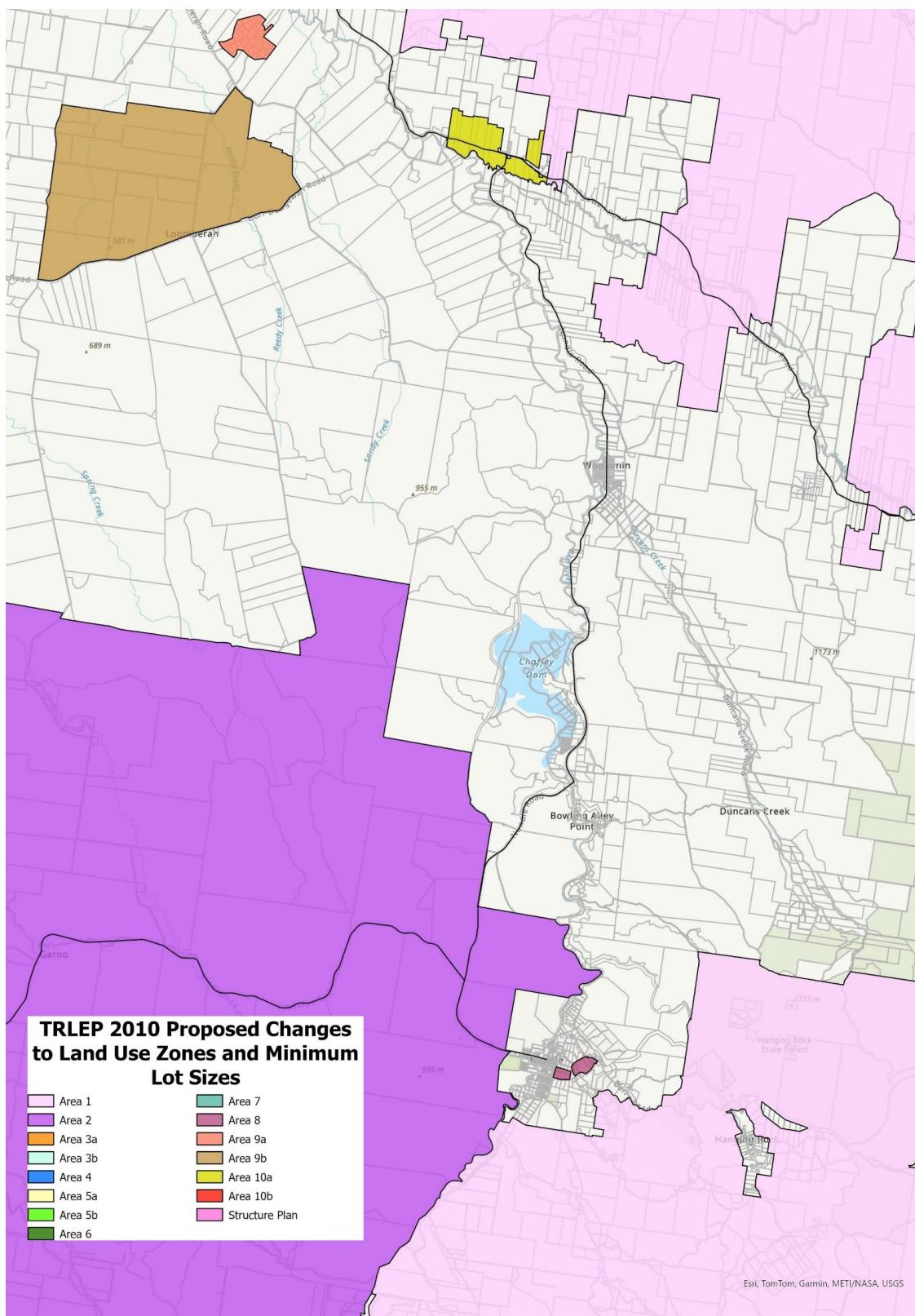


Figure 11: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (Nundle surrounds).

Action 1.1	Ensure State Significant Agricultural Land, Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land and Important Agricultural Land are used as key criteria in the assessment of Planning Proposals and Development Applications pertaining to rural zoned land.
Action 1.2	Implement minimum lot size changes as recommended, accounting for landscape characteristics, viability of agricultural productivity and strategic objectives for the zones.
Action 1.3	Introduce a RU2 Rural Landscape zone in identified areas to distinguish rural lands with high scenic value from those with higher soil fertility.

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Focus Area 2: Reduce and Manage Land Use Conflicts

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands host a wide range of important land uses, activities and industries.

Land use conflict can occur when demand for the same resources arises from competing, and sometimes incompatible, sources. This can include, for example, demand for space, demand for assets, or the generation of impacts that invade neighbouring uses, such as noise or odour.

One common example of rural land use conflict occurs with urban expansion into agricultural lands in fringe areas of towns and villages. Everyday farming practices can result in impacts such as noise, odour or spray drift. New residential neighbours may lack understanding of farming practices and can present challenges to the operations of farming businesses.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands contain critically important primary producers and key employers. Protecting these industries from potential land use conflict is vital to ensuring their ongoing operations, viability and future growth.

The Tamworth Regional LGA contains one of the state's most significant poultry industry clusters. Incompatible land uses such as residential encroachment or insufficient separation distances, can lead to conflict arising from issues such as noise, odour, or biosecurity concerns.

In order to preserve the productivity of our rural lands, mitigating land use conflicts is a key priority of this Rural Lands Strategy and remains an important focus of Council.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 2 - Protect the viability and integrity of rural land (Strategy 2.1)
- Objective 3 - Expand agribusiness and food processing sectors (Strategy 3.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 2: Create a Prosperous Region (Action PR7)
- Planning Priority 3 – Build Resilient Communities (Action RC1)
- Planning Priority 7: Deliver Durable Infrastructure (Action DD1).

Renewable Energy Projects

The New England Renewable Energy Zone (NEREZ) is partly located within the Tamworth Regional LGA (refer to Focus Area 4 for further detailed discussion).

While renewable energy may present an opportunity for some farmers to diversify their income, increasing land use conflict is expected to be a confronting reality for many rural landholders and communities, and might result in the loss or displacement of agricultural land or intrusion on rural landscapes.

The report *Renewable energy generation and agriculture in NSW's rural landscape and economy – growth sectors on a complementary path*, prepared by the NSW Agriculture Commissioner, notes that land use conflict is a serious problem in NSW, and is widely considered to be getting worse with population growth, distribution changes, and energy policy developments (among other things), increasing the demand for conversion of agricultural land for industrial and residential uses.

Land use conflict concerns identified within the report included impacts to neighbouring landholders such as the risk of reduced property values, increased insurance liabilities, production practice changes to improve compatibility, changed water flows and increased pest and weed management requirements. Local and cumulative impact on food and fibre production, and impact on upstream and downstream businesses in the community and wider regions were also noted.

In November 2024, DPHI developed the *Renewable Energy Planning Framework* to assist the State's transition to renewable energy. The Framework is comprised of several guidelines to inform the development and assessment of large-scale wind and solar energy, battery energy storage systems, hydrogen and large-scale transmission infrastructure.

The Framework sets out controls related to matters such as noise, health, visual, fire, environmental, traffic and decommissioning impacts, and requires cumulative impact assessment and land use conflict risk assessment for proposed development

NSW Right to Farm Policy

The *NSW Right to Farm Policy* was published by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) in 2015 to

address land use conflicts that arise from lawful agricultural practices.

The policy aims to increase certainty for existing agricultural use and promote innovation and investment in agriculture.

As stated in the Policy:

- People who want to live in rural and agricultural areas need to understand that land is used for productive purposes, such as agriculture. The reality is that normal farming practices can have impacts on neighbours, ranging from residual noise, light, dust and other impacts.
- In some local government areas, complaints occur frequently, in some areas on a weekly basis. Land use conflict can be a considerable issue for local government, and creates uncertainty for farm businesses, as it can increase costs and exert pressure on some farmers to relocate or leave the industry.

Consequently, it is essential to establish and maintain best practice approaches to minimising land use conflict, including via upfront strategic land use planning.

Biosecurity

Maintaining biosecurity is an increasingly important consideration for primary producers. Recent cases of avian influenza affecting the Victorian and NSW poultry industries demonstrate the dire consequences of disease outbreaks to agriculture and food supply chains.

Ensuring adequate buffer zones are maintained around poultry farms is one way to mitigate against this biosecurity risk.

Weed control is another form of biosecurity that requires vigilance, education and resourcing to protect the productivity of agricultural land.

Land Use Buffers

One measure to minimise land use conflict involves physically separating uses with specified buffer distances; minimising opportunity for conflict between the source of an impact and the sensitive receptor, such as residential dwellings.

Incorporating appropriate buffer zones into the planning process, particularly at the early stages of a

development, can provide clarity for landowners, neighbours and consent authorities and ongoing benefits for primary producers and the public.

Buffer Zone: An area of land set aside to minimise the impacts of land uses on each other.

Separation Distance: The distance between the point of generation of an environmental impact and a receptor that is sensitive to that impact.

Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture (2018)

In 2018, DPI released the guideline *Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture* to provide buffer zone advice to agricultural industries, development proponents and consent authorities so as to reduce land use conflict between agriculture and other land uses.

The guideline provides suggested evaluation distances between agriculture and sensitive receptors. However, it is clearly stated that issues surrounding land use conflict and the separation of incompatible land uses through buffer zones is not an exact science, and site specific considerations such as topography, vegetation and the nature of the proposed and adjacent development all need to be considered.

Council will look to implement all relevant parts of the *Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture* into the *Tamworth Regional Development Control Plan 2010* (TRDCP 2010), including referring to the suggested evaluation distances to initiate an assessment of land use buffers, when assessing agriculture developments.

Intensive Livestock Agriculture

Clause 5.18 of the TRLEP 2010 provides for the assessment of development for the purpose of intensive livestock agriculture.

The clause requires consideration for matters such as adverse impacts that may occur as a result of odours, surface and groundwater pollution, and the degradation of soils, as well as site suitability, mitigation measures, animal health and welfare, and compliance with other relevant state government guidelines and requirements.

Clause 5.18 sets out certain types of intensive livestock agriculture development (up to certain capacity thresholds) which, subject to the satisfaction of certain

controls, do not require development consent. These include:

- Cattle feedlots with fewer than 50 cattle
- Goat feedlots with fewer than 200 goats
- Sheep feedlot with fewer than 200 sheep
- Pig farms with fewer than 20 breeding sows, or fewer than 200 pigs (of which fewer than 20 may be breeding sows)
- Dairies with fewer than 50 dairy cows,
- Poultry farms with fewer than 1,000 birds for meat or egg production (or both).

Clause 5.18 identifies certain requirements and land use buffers to enable such development without consent, requiring that the development will not be located:

- In an environmentally sensitive area
- Within 100 metres of a natural watercourse
- In a drinking water catchment
- Within 500 metres of any dwelling that is not associated with the development, or a residential zone
- For a poultry farm used for breeding poultry - within 5km of another poultry farm
- For a poultry farm not used for breeding poultry - within 5km of a poultry farm used for breeding poultry, or within 1km of a poultry farm not used for breeding poultry
- For a pig farm—within 3km of another pig farm.

Namoi Regional Job Precinct

As discussed in Section 2 of this Rural Lands Strategy, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has identified a primary regional intensive agriculture investigation area centred largely over the Tamworth Regional LGA's fertile western rural lands as a part of the Namoi Regional Job Precinct (RJP). This analysis provides an important basis upon which Council can refer to in order to reduce land use conflict that has the potential to impact important intensive livestock agriculture in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

For example, Council will seek to preserve the primary use of lands within the Namoi RJP for agriculture by permitting the construction of secondary dwellings only in certain rural areas that are not identified

important agricultural land, such as those outside the proposed Namoi RJP.

Poultry Industry

In 2019-20, the Tamworth Regional LGA was the second biggest producer of poultry meat in NSW, with the gross value of poultry exceeding \$96M.

Poultry meat producer Baiada has a strong presence in the region and is moving ahead with major expansion plans including:

- New \$203M Oakburn Processing Plant to be completed in 2026 with the capacity to process 3 million chickens per week
- New \$84M feedmill at Wallamore
- New \$28M broiler farm at Appleby featuring 16 poultry sheds with capacity for 960,000 birds.

The poultry industry is of critical importance to the economy of the Tamworth Regional LGA, providing significant employment in both primary production and secondary manufacturing and processing industries.

The majority of poultry farms in the Tamworth Regional LGA are located within the Namoi RJP, where primary agriculture is to be prioritised and preserved.

Council will look to continue to enable the strength of the poultry industry in the Tamworth Regional LGA; preserving jobs, capitalising on investment and enabling sustainable growth.

Infrastructure Sites

The orderly and appropriate development of key infrastructure to support the Tamworth Regional LGA requires forward consideration for concerns such as incompatible land uses and/or necessary separation distances to avoid potential land use conflicts and preserve the viability of a number of important industries and essential infrastructure.

Tamworth Regional Airport

The Tamworth Regional Airport and its surrounding precinct is the home of an expanding centre for aviation related industries. Preserving the potential for this precinct to grow as a training, business and tourist gateway will include ensuring that potentially incompatible land uses (such as noise sensitive receptors) aren't introduced, and that land in

proximity to the airport is preserved for supporting or related employment purposes.

Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The majority of Council's wastewater treatment facilities are located on rural lands. Development near some of these facilities are currently regulated by a 'Sewer Treatment Plant' buffer via clause 7.5 of the TRLEP 2010 which requires new developments to consider adverse impacts on the operation of these critical pieces of infrastructure. Other wastewater treatment facilities do not currently have the protection of a buffer.

It is considered that as part of a future review of the TRLEP 2010 that all wastewater treatment facilities are reviewed to determine appropriate buffer requirements.

Waste Management

Council operates a total of eleven (11) waste management facilities in the Tamworth Regional LGA comprising four (4) landfills and seven (7) rural transfer stations.

The Forest Road Waste Management Facility (FRWMF) located in Tamworth is the largest facility operated by Council. The site is the primary landfilling and organics processing facility servicing the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Development near the facility is currently regulated by a 'Waste Disposal Buffer' via clause 7.5 of the TRLEP 2010 which requires new developments to consider adverse impacts on the operation of this critical piece of infrastructure. This buffer extends approximately 500m around the site, with the exception of the north-east boundary which is 300m. The FRWMF itself is zoned SP2 Infrastructure. The lands surrounding the FRWMF are zoned RU6 Transition and encompass the balance of the buffer.

There are a number of existing residences within the buffer and substantial housing growth to the north, northwest and northeast of the FRWMF. Council recently engaged an external consultant to undertake an odour impact assessment based on the current and future operation of the FRWMF. This assessment identified the required buffer distances around the waste management facility to minimise any potential odour impacts on the nearest sensitive receptors.

Based on the findings of the assessment, existing and future operations of the FRWMF have the potential to

cause odour impacts on the surrounding environment within the existing buffer zone. Therefore, it is not proposed to reduce the size or extent of the buffer or associated RU6 Transition zone.

Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment

In the assessment of development in the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands, Council will continue to undertake comprehensive Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment (LUCRA) to identify and assess the potential for land use conflict to occur between adjacent land uses.

Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide (2011)

In 2011, DPI released the guideline *Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide* to provide guidance on the practical measures to use when conducting a LUCRA.

The guideline sets out that a LUCRA aims to:

- Accurately identify and address potential land use conflict issues and risk of occurrence before a new land use proceeds or a dispute arises
- Objectively assess the effect of a proposed land use on neighbouring land uses
- Increase the understanding of potential land use conflict to inform and complement development control and buffer requirements
- Highlight or recommend strategies to help minimise the potential for land use conflicts to occur and contribute to the negotiation, proposal, implementation and evaluation of separation strategies.

The guideline identifies the following four key steps to undertake a LUCRA:

1. Gather information about proposed land use change and associated activities
2. Evaluate the risk level of each activity
3. Identify risk reduction management strategies
4. Record LUCRA results.

Council will seek to continue to undertake a comprehensive LUCRA in accordance with DPI's *Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide* when assessing potential land use conflicts. It is recommended the requirement for a LUCRA is included in the TRDCP 2010 to provide clear expectations to developers.

Action 2.1	Update the TRDCP 2010 to include all relevant parts of DPI's <i>Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide</i> (2011, or its update) when assessing potential land uses conflicts.
Action 2.2	Update the TRDCP 2010 to establish appropriate buffer areas and separation distance for a range of rural land uses. This should be consistent with DPI's <i>Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture Interim Guidelines</i> (2018, or its update).
Action 2.3	Advocate for renewable energy and/or extractive industries to be located away from the Tamworth Regional LGA's highest quality agricultural lands in order to retain their use for primary production.
Action 2.4	Implement the Namoi Regional Job Precinct into the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 where applicable to promote intensive agriculture and minimise land use conflicts.
Action 2.5	Investigate expanding the Namoi Regional Job Precinct to include high value agricultural land and established intensive agricultural clusters.

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Focus Area 3: Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages

Tamworth is a hub for regional and inter-state connections, being ideally located on the New England Highway in between Sydney and Brisbane.

Tamworth enjoys direct flights to Sydney and Brisbane, rail services to Newcastle and Sydney, and access to overseas freight.

The efficiency of the region's freight network directly influences productivity, collaboration, growth and access to markets.

Tamworth is positioned along the New England Highway and Manilla Road, which form a key spine north-south, as well as the Oxley Highway, which extends generally east-west (Figure 12). Collectively, these routes serve as key freight routes underpinning the region's economic productivity.

In order to support anticipated population and economic growth in the region, additional transport infrastructure will be required, especially to encourage the growth of emerging agribusiness and renewable energy by providing strong connectivity to logistic and distribution centres.

According to the National Road Transport Association, operational costs for trucking have surged over 20% between 2018 and 2024, driven by cost of diesel, labour and rising interest rates.

This has resulted in significant freight cost increases for primary producers and reduced profit margins for freight companies.

This Rural Lands Strategy aims to support better transport links and infrastructure to connect the region by improving State and regional freight, active and public transport networks, and growing emerging transport technologies.

Council will continue to collaborate with Transport for NSW (TfNSW), EnergyCo and Tamworth Regional Airport to promote transport opportunities, improving regional transport across various modes to enhance connectivity throughout the region.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 20 - Improve state and regional freight connectivity (Strategy 20.1 and 20.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 2 – Create a Prosperous Region (Actions PR3 and PR8)
- Planning Priority 4; Connect Our Region and its Citizens (Actions (CRC1, CRC2, CRC3 and CRC6).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 4 – Facilitate liveable communities
 - Priority 4.3 – Connected communities (Action 4.5).

Tamworth Regional Airport

The Tamworth Regional Airport is an important asset to the Tamworth Regional LGA, providing regionally significant connectivity for residents, visitors and industry.

The airport precinct is also the location of a growing regional centre for aviation and aviation related industries, including flight training, and recreational and tourist aviation activity. The airport is home to Qantaslink, Sigma Aviation, Aviskills, Sydney Flight College, Airspeed Aviation, AirMed, New England Flight Training, Tamworth Aero Club, 310 Squadron Australian Air Force, Civil Aviation Safety Authority Regional Office and the International Flight Training Tamworth pilot training facilities.

The Tamworth Regional Airport currently offers direct flights to Sydney and Brisbane, connecting travellers to international destinations.

Long term growth opportunities may include capacity for international air freight, further connecting local and regional industries to global markets. This would place the Tamworth Regional Airport at the centre of an aviation, logistics and food processing hub for the New England North West.

Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility

The Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility, strategically located within the Tamworth Global Gateway Park adjacent to the Tamworth Regional Airport, provides efficient and convenient conveyance of freight to the ports of Newcastle, Sydney and beyond to global markets.

The Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility opened in March 2024, and is managed by Qube Logistics. The facility was constructed on Council-owned land and required re-commissioning of 5km of the branch line from Tamworth which had been disused for decades.

Rail offers an economical transport option for bulk commodities and reduces heavy vehicle movements from roads and highways. Access to rail unlocks significant efficiency; delivering goods and produce faster and fresher, better connecting producers to broader and larger markets, and expanding opportunity for partnerships and cooperation.

The Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility offers both containerised and bulk transfer opportunities.

The facility has opened up international import and export markets for local businesses and primary producers by providing for the transfer of products and commodities from truck, to rail, and on to global ports.

Western Freight Link

Council is committed to enabling the delivery of the future Western Freight Link on the south-western edge of Tamworth.

The Western Freight Link will provide a bypass for trucks and heavy vehicles, enabling a connection to the New England Highway at Burgmanns Lane and to the Oxley Highway at Country Road.

The link will improve road efficiency and the movement of freight within the Tamworth Regional LGA and wider State network, with significant benefits to regional productivity including greater employment capacity and enhanced connectivity to support agricultural and manufacturing logistics throughout the region.

Eastern Detour

Constructing Tamworth's Eastern Detour will further enhance the function, safety and efficiency of Tamworth's roads, with significant benefit to the broader state network.

The project will connect the southern approach of the New England Highway with the eastern branch at Nemingha, enabling a connection that bypasses the centre of Tamworth.

The delivery of the Eastern Detour is essential to facilitate the development of the NEREZ throughout the wider New England region, enabling the movement of significant infrastructure on road networks outside the city centre.

The Eastern Detour will also provide a substantial improvement to Tamworth's road safety and function, by diverting traffic movements away from the city centre.

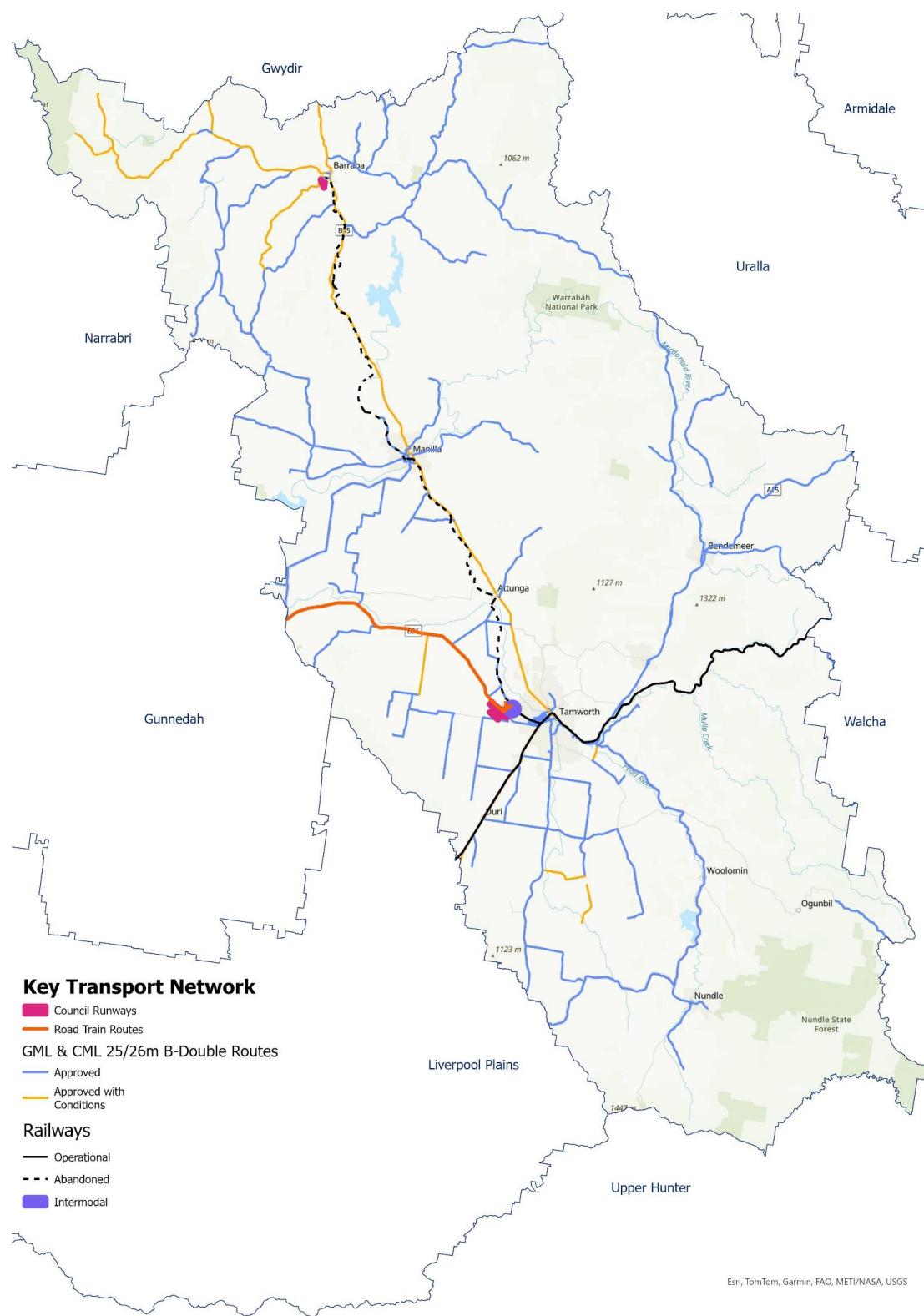


Figure 12: Key transport network.

Action 3.1	Lobby the NSW Government to fund local and regional road projects, such as B-Double and Road Train routes, to strengthen regional transport connections.
Action 3.2	Continue to engage with Transport for NSW to deliver the Western Freight Link to enable freight to move safely and efficiently throughout the region.
Action 3.3	Continue to engage with EnergyCo and Transport for NSW to investigate routes for the Tamworth Eastern Detour with consideration for both the immediate demands of the New England REZ and the long-term connectivity objectives of the Tamworth region and State road network.
Action 3.4	Continue to investigate and protect the Tamworth Regional Airport as a future air freight hub for agricultural produce.
Action 3.5	Identify opportunities for rural industries that may benefit from the Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility including the export of local agricultural products.

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Focus Area 4: Support and diversify the rural economy

Diversifying the rural economy will enable the region to adapt to population growth, extreme weather events and shifting global economies.

Opportunities exist to diversify Tamworth's rural land uses, including agritourism, sports (particularly those related to the equine industry), culture and education.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 3 - Expand agribusiness and food processing sectors (Strategy 3.1 and 3.2)
- Objective 7 - Support a diverse visitor economy (Strategy 7.1 and 7.2)

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 2 – Create a Prosperous Region (Actions PR2, PR4, PR5 and PR6)
- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Actions RC4, RC6 and RC7)
- Planning Priority 5: Design with nature (Action DN7).

Equine Industry

The Tamworth Regional LGA is emerging as a regional centre for equine and equine sports related enterprises. The equine industry is a major and growing contributor to the economy of the Tamworth region, and offers significant opportunity to compatibly diversify the sectors of our rural economy beyond primary production.

The Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC) is a leading multipurpose equine and livestock facility, the largest of its kind in the southern hemisphere. Located on the southern fringe of Tamworth, AELEC is designed to host competitions and events attracting visitors from all over the country.

Each year, the venue attracts:

- 7,000 annual competitors
- 9,000 horses
- 16,000 head of cattle
- 120,000 visitor nights
- Over \$43 million in economic contribution to the NSW economy.

AELEC operates 365 days of the year, with events occupying AELEC for an average of 320 days of the year during 2022-2023, an average utilisation rate of 88%.

To the south of Tamworth is a growing cluster of equine enterprises and other equine related land uses. These are primarily occurring on approximately 10ha lots within close proximity to the AELEC, on generally flat or gently undulating land with fertile soils.

Equine related activities, horse studs and the like represent a complementary land use within the rural surrounds of Tamworth, contributing high quality scenic rural character, job creation, tourism and recreational opportunities, and attracting national and international investment.

Council will look to continue to support the growth of equine related uses in the Tamworth Regional LGA by identifying and rezoning land suitable for equine industry expansion, including the delivery of additional 10ha lots in strategic locations, supporting the industry to be retained and encouraged to grow within the region.

Tourism

Tourism plays an important role in the Tamworth Regional LGA's economy with attractions including festivals, sporting events, restaurants, museums and galleries.

The Tamworth Country Music Festival attracts more than 50,000 festival goers each year and the region is regarded as a major inland sports capital.

The tourist economy is a key focus for economic growth and prosperity in the region, and opportunities exist for further growth within this sector, particularly growth in agritourism for our productive rural lands.

Promoting the growth of the tourist industry and attracting diverse visitors and businesses to the region will also require well planned infrastructure, services and safety measures to ensure sustainable growth.

The growth of the tourist industry must be carefully considered so as to not negatively impact the productivity and liveability of rural lands, and mitigate the potential for land use conflict.

Agribusiness & Agritourism

Agribusiness and agritourism are key sectors that will help to diversify the region's economy, promoting employment and economic resilience.

Agribusiness includes industries such as food and fibre production, agrichemicals, seed supply, farm machinery wholesale and distribution, freight, logistics, processing, marketing and retail sales.

Chicken meat production and processing is the largest intensive agribusiness employer in the region and is centred around the Baiada processing plant in Tamworth.

Agritourism and small-scale agricultural development in the region contribute to a diverse and unique tourist offering, and may include food and wine trails, farm stays, farmers markets, and farm gate experiences.

These offerings can support the recovery and resilience of agribusinesses, growing the region's economy, attracting tourists and promoting job creation.

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPCI) has recently introduced clear

planning terms for agritourism-related activities. These include:

- **farm gate premises** where visitors interact with produce from the farm, such as through fruit picking, sales, tastings, workshops and cafés.
- **farm experience premises** where visitors can experience life on a farm, including tours, horse riding, weddings, functions and retreats.
- **farm stay accommodation** which includes camping, caravanning and glamping.

DPHI has enabled fast-track planning pathways for agritourism, including introducing new standards to enable exempt and complying development, and has enabled agritourism to be permitted with consent in all RU1 Primary Production and RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land use zones.

Recreation

There are significant sporting facilities within the Tamworth Regional LGA, including the AELEC, an indoor sports dome, athletics facilities, a velodrome, netball courts, and hockey fields.

The AELEC attracts visitors regionally and nationally, as well as having strong links with local farming communities. The *Blueprint 100 - Part 1* outlines the opportunity to position Tamworth as a regional leisure and sports destination.

Education

The New England North West region has a strong education sector, based around the University of New England (UNE) and TAFE NSW, as well as ongoing demand for skilled labour.

UNE offers numerous animal science and agriculture-related degrees and short courses. According to the university, the proposed new UNE Tamworth Central campus (expected to open in 2027) will provide access and study facilities for the entire catalogue of courses offered by UNE, where students may choose to access a mixture of learning online and face to face.

In addition, UNE has been working closely with the Tamworth community to develop academic programs that will be delivered in place, supported by market research and planning. Two short courses have already been developed in response to requests for equine-focused offerings.

The Tamworth Regional LGA's prime agricultural lands and robust industries have attracted a number of other agriculture-related educational and research establishments. These include the Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, Australia's only selective agricultural day and boarding school for boys, and DPI's Tamworth Agricultural Institute, a principal research institute dedicated to ensuring agricultural industries and rural communities remain economically viable and sustainable.

Council will look to continue to support the growth, innovation and economic diversification presented by the agricultural education sector in the Tamworth Regional LGA, facilitating operational needs, encouraging opportunity and collaboration, and ensuring well planned growth and compatible land uses.

Renewable Energy

The NEREZ is in the early stages of planning by the NSW Government, and the Tamworth Regional LGA is partly located within the zone (Figure 13).

The NEREZ will contribute to the diversification of land uses occurring in our rural lands, presenting many opportunities and some challenges as it is developed across the region.

The NEREZ is expected to deliver up to \$24 billion in private sector investment and support around 2,000 operational jobs and 6,000 construction jobs. This development is also expected to bring a large influx of workers and families to the area, potentially within a relatively short timeframe, which may present challenges such as additional strain on the housing market, local infrastructure and services.

In order to leverage the opportunities of investment from the NEREZ, the Tamworth Regional LGA needs upfront strategic planning that will ensure it can attract complementary land uses and industries, accommodate a short term influx in workers, and mitigate any potential land use conflict or incompatibilities to continue to support the diverse and valuable range of activities that occur throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Mining

The Tamworth Regional LGA borders one of the largest coal basins in the country at Gunnedah. Growth in extractive industries will continue to be anticipated throughout the region into the future, and mining is expected to remain one of the key industries of the region's economy.

Manilla is a commuting base for miners and their families due to the town's proximity to a number of mines. Ensuring that Manilla and surrounding areas can accommodate demand for housing and infrastructure as a result of mining activities is a key consideration for Council, and includes providing and maintaining a high quality of life for residents, ensuring the provision of key services and amenities, and continuing to attract and diversify the economy to support employment and opportunity into the future.

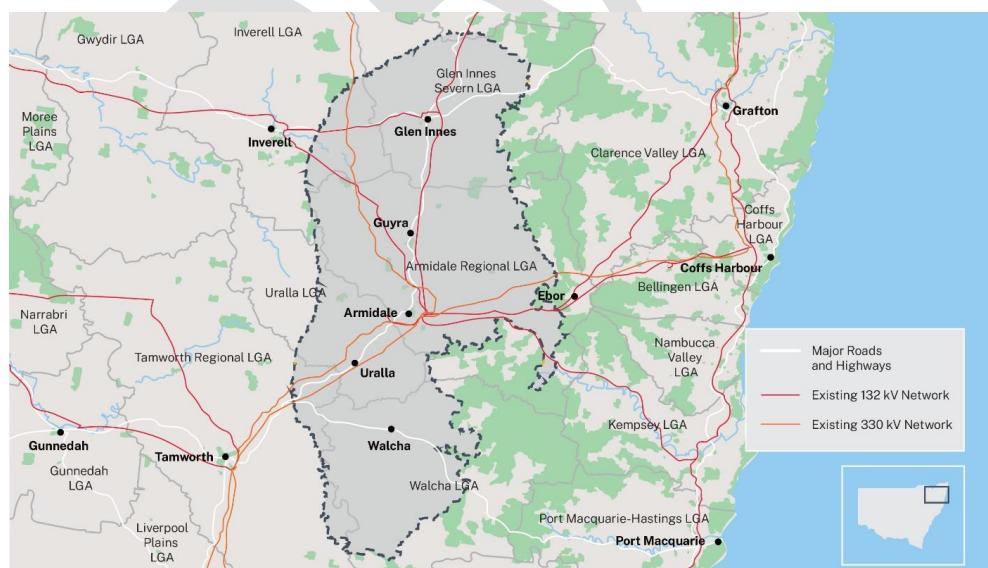


Figure 13: New England Renewable Energy Zone (NEREZ).

Action 4.1	Promote attractions to encourage growth in key tourism market segments such as food and agritourism, farm-stay, or experience-based holidaymaking.
Action 4.2	Strengthen innovation and industry diversification throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA, by exploring new avenues for support through partnerships and funding with TAFE NSW and Universities.

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Focus Area 5: Support rural housing in the right locations

Providing a diverse range of suitable housing is essential to balancing growth and meeting the needs of the Tamworth community.

In order to achieve this, a mix of dwelling types, sizes and locations needs to be delivered, and this will include well-planned infill and greenfield housing, as well as some housing in rural areas. This will support a diversity of housing choice for the region's population now and into the future.

Rural zones in the Tamworth Regional LGA support agriculture, industry and employment, as well as lifestyle and residential opportunities.

Housing in rural areas can, however, increase the potential for land use conflict and may undermine some of Council's other important objectives for rural lands, such as those relating to agriculture, biodiversity or scenic value. With considered planning, the delivery of rural housing can avoid conflict with other important rural land uses.

Enabling some housing in appropriate rural areas will support diverse housing choice, such as enabling older people to be comfortably housed as they age.

Housing for the region's seasonal and itinerant workers will be another essential consideration to support ongoing agricultural industry and major projects under construction. An undersupply of accommodation options for such workers could result in upward pressure on rents, and health and safety concerns from overcrowding and makeshift housing.

Council will continue to balance the delivery of housing in rural areas with careful consideration for orderly development, the provision of services and infrastructure, the preservation of key rural industries, and the mitigation of potential land use conflict.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 13 - Provide well located housing options to meet demand (Strategy 13.2 and 13.3).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 1: Facilitate Smart Residential Growth and Housing Choices (Actions SG1 and SG5)
- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Action RC2)

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 1 – Provide for sustainable growth that is supported by infrastructure (Action 1.5)
- Priority 2: Increasing diversity and choice in housing (Actions 2.5 and 2.6)
- Priority 5: Promote Rural Communities (Actions 5.1 and 5.4).

Rural Residential Development

Rural residential lands typically contain low density dwellings in rural or urban fringe areas. In the Tamworth Regional LGA, rural residential is principally zoned R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha.

The delivery of rural residential housing requires careful and considered planning to ensure that development avoids land use conflict and minimises potentially detrimental urban sprawl.

Future development of any residential areas requires careful consideration of key infrastructure requirements to support the community, including potential connections to water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure.

Subdivision of areas currently zoned for rural residential development in the Tamworth Regional LGA has been limited, particularly in the Tamworth hinterlands (areas around Hallsville/Moore Creek, Moonbi Hinterland, Tintinhull/Daruka and Piallamore/Nundle Road).

The primary constraint to this development is the cost-prohibitive requirement for reticulated town water to be provided to R5 Large Lot Residential areas with a 2ha minimum lot size.

It is recommended that in order to unlock housing within close proximity to existing services and amenities, requirements for reticulated water in the R5 Large Lot Residential zone with a 2ha minimum lot size is removed from the TRDCP 2010.

Exceptions to this update would include the Daruka locality, which have been previously identified for revised minimum lot size to 5ha due to the significant impracticality of supplying town water to these areas, with constraints including existing community water schemes, vegetation, bushfire prone land and significant topography.

Figure 9, Figure 10 and Figure 11 set out proposed land use planning amendments to rural residential development in the Daruka, Kootingal/Moonbi, Nundle and Loomberah areas.

Dwelling Entitlements

A 'dwelling entitlement' refers to the ability for a landowner to build a dwelling on a lot. If the lot area is the same or larger than the prescribed minimum lot size, it is considered that there is a dwelling entitlement.

Not all properties in rural zones have the entitlement to build a dwelling. Where the size of the lot is equal to or greater than the relevant minimum lot size development standard, a dwelling entitlement is assumed to exist.

Clause 4.2B of the TRLEP 2010 outlines standards for the construction of dwellings on land zoned RU1 Primary Production, RU4 Primary Production Small Lots and RU6 Transition.

The clause requires that development consent must not be granted for a dwelling on land in such zones, unless the land is:

- a lot that is at least the specified minimum lot size
- an existing holding
- a lot on which the construction of a dwelling house was permissible under previous relevant environmental planning instruments such as the *Barraba Local Environmental Plan 1990*, *Manilla Local Environmental Plan 1988*, *Nundle Local Environmental Plan 2000*, *Parry Local Environmental Plan 1987* or *Tamworth Local Environmental Plan 1996*.

Despite being on lots that are smaller than the prescribed minimum lot size, some lots in the Tamworth Regional LGA are eligible for a dwelling entitlement due to an existing holding.

These historical dwelling entitlements can result in 'ad hoc' development in rural areas, fragment the rural landscape, introduce sensitive receptors, and undermine strategic planning objectives, increasing the potential for land use conflict and uncertainty by introducing incompatible land uses into rural areas.

The report *Improving the Prospects for Agriculture and Regional Australia in the NSW Planning System*, prepared by the NSW Agriculture Commissioner, found that the potential for dwellings to pop up randomly throughout rural zones due to historical settings presents a real risk to effective local strategic planning. The continued use of these dwelling entitlements has seen adverse outcomes for agriculture and the integrity of the planning system generally. Not only are

more sensitive receptors introduced to the rural landscape, but agricultural assets can be impaired.

It is recommended that the TRLEP 2010 is updated to include a three (3) year sunset provision whereby the dwelling entitlement on vacant existing holdings below the minimum lot size would lapse.

agricultural land, including the proposed Namoi RJP and by controlling the size and location of any secondary dwelling in a rural area.

Secondary Dwellings

In November 2024, Council prepared a planning proposal to amend the TRLEP 2010 to permit the construction of secondary dwellings with consent in areas of RU1 Primary Production and RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land uses zones that are outside of the proposed Namoi RJP, as shown in Figure 14.

The intended outcome of this amendment was to:

- Increase housing diversity in rural areas in a manner that is unlikely to have a significant impact on agricultural lands or primary production
- Support primary producers by providing additional options for succession planning and ageing in place.

The option to construct secondary dwellings on rural lands could enable residents to retain family, community and cultural connections. While housing in urban centres will be a suitable option for many due to proximity to services, many rural areas of the Tamworth Regional LGA are also well serviced by rural communities.

The definition of a secondary dwelling under the TRLEP 2010 requires that it can only be undertaken in conjunction with another dwelling (the principal dwelling). Therefore, a secondary dwelling does not introduce a new residential land use into a rural area. Rather, the residential land use already exists (the principal dwelling) and the secondary dwelling is a small-scale intensification.

Land use conflict for secondary dwellings will also be managed through clause 5.5 of the TRLEP 2010, including that:

- Secondary dwellings must not exceed either 130sqm or 25% of the total floor area of the principal dwelling (whichever is the greater)
- The distance between the secondary dwelling and the principal dwelling must not exceed 100m.

The potential for land use conflict on important agricultural land is to be minimised by directing secondary dwellings away from identified important

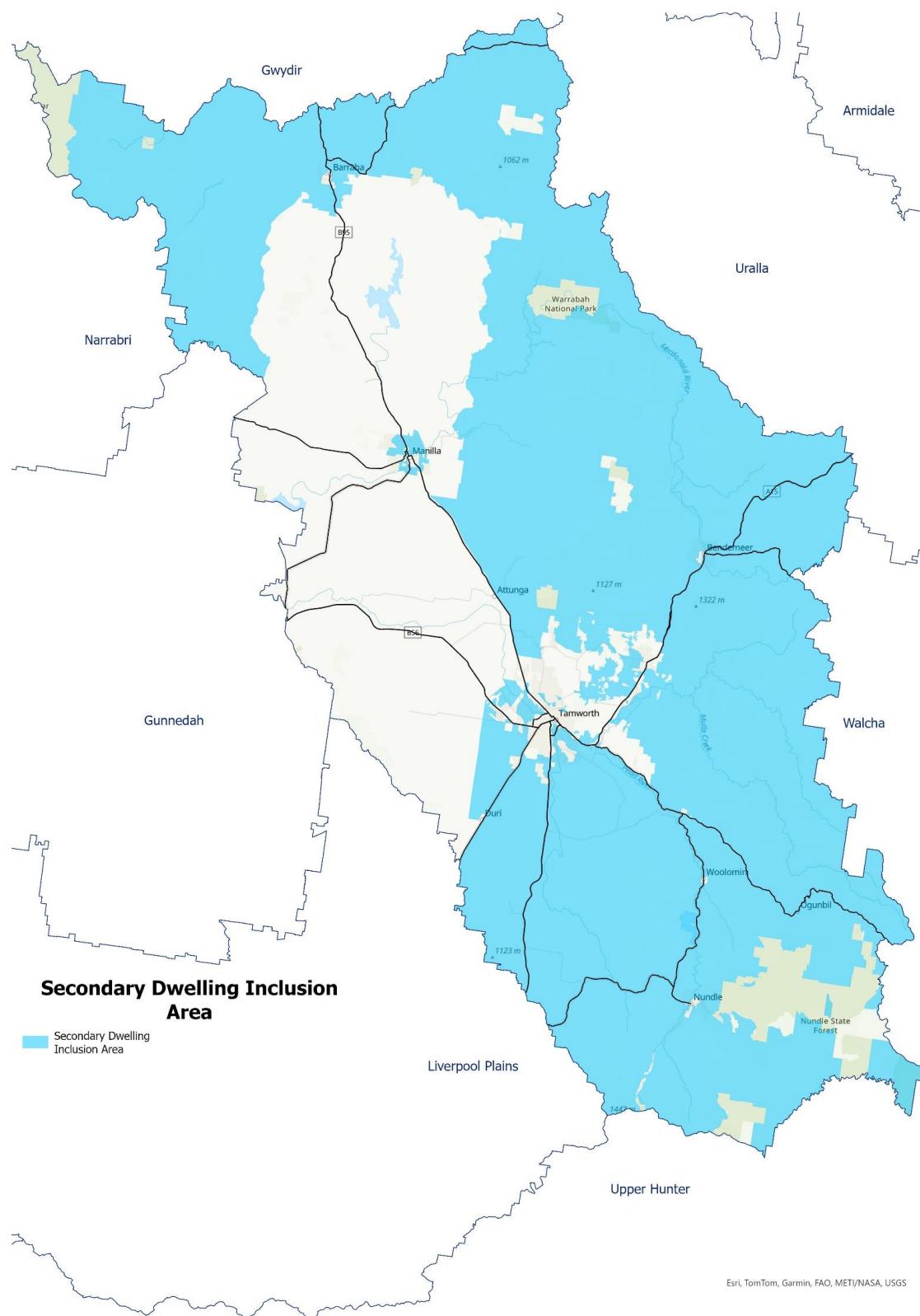


Figure 14: Secondary dwelling inclusion zone.

Temporary Worker Accommodation

The regional city of Tamworth is a major centre of service and manufacturing for agriculture, mining, housing, commercial and industrial industries within the New England North West region.

As a result, the Tamworth Regional LGA experiences large influxes of workers each year, many on a temporary basis. In the Tamworth Regional LGA, this can include seasonal workers associated with the region's agricultural and manufacturing industries, temporary visa holders associated with food processing, mining workforce from extractive industries occurring in nearby LGAs, and construction workers associated with major projects underway throughout the region.

Demand for temporary worker accommodation is expected to increase substantially with the anticipated influx of construction workers associated with the NEREZ, which covers part of the Tamworth Regional LGA and the ongoing expansion of food processing facilities such as the under-construction Baiada Oakburn processing plant.

An insufficient supply of accommodation for temporary or seasonal workers can put upward pressure on housing rental markets and risks overcrowding or makeshift housing. Whilst temporary workers can use motels, short stay accommodation, boarding houses, hostels, or caravan parks, this is a less than desirable outcome as it competes and puts pressure on the visitor and tourism economy which are large economic drivers for the Tamworth region.

Providing temporary worker accommodation with access to the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural areas will support the region's regular influxes of seasonal and itinerant workers.

The NSW Government published a draft *Temporary and Seasonal Workers' Accommodation Toolkit* in August 2023. The Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy recommends collaboration with DPHI to identify local solutions for temporary workers accommodation. The timely and sufficient coordination of temporary and seasonal workers accommodation, particularly in renewable energy and agricultural areas, is a key priority of Council to ensure sufficient accommodation is made available to safely support worker needs.

- **Temporary workers accommodation** is a place of residency for individuals employed on a short-term, periodic or seasonal basis.

- **Rural workers accommodation** is housing (usually permanent) that is provided on a farm on a year-round or seasonal basis for agricultural or rural workers on that land.

In January 2025, the NSW Government announced reforms to fast-track housing for construction workers in renewable energy zones. These reforms permit temporary worker accommodation in all residential zones, and in some non-residential zones, including rural zones near renewable energy infrastructure or business zones with convenient amenities and transport links.

Council will continue to collaborate with DPHI and key industry stakeholders to enable temporary worker accommodation in suitable locations across the Tamworth Regional LGA. This will include preparation of a temporary workers accommodation strategy.

Action 5.1	Permit secondary dwellings in certain rural lands to support housing diversity in rural areas in a manner that is unlikely to have a significant impact on agricultural lands or primary production.
Action 5.2	Update the TRDCP 2010 to remove the requirement for the provision of reticulated water in the R5 Large Lot Residential Zone with a 2ha minimum lot size, with the exception of the Daruka locality, to unlock housing within close proximity to existing amenities and services.
Action 5.3	Include a three (3) year sunset provision in the TRLEP 2010 whereby the dwelling entitlement on vacant existing holdings and rural and conservations lots below the current minimum lot size would lapse.
Action 5.4	Prepare a Temporary Workforce Accommodation Strategy to support the rural industries and NEREZ.

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Focus Area 6: Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural communities offer unique local character and lifestyle attractions, set within distinctive scenic landscapes.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is home to a number of lively rural communities, including Barraba, Bendemeer, Hanging Rock, Kootingal, Manilla, Moonbi, Nemingha and Nundle. Many other rural villages are located across the region.

These centres importantly provide essential goods, services and amenities for their communities and for the surrounding rural populations.

The rural communities also support a diverse range of rural industries, such as the emergence of a distinct 'poultry precinct' at Manilla.

Council will continue to work towards ensuring that our rural communities are attractive and connected, with good access to services, infrastructure and amenity, and thriving economies.

Retaining and celebrating local character is important as places evolve, enabling more compatible and sustainable development, contributing to quality of life for residents, and attracting investment. Community values and ambitions for the future character of a place can be at the heart of creating unique, locally recognisable places.

A sense of place can be created through celebrating the regions distinctive features and unique character, such as historic buildings or cultural assets.

Place-based planning and local character statements can identify and support the needs of rural communities, and can ensure that new development complements local landscapes and styles.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan

- Objective 17 - Celebrate local character
Strategy 17.1 - Ensure strategic planning and local plans recognise and enhance local character through use of local character statements in local plans and in accordance with the NSW Government's Local Character and Place Guideline.

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS

- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Action RC1).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 4 – Facilitate liveable communities
 - Priority 4.1 Urban design enhances liveability (Action 4.1).

Growth in Rural Communities

Encouraging sustainable growth can foster attractive and resilient places, allowing for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural communities to preserve unique local values while making the most out of local investment and opportunity.

Supporting the strength, local character and economic viability of these important towns is an essential part of ensuring that the Tamworth rural communities are diverse, inclusive and resilient.

Land use planning changes have been proposed in Focus Area 1 of this Strategy that will support growth around Attunga, Kootingal, Moonbi and Nundle.

The communities of Bendemeer, Manilla and Barraba have historically experienced low demand for development; however, they are uniquely placed to take advantage of future growth associated with the proposed New England Renewable Energy Zone (Bendemeer) and Namoi Regional Jobs Precinct (Manilla and Barraba). This growth may be residential (e.g. workforce accommodation) or commercial (logistics, manufacturing and support industries).

To this end, a high-level constraints mapping of land zoned RU4 Primary Production Small Lots within 2km of these communities has been undertaken. A 2km distance is appropriate as it provides both proximity to services for residential development or separation (if required) for an emerging industry.

The purpose of this review is to identify indicative constraints in consideration of proximity to watercourses (e.g. pollution, flooding), proximity to Council infrastructure, the need for separation from the proposed Namoi RJP, presence of large vegetation communities and bush fire protection.

Lands that are indicatively unconstrained may be more suitable for investigation by developers in the first instance, noting that more detailed studies would need to be undertaken to support a Development Application or Planning Proposal.

These High level Constraints Analysis maps are included as Figure 15, Figure 16 and Figure 17.

Renewable Energy

The Tamworth Regional LGA is experiencing a high level of renewable energy projects, many located outside the NEREZ. These projects have the potential to not only impact communities in close proximity, but also create significant lasting impacts on the wider Tamworth region.

Many renewable energy projects are accompanied with a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) wherein the proponent agrees to provide public amenities or infrastructure, dedicate land at no cost, make monetary contributions, or offer other material public benefits for a public purpose.

Renewable Energy VPAs are essential for capturing public benefits beyond the traditional infrastructure contributions system and can ensure that affected local communities receive direct social, environmental and economic benefits from projects in their area.

In December 2023, Council adopted the *Tamworth Regional Council Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy for Renewable Energy Projects*. However, in November 2024, DPHI developed the *Renewable Energy Planning Framework* (Renewable Energy Framework) to assist the State's transition to renewable energy.

In order to leverage the opportunities of investment from renewable energy projects, Council intends to update its existing a Renewable Energy Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy to establish a clear framework for Council when negotiating and implementing Renewable Energy VPAs with proponents of renewable energy projects.

The policy will seek to ensure that both rural communities within and outside the NEREZ benefit from renewable energy projects and funds collected as part of the Policy will be used to deliver community infrastructure and benefits to rural communities.

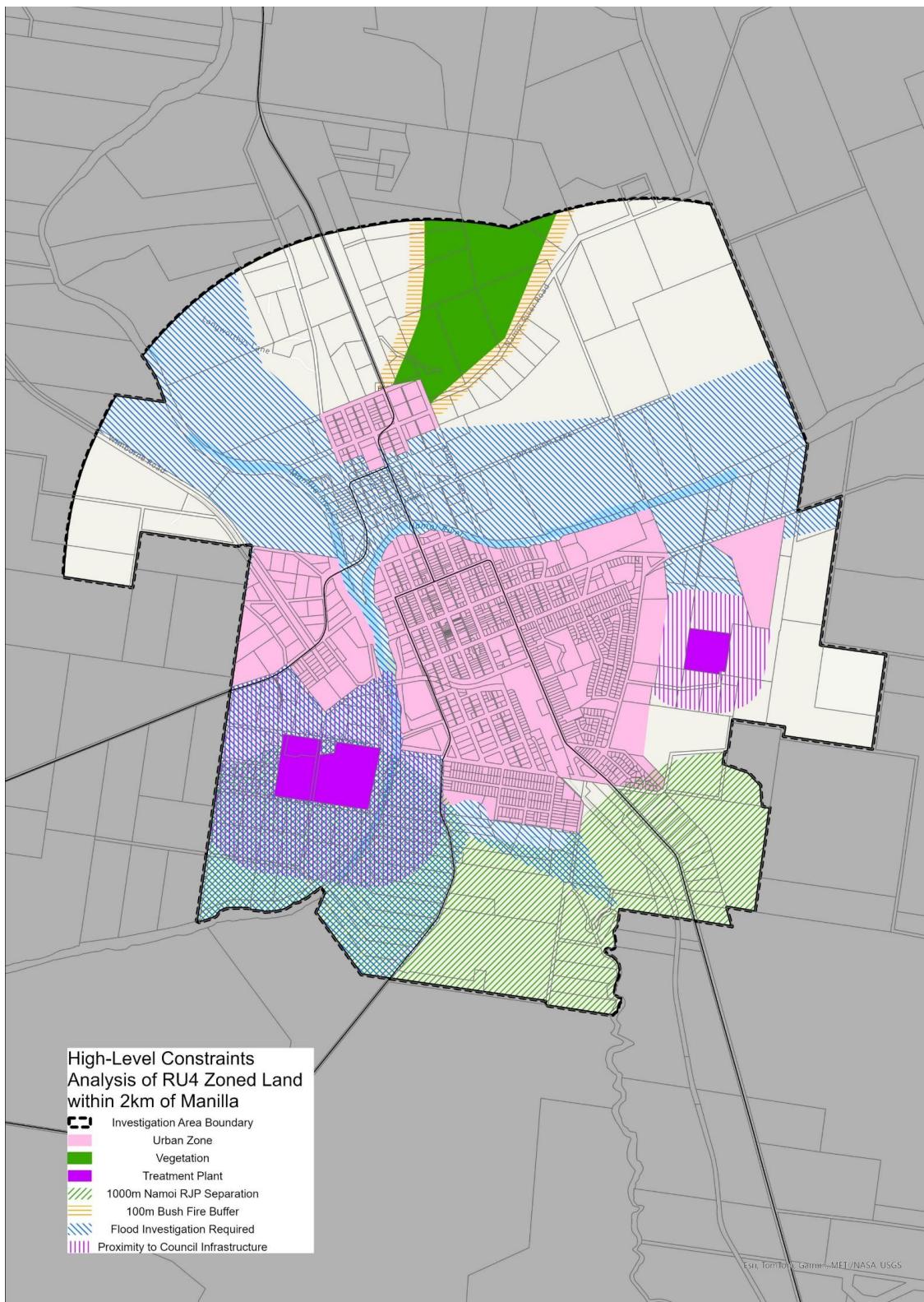


Figure 15: High level constraints map - Manilla.

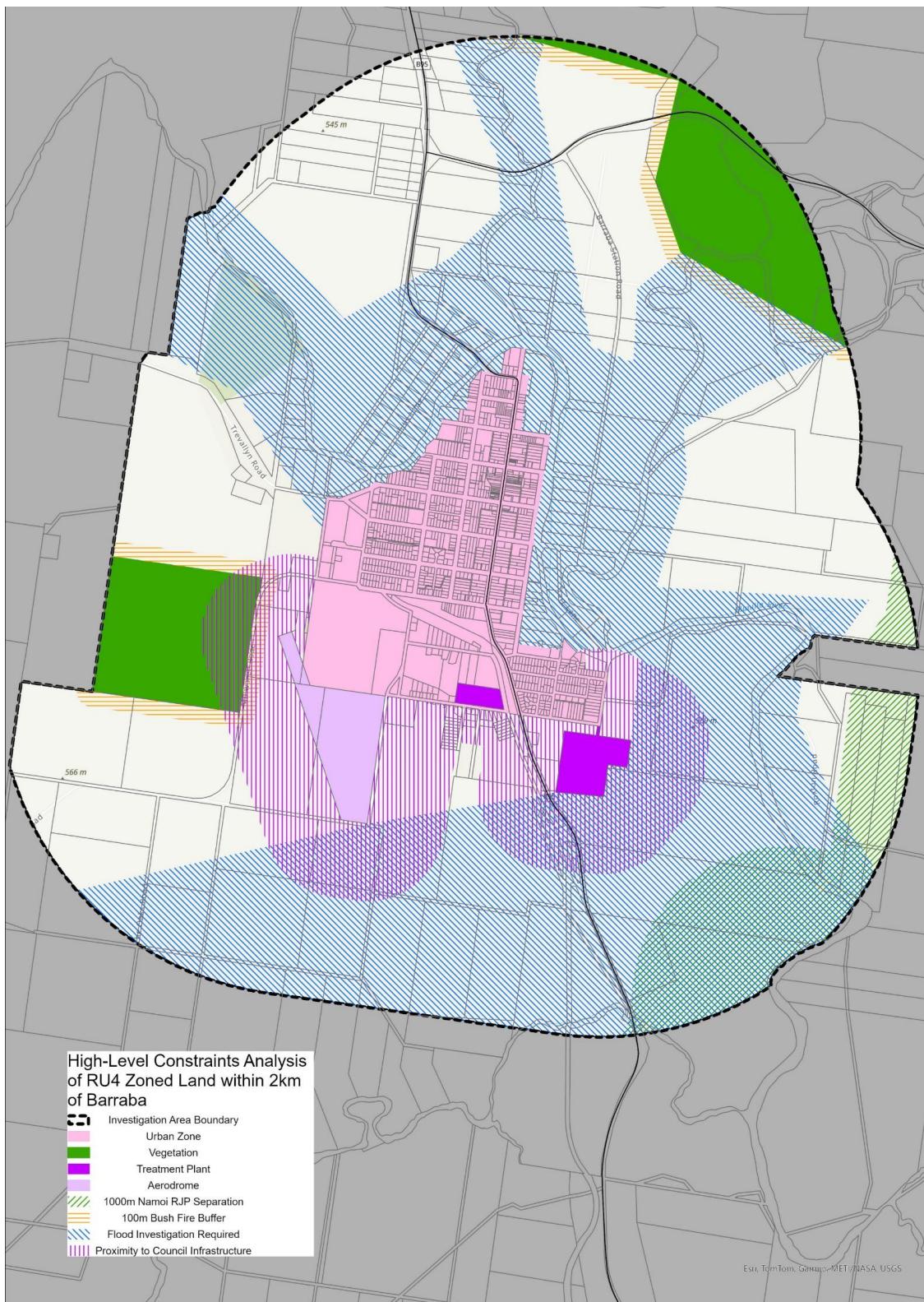


Figure 16: High level constraints map - Barraba.

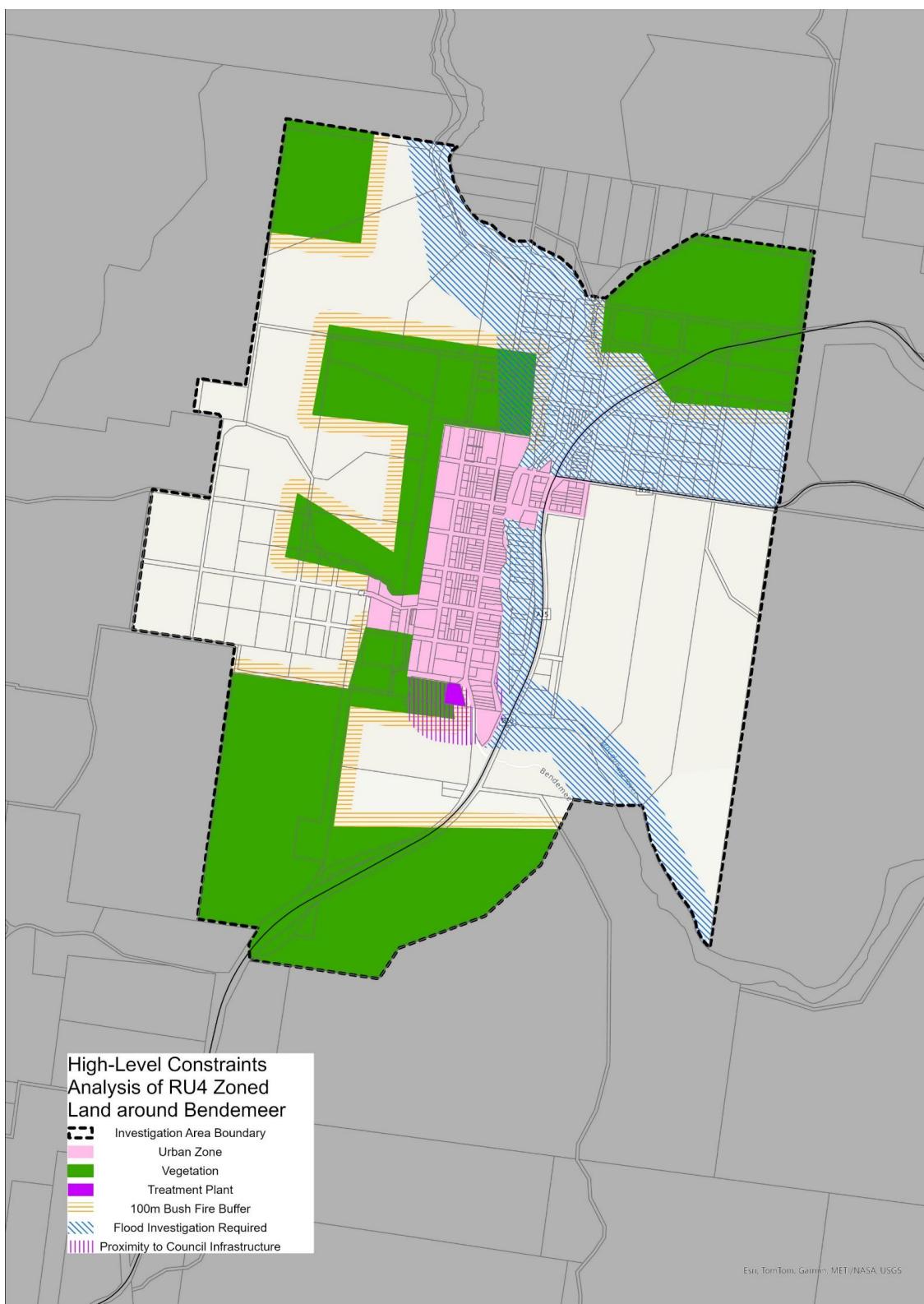


Figure 17: High level constraints map - Bendemeer.

Action 6.1

Implement place-making opportunities that enhance local character, reinforce a sense of community and foster growth in our small towns and villages (e.g. storytelling, public art, street greening, shared spaces, and safe and sustainable design principles).

Action 6.2

Continue to monitor future growth opportunities for Manilla, Barraba and Bendemeer in consideration of the high level constraints map.

Action 6.3

Update Council's existing Renewable Energy Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy to provide a clear framework for negotiating and implementing Renewable Energy Planning Agreements within Tamworth Regional LGA.

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Focus Area 7: Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas

The Tamworth Regional LGA is highly valued for its attractive scenic landscapes, rich biodiversity and significant cultural heritage. These qualities contribute to our local identity and liveability.

The design of new development proposed for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural areas is to be complementary to the surrounding setting and rural character, as the introduction of incompatible development has the potential to degrade local landscapes.

It is therefore essential that Council continue to assess and better understand the Tamworth Regional LGA's rich biodiversity, scenic and heritage assets, to inform land use planning and strengthen controls to protect and retain these values.

Preserving such assets can have significant benefits to the economy of our rural communities, supporting place-making efforts, enhancing tourism offerings, and creating distinct local character and community identity.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 12 - Protect regional biodiversity and areas of High Environmental Value (Strategy 12.1, 12.5 and 12.6)
- Objective 15 - Understand, respect and integrate Aboriginal culture and heritage.
- Objective 17 – Celebrate local character (Strategy 17.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 3: Building Resilient Communities (Action RC3)
- Planning Priority 5: Design with nature (Action DN3)
- Planning Priority 6: Celebrate culture and heritage (Actions C&H1, C&H2 and C&H2).

Environmental Value and Biodiversity

The Tamworth Regional LGA has lands of high environmental value and ecological diversity, including national parks, conservation areas and biodiversity corridors. These environments make the Tamworth Regional LGA a great place to live.

However, the impacts of some industry, urban sprawl and land clearing can threaten important assets and ecosystems.

Progressing biodiversity mapping, on both public and private land, is a key priority of this Rural Lands Strategy to protect land with high environmental values and biodiversity from potentially detrimental future development.

Biodiversity Baseline Study

In 2023, Council commenced a Biodiversity Baseline Study to help monitor the Tamworth Regional LGA's local environment now and into the future.

The study is well underway, and once completed, will present a snapshot of key species and habitats across the Tamworth Regional LGA, including communities or individual sightings of native flora and fauna.

Following is a snapshot of some of the initial findings of Phase 1 of the Biodiversity Baseline Study.

- The north-eastern quarter of the Tamworth Regional LGA (along the western escarpment of the New England Tableland) is a refuge for rare and threatened species, particularly woodland birds.
- Areas around Bendemeer contain high value habitats and strong biodiversity connectivity, including large wetlands with endangered ecological communities. The Macdonald River also forms an important corridor supporting platypus and threatened Bell's Turtles.
- The area between Hanging Rock and Niangala supports three threatened ecological communities and threatened species such as Koalas, Squirrel Glider, and Southern Greater Glider as well as the only populations of the Critically Endangered Dungowan Star Bush.
- Areas around Dungowan, Limbri, Weabonga, Mulla Mulla Creek and Winton have significant native wildlife habitat for several rare and declining species, including many woodland birds.

- The Dungowan – Ogunbil – Woolomin area is likely to support a significant Koala population. Ogunbil in particular contains areas of large and connected bushland, and a diversity of forest ecosystems with suitable habitat for a number of threatened species.
- The Tamworth Regional LGA supports large areas of very high quality critically endangered Box Gum Grassy Woodland, particularly in areas around Dungowan and Ogunbil.

Figure 18 provides an indication of the location of the highest quality biodiversity land.

Once the Biodiversity Baseline Study is completed, mapped areas of high biodiversity value may be managed via the introduction of a terrestrial biodiversity clause in the TRLEP 2010 with objectives to protect valuable fauna and flora, protect ecological processes, and encourage conservation practices.

Scenic Protection

The Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands are highly valued for their attractive scenic qualities, which contribute significantly to the identity and character of the region.

The protection of scenic landscapes not only enhances appreciation of rural lands, but can also enhance local heritage, culture and character.

Some industry, urban sprawl and modern infrastructure can degrade valuable scenic landscapes. The construction of solar and wind farms and associated infrastructure within the developing NEREZ has the potential to impact the character of our scenic rural lands.

It is therefore a key priority of Council to identify and protect Tamworth's scenic rural vistas, to ensure the successful and compatible growth of the NEREZ and preserve important scenic qualities now and into the future.

Tamworth Lookout and Surrounding Hills

The Tamworth Lookout and surrounding hills, including Flagstaff Mountain, Bald Hill, Daves Hill and Mount Daruka provide a significant scenic backdrop to the Tamworth City and surrounding rural residential areas. They contain significant native vegetation that contributes to the picturesque views both towards and from the hills. The prominence of these hills behind Tamworth City, commonly known as the Wentworth

Mounds, is an important tourism feature for the region.

Moonbi Hills

The New England Highway between Bendemeer and Moonbi is a scenic tourist drive involving a significant change in elevation (350 metres), bounded by a mountain range that rises to approximately 1300 metres. This unique landscape provides impressive views for traffic along the New England Highway. In addition to the visual landscape, this mountain range contains significant native vegetation which contributes to the biodiversity of the region.

Liverpool Range and Mount Royal Range around Nundle and Hanging Rock

The Liverpool Range and Mount Royal Range around the villages of Nundle and Hanging Rock, including the massive face of the quintessential Hanging Rock, are known for their natural beauty. The significant change in elevation (up to 600m) between Nundle and Hanging Rock offers a dramatic change in the landscape and provides panoramic views both towards the range (from Nundle) and from the range (from Hanging Rock Lookout). These views are enhanced by the amount of native vegetation and biodiversity along the hills.

The presence of the mountains and ridgelines provides a sense of place and identity for both the Nundle and Hanging Rock villages. In addition, both Nundle and Hanging Rock are popular tourist destinations for visitors all year round with the scenic landscape a significant attraction for visitors.

Dungowan

Undulating grazing hills that rise to mountain ranges create unique natural landscapes across the Dungowan Valley. The area offers distinct rural character, containing some of the Tamworth Regional LGA's most fertile agricultural lands, as well as a number of historic buildings located in a rural setting.

Potential RU2 Rural Landscape Zone

Land in rural areas of NSW with specific ecological and scenic landscape qualities can be managed within the RU2 Rural Landscape land use zone.

The standard objectives of the RU2 Rural Landscape zone are:

- To encourage sustainable primary industry production by maintaining and enhancing the natural resource base.
- To maintain the rural landscape character of the land.
- To provide for a range of compatible land uses, including extensive agriculture.

Currently, the Tamworth Regional LGA does not utilise the RU2 Rural Landscape zone. However, this zone could be implemented in areas of identified high scenic value, such as those discussed above, to better protect rural lands from inappropriate development, help to mitigate adverse visual impacts and differentiate it from productive agricultural land.

Council has identified preliminary areas of high scenic amenity in the Tamworth Regional LGA as shown in Figure 19. These areas include visually prominent and/or vegetated landscapes and ridgelines. However, it is recommended that a detailed Scenic Landscapes Study is prepared for the Tamworth Regional LGA to best identify and characterise key areas of scenic value. Once identified, areas of high scenic amenity may be rezoned as RU2 Rural Landscape in order to formalise their protection and/or be managed via the introduction of a scenic protection clause in the TRLEP 2010 with objectives to protect the environmental and scenic amenity of land that is of high scenic value.

Heritage Values

There are over 540 heritage listed buildings or places in the Tamworth Regional LGA, including many throughout our rural lands (Figure 20). These may include buildings, farmyard structures, trees, views, and cultural landscapes.

Much development and growth on rural land is governed by large industry or state government. It is therefore essential to consult and collaborate with the rural and aboriginal communities in order to protect important heritage assets.

Council has developed the *Innovative Reconciliation Action Plan 2018-2020* to respect and promote Aboriginal culture and engage Aboriginal members of the community in all matters affecting the region.

The *Tamworth Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study* is well underway, and once completed, will identify known Aboriginal cultural values sites and assist in Council's assessment of impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage values in planning decision-making. An

outcome of the Study includes that places identified with high heritage significance will be included in Schedule 5 of the TRLEP 2010.

Preserving our built and natural heritage is a key priority to ensuring the Tamworth Regional LGA remains a vibrant, distinct and desirable place.

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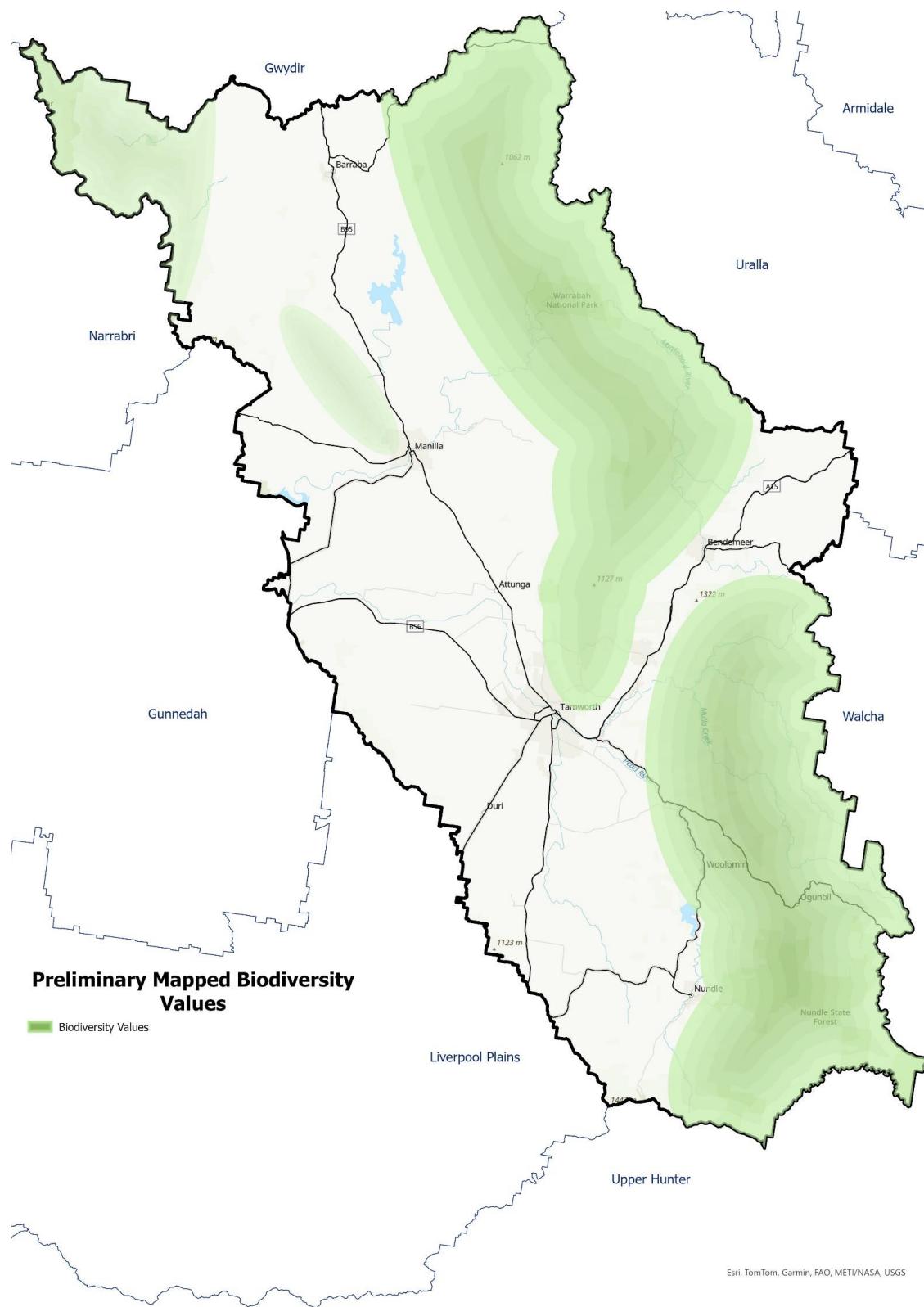


Figure 18: Preliminary mapped biodiversity values.

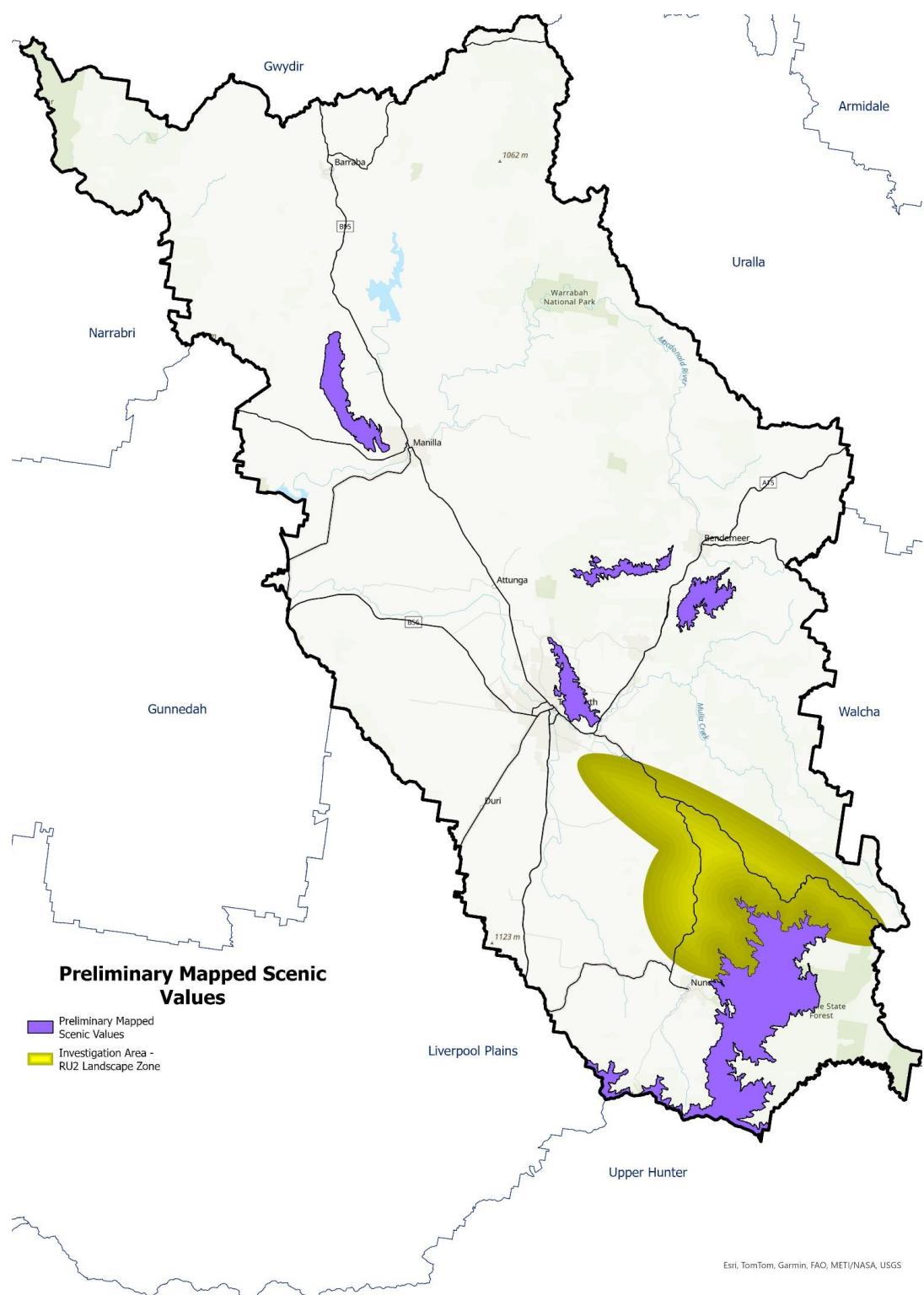


Figure 19: Preliminary mapped scenic values.

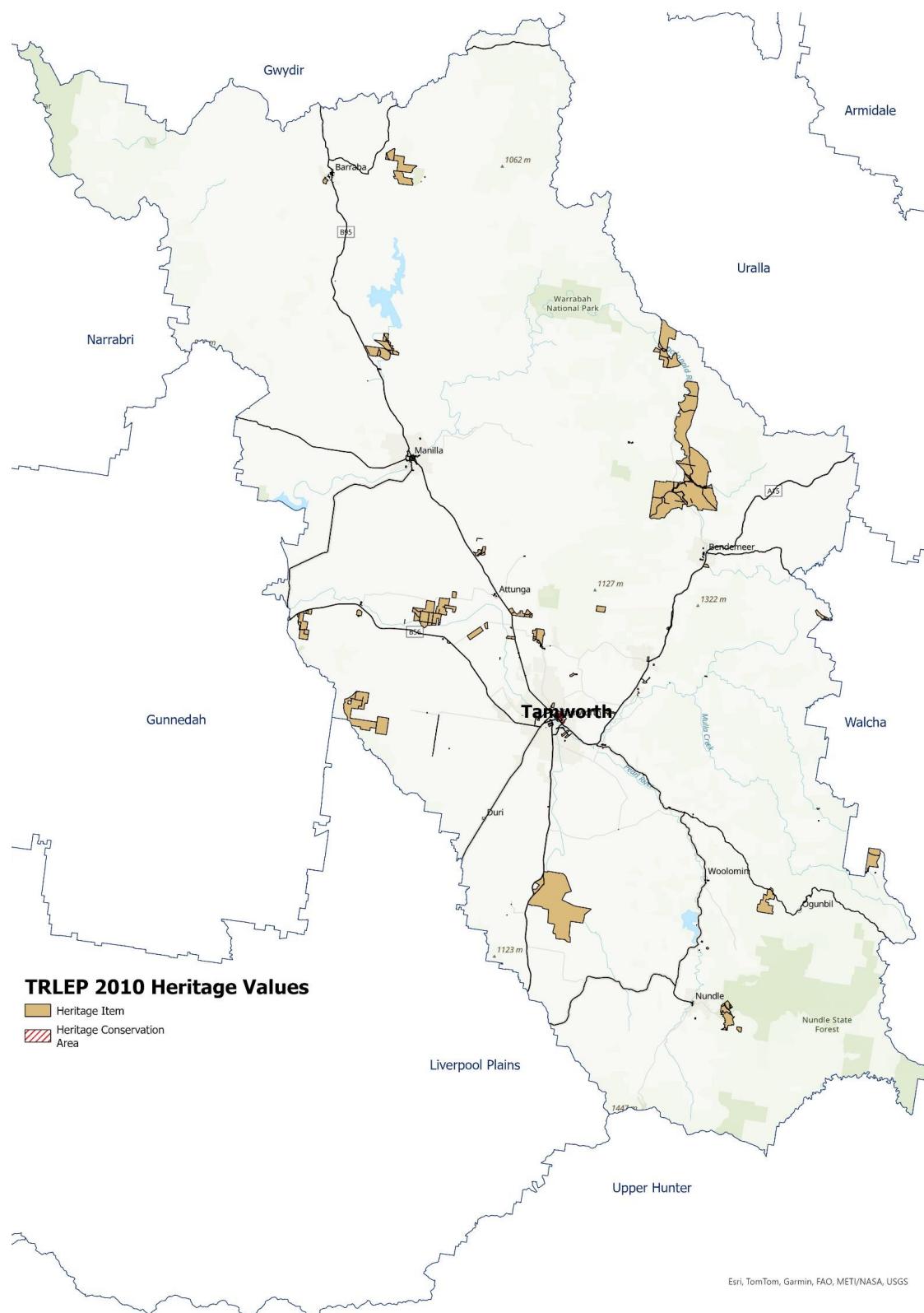


Figure 20: TRLEP 2010 Heritage Values.

Action 7.1	Prepare a Scenic Landscape Strategy and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 by introducing a scenic protection clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the strategy.
Action 7.2	Complete the <i>Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Baseline Study</i> and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 by introducing a terrestrial biodiversity clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the study.
Action 7.3	Complete the <i>Tamworth Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study</i> and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 to protect items, landscapes and curtilages of heritage items on rural lands.

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Focus Area 8: Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to a changing climate

Sustainable rural land use practices are vitally important to support the long-term preservation, viability and productivity of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

Stresses such as natural hazard, water security and resource scarcity can threaten livelihoods, agricultural productivity and prosperity.

Supporting the Tamworth Regional LGA to sustainably develop and diversify will strengthen the region's ability to respond to changing global economic and policy influences, natural hazards, development pressures and population growth.

Council will continue to support opportunities to encourage innovation and industry diversification throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA, and new avenues, such as partnerships, funding arrangements or community-led programs, will continue to be explored.

Strategic Alignment

New England North West Regional Plan 2041

- Objective 8: Adapt to climate change and natural hazards and increase climate resilience (Strategy 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3)
- Objective 9: Lead renewable energy technology and investment (Strategy 9.2)
- Objective 10: Support a circular economy (Strategy 10.1)
- Objective 11: Sustainably manage and conserve water resources (Strategy 11.1 and 11.2).

Blueprint 100 Part Two: LSPS 2020

- Planning Priority 5: Design with nature (Actions DN5 and DN6).

Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy 2024

- Priority 1: Provide for sustainable growth that is supported by infrastructure
 - Priority 1.1 – Water Security for continued growth (Action 1.1).

Environmental Hazard

Hazards such as significant topography, flood and bushfire influence the extent to which land in the Tamworth Regional LGA can be responsibly developed.

With a changing climate, the occurrence and severity of natural hazard is expected to increase, and land use planning must respond appropriately to mitigate potential risk to life and livelihood.

Bushfire

Bushfire prone land has been mapped by the NSW Government across the state, identifying the likelihood that certain land is subject to bush fire attack.

Bushfire vegetation categories include:

- Vegetation Category 1 (highest risk of bushfire)

Areas of forest, woodlands, heaths (tall and short), forested wetlands and timber plantations.

- Vegetation Category 2 (lower risk of bushfire)

Rainforests, lower risk vegetation parcels, including remnant vegetation or land with ongoing land management practices that actively reduces bush fire risk.

- **Vegetation Category 3** (medium risk of bushfire)

Grasslands, freshwater wetlands, semi-arid woodlands, alpine complex and arid shrublands.

Figure 21 identifies bushfire prone land within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

The majority of lands towards the west of the Tamworth Regional LGA are Category 3 bushfire prone land, while the vegetated hills and bushlands to the east of the LGA are primarily Category 1.

Flooding

Flood prone land in the Tamworth Regional LGA covers a large proportion of the LGA's rural land. These floodplains support rich alluvial soils providing highly productive agricultural land; however the immediate impacts of flooding can cause loss of human life, damage to soil and property, destruction of crops and loss of livestock.

The *Flood Prone Land Policy* and the *NSW Flood Risk Management Manual 2023* (FRMM) provides the framework to reduce the impacts of flooding and flood liability on communities and individual owners and occupiers of flood prone property, and to reduce private and public losses resulting from floods.

Council has adopted seven (7) flood studies comprising *Tamworth City Wide Flood Study 2019*, *Tamworth Behind the Levees Flood Study 2012*, *Tamworth North and East Drainage Study 2021*, *Manilla Flood Study 2012*, *Barraba Flood Study 2012*, *Bendemeer Flood Study 2012* and *Nundle and Woolomin Flood Study 2012*. Flood Risk Management Plans have also been prepared for Tamworth City, Bendemeer and Nundle and Woolomin.

Council will continue to review its flood studies and prepare Flood Risk Management Plans for rural lands and rural communities. This will provide information and clear directions on the management of the floodplains within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

Development on flood affected rural lands will continue to be assessed in consideration of clause 5.21 of the TRLEP 2010 which aims to minimise the flood risk to life and property associated with the use of land within the flood planning area.

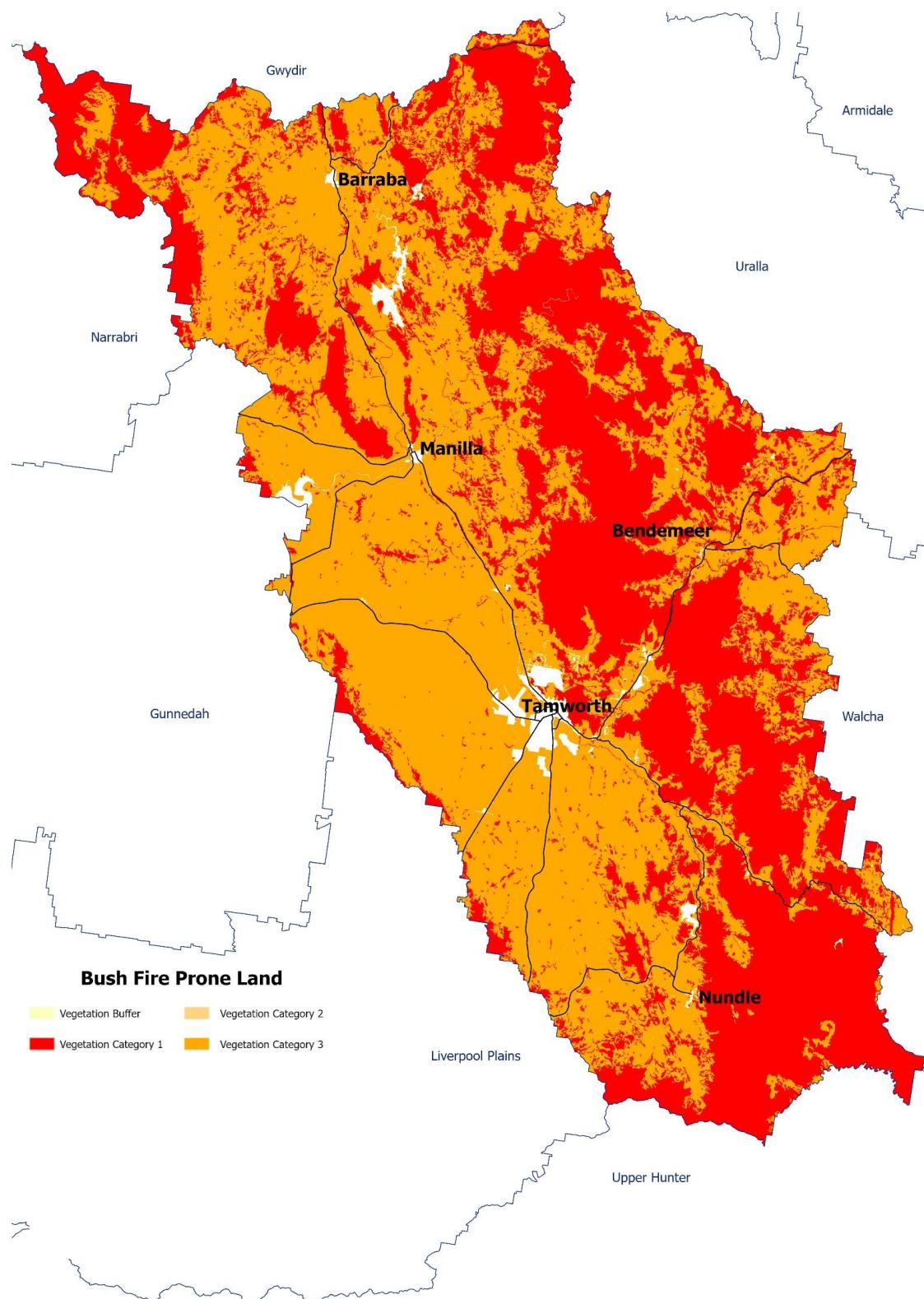


Figure 21: Bush Fire Prone Land.

Water Security

Water security means ensuring reliable access to water resources for current and future generations.

The Tamworth Regional LGA is located in the Namoi catchment. Tamworth's water supply is dependent on the weather, leaving supply particularly vulnerable in periods of drought.

As the population of the Tamworth Regional LGA grows, greater demand will be placed on already limited, vulnerable water resources. Even without growth, the Tamworth Regional LGA is at some risk of running out of water in times of prolonged drought, and the widespread impacts of a warming climate are likely to exacerbate these concerns.

A whole of catchment approach to land use and water management is required across the region, with consideration for climate change, water security, sustainable demand and growth, and the natural environment, as well as investigating options for water management through innovation.

Water security is the number one issue raised in Tamworth's Blueprint 100, the major focus of the *Namoi Regional Water Strategy 2023*, and a concern of local residents.

It is essential to increase supply of Tamworth's water resources in order to meet the needs of a growing population and secure reliable access to water in the region. Council's priority is to deliver durable water infrastructure, including raw water.

Tamworth Water Security Plan

Council is currently developing a *Water Security Plan*, due for public exhibition in late 2025, to ensure that water resources are reliable, sustainable and able to support future demand.

Council is investigating a range of resilient water options, generally four categories; surface water, groundwater, water recycling and water efficiency.

Climate Vulnerability

The NSW climate is changing, with average temperatures gradually increasing since the 1960s. The impacts of climate change will include:

- increased temperatures

- increased risk of severe drought
- increased bushfire danger
- fewer frosts
- changes to extreme rainfall.

Climate change has the potential to significantly impact the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands. The economy is heavily reliant on the productivity of its rural lands, particularly the production of beef, lamb and poultry products. Climate change will likely pose a significant challenge to those living and working on rural lands as the availability of necessary natural resources, such as water and high-quality soils, are increasingly at risk.

Understanding, adapting and preparing for a changing climate is crucial to protecting our rural lands, preserving both natural value and productivity.

In 2024, the NSW Department of Primary Industries published their *Climate Vulnerability Assessment Summary Report* documenting the findings of a project designed to help primary industries in NSW understand the implications, both risks and opportunities, of climate change on various agricultural commodities over the medium term to the year 2050.

Findings related to commodities of particular importance to the Tamworth Regional LGA are summarised below.

Wheat

Dryland and irrigated wheat growing regions are expected to maintain moderate to high climate suitability for growing wheat by 2050, however the length of the growing season is likely to be shorter due to higher temperatures, potentially affecting grain yields.

Irrigated Lucerne

NSW irrigated lucerne growing regions are likely to experience a minimal decrease from high to moderate in climate suitability by 2050. The irrigation water requirements of lucerne are likely to increase as a result of higher temperatures meaning the industry may need to be more efficient with water storage and use.

Cattle

Climate suitability for cattle is expected to maintain very high climate suitability across the entire state. Bringing forward joining so that calving occurs in late

spring instead of early summer could mitigate heat exposure of calves.

Sustainable Rural Land Use Practices

Sustainable rural practices respond to land use trends and challenges such as the overexploitation and degradation of natural resources. Sustainable rural practices can include reduced reliance on chemicals, diverse planting and increasing biodiversity, and water efficient irrigation.

Sustainable rural practices are critical to protecting and sustaining the health, viability and productivity of the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands. An emphasis on sustainability and resilience will be key to sustaining growth and productivity into the future, as well as enhancing the ability to respond to a changing climate and natural disasters.

Circular Economy

As the Tamworth Regional LGA continues to grow, Council will look to encourage the efficient and sustainable consumption of resources by promoting the principles of a circular economy.

In a circular economy, resources are reduced, reused, recycled and recovered, enhancing efficiency and environmental sustainability throughout the supply chain.

Promoting a circular rural economy throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA will strengthen the region's ongoing environmental, economic and social success and will enhance the region's capacity to respond to global economic and natural crisis.

Advances towards a circular economy for the region will ensure the efficient and sustainable consumption of resources, enhancing efficiency and environmental sustainability throughout the supply chain.

Action 8.1	Continue to review and update Council's flood studies and plan in accordance with the NSW Flood Risk Management Manual framework.
Action 8.2	Complete the Tamworth Water Security Plan and where relevant, outcomes should be introduced into the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010.
Action 8.3	Collaborate with Government agencies to educate rural landowners on biodiversity offsets, maintenance and rehabilitation of riparian zones, sustainable land practices and availability of grant funding.

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5 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The intent of the Rural Lands Strategy is to provide a framework to guide future decision making for the sustainable planning and management of rural lands within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

The actions of the Strategy have been categorised based on their delivery timeframe; short-term, medium-term, long-term, or ongoing.

Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
0-2 years	2-5 years	5+ years	Ongoing

Collaboration with a number of stakeholders will be required to enable delivery of the actions in this Strategy.

Council will review the Strategy at 5-year intervals from its adoption. This review will ensure that the Strategy continues to reflect the Tamworth Regional LGA, capturing changes over time. Timeframes and priorities will be updated as necessary.

The relevant actions, stakeholders and timeframes are outlined in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Implementation plan.

Action Ref.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Focus Area 1: Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands			
1.1.	Ensure State Significant Agricultural Land, Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land and Important Agricultural Land are used as key criteria in the assessment of Planning Proposals and Development Applications pertaining to rural zoned land.	Future Communities Division Development Division	Ongoing
1.2	Implement minimum lot size changes as recommended, accounting for landscape characteristics, viability of agricultural productivity and strategic objectives for the zones.	Future Communities Division	Medium Term
1.3	Introduce a RU2 Rural Landscape zone in identified areas to distinguish rural lands with high scenic value from those with higher soil fertility.	Future Communities Division	Long Term
Focus Area 2: Reduce and manage land use conflicts.			
2.1	Update the TRDCP 2010 to include all relevant parts of the NSW DPI's <i>Land Use Conflict Risk Assessment Guide</i> (2011, or its update) when assessing potential land uses conflicts.	Development Division	Medium Term

Action Ref.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
2.2	Update the TRDCP 2010 to establish appropriate buffer areas and separation distance for a range of rural land uses. This should be consistent with NSW DPI's <i>Buffer Zones to Reduce Land Use Conflict with Agriculture Interim Guidelines</i> (2018, or its update).	Development Division	Medium Term
2.3	Advocate for renewable energy and/or extractive industries to be located away from the Tamworth Regional LGA's highest quality agricultural lands in order to retain their use for primary production.	Future Communities Division Development Division	Ongoing
2.4	Implement the Namoi Regional Job Precinct into the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 where applicable to promote intensive agriculture and minimise land use conflicts.	Future Communities Division Development Division	Short Term
2.5	Investigate expanding the Namoi Regional Job Precinct to include high value agricultural land and established intensive agricultural clusters.	Future Communities Division Development Division	Short Term

Focus Area 3: Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages

3.1	Lobby the NSW Government to fund local and regional road projects, such as B-Double and Road Train routes, to strengthen regional transport connections.	Office of the General Manager Regional Services Directorate Transport for NSW	
3.2	Continue to engage with Transport for NSW to deliver the Western Freight Link to enable freight to move safely and efficiently throughout the region.	Regional Services Directorate Liveable Communities Directorate Office of the General Manager Transport for NSW	Ongoing / Long Term
3.3	Continue to engage with EnergyCo and Transport for NSW to investigate routes for the Tamworth Eastern Detour with consideration for both the immediate demands of the NEREZ and the long-term connectivity objectives of the Tamworth region and State road network.	Regional Services Directorate Liveable Communities Directorate Office of the General Manager	Short / Medium Term

Action Ref.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
		EnergyCo	
		Transport for NSW	
3.4	Continue to investigate and protect the Tamworth Regional Airport as a future air freight hub for agricultural produce.	Economic Development and Investment Division Tamworth Regional Airport	Long Term
3.5	Identify opportunities for rural industries that may benefit from the Tamworth Intermodal Freight Facility including the export of local agricultural products.	Economic Development and Investment Division	Long Term
Focus Area 4: Support and diversify the rural economy			
4.1	Promote attractions to encourage growth in key tourism market segments such as food and agritourism, farm-stay, or experience-based holidaymaking.	Communities and Experiences Directorate	Short Term / Ongoing
4.2	Strengthen innovation and industry diversification throughout the Tamworth Regional LGA, by exploring new avenues for support through partnerships and funding with TAFE NSW and Universities.	Office of the General Manager Universities TAFE NSW	Ongoing / Long Term
Focus Area 5: Support rural housing in the right locations			
5.1	Permit secondary dwellings in certain rural lands to support housing diversity in rural areas in a manner that is unlikely to have a significant impact on agricultural lands or primary production.	Future Communities Division	Short Term
5.2	Update the TRDCP 2010 to remove the requirement for the provision of reticulated water in the R5 Large Lot Residential Zone with a 2ha minimum lot size, with the exception of the Daruka locality, to unlock housing within close proximity to existing amenities and services.	Development Division	Short Term
5.3	Include a three (3) year sunset provision in the TRLEP 2010 whereby the dwelling entitlement on vacant existing holdings and rural and conservations lots below the current minimum lot size would lapse.	Future Communities Division	Short Term

Action Ref.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
5.4	Prepare a Temporary Workforce Accommodation Strategy to support the rural industries and NEREZ.	Liveable Communities Directorate	Medium Term
Focus Area 6: Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities			
6.1	Implement place-making opportunities that enhance local character, reinforce a sense of community and foster growth in our small towns and villages (e.g. storytelling, public art, street greening, shared spaces, and safe and sustainable design principles).	Liveable Communities Directorate Communities and Experiences Directorate	Ongoing
6.2	Continue to monitor future growth opportunities for Manilla, Barraba and Bendemeer in consideration of the high level constraints maps.	Future Communities Division Development Division	Ongoing
6.3	Update Council's existing Renewable Energy Voluntary Planning Agreement Policy to provide a clear framework for negotiating and implementing Renewable Energy Planning Agreements within Tamworth Regional LGA.	Future Communities Division	Short Term
Focus Area 7: Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas			
7.1	Prepare a Scenic Landscape Strategy and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 by introducing a scenic protection clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the strategy.	Future Communities Division	Medium Term
7.2	Complete the <i>Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Baseline Study</i> and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 by introducing a terrestrial biodiversity clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the study.	Future Communities Division Water and Waste Division	Short Term

7.3	Complete the <i>Tamworth Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study</i> and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 to protect items, landscapes and curtilages of heritage items on rural lands.	Development Division Future Communities Division	Short Term
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Focus Area 8: Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to a changing climate

8.1	Continue to review and update Council's flood studies and plan in accordance with the NSW Flood Risk Management Manual framework.	Regional Services Directorate	Medium Term
8.2	Complete the Tamworth Water Security Plan and where relevant, outcomes should be introduced into the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010.	Water and Waste Directorate	Short Term
8.3	Collaborate with Government agencies to educate rural landowners on biodiversity offsets, maintenance and rehabilitation of riparian zones, sustainable land practices and availability of grant funding.	Liveable Communities Directorate Sustainability Division Government Agencies Rural Landowners	Long Term

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT



Rural Lands Strategy

Date: 16.06.2025

Job no: ALPD15-1598-400

Project Sponsor: Gina Vereker

Project Owner: Andrew Spicer

Project Manager: Mitch Gillogly

1. Achievement of Objective(s)

There were 51 genuine responses received through the Have Your Say page survey, and while this is a good result, the number of attendees to community drop-in sessions didn't meet the expected outcome.

2. Media Coverage

The campaign didn't call for a media opportunity, however, Project Manager and spokesperson, Mitch Gillogly, attended the post-Council Meeting media and spoke to journalists about the strategy. He also did an on-air interview with ABC.

Television and Radio

Station	Date	Local Audience	Reach
ABC NENW Breakfast	12/05/2025	1,623	5,300

Articles were written for E-News, Your Council News and the Moonbi-Kootingal newsletter.

Have your say on rural lands

There's still time to provide your feedback on Council's draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy. The draft Strategy provides a framework for planning and managing rural lands in the Tamworth Region and focuses on rural land in these specific zones - RU1, RU3, RU4, RU5, RU6, C1, C2, C3, R5.

It aims to address current and emerging issues and opportunities in rural areas and sets out policies for managing change into the future with eight key focus areas and 28 associated actions.

The draft Strategy will provide a framework for land use planning to underpin the Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010 and the implementation of local, Regional and State Government strategic plans.

If you would like to find out more about the strategy and provide your feedback, please visit <https://haveyoursay.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/tamworth-regional-rural-lands-strategy> before 5pm Thursday 5 June, 2025.



Thinking about building a secondary dwelling on your land?

Council also has a Planning Proposal on public exhibition through the NSW Planning Portal until 5pm Thursday 5 June, which if successful, would allow Council to amend the Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010 (TRLEP 2010) to permit the construction of secondary dwellings with consent in certain areas of RU1 Primary Production and RU4 Primary Production Small Lots land uses zones.

If you would like to make a submission, take a look at maps of the included areas or just find out more, please visit <https://haveyoursay.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/planning-proposal-secondary-dwellings-certain-rural-areas>

We want your feedback on rural land use



We are looking for community feedback on the draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy which aims to set a clear direction for the future use and management of rural lands in the region. The draft strategy will be on public exhibition from Wednesday, 7 May for 28 days and emphasises the need for ongoing engagement with the community to ensure planning aligns with the needs of rural residents, landowners, industries, and other stakeholders.

The eight focus areas of the strategy are: Prioritising agriculture and preserving the productivity of our rural lands; Reduce and manage land use conflicts; Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages; Support and diversify the rural economy; Support rural housing in the right locations; Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities; Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas; and Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to the changing climate.

Drop-in information sessions will be held in Tamworth, Kootingal, Nundle, Manilla and Barraba, in addition to consultation with Government agencies and industry stakeholders.

Deputy Mayor, Jeff Budd, said it was important for community members to pass on their knowledge.

"We really encourage people out there with information we might not be aware of, to participate and make submissions so that we can move forward with this strategy," he said.

To find out more visit tconews.au/HaveYourSay from Wednesday 7 May.

[VIEW FULL ISSUE #19 - 2025](#)

Community Engagement

Liveable Communities' Strategic Planners have been out and about over the past week, chatting to residents about the Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy and a Planning Proposal that would allow secondary dwellings in certain rural areas of the LGA.

Community drop-in sessions were held in Barraba, Kootingal, Manilla, Nundle and Tamworth and were a great opportunity for local residents to have a relaxed chat with staff about the draft strategy, their thoughts on current and future rural land uses as well as priorities and opportunities for rural lands into the future.

The team was supported by consultants from Gyde and members of the Marketing and Communications team.



[Submit your feedback on the draft strategy here](#)

[Find out more about the Planning Proposal here](#)

The draft strategy was also included in the Media Update following the Council Meeting where it was approved to go on public exhibition, which was distributed to local media and published on Council's website.

Council meeting update - 29 April 2025

Tuesday 29 April, 2025

Here is an overview of outcomes from tonight's Ordinary Meeting of Tamworth Regional Council:

- Councillors unanimously supported a Notice of Motion from Councillor Ryan Brooke and Councillor Charles Impey to endorse a community campaign to convert the current Banksia Mental Health Unit into a repurposed drug and alcohol detoxification centre once the new unit is operational. The motion outlines previous commitments made by Council to explore local options to support people living with alcohol and drug misuse, and to advocate to the State Government for appropriate services to be located in Tamworth. Community consultation has previously been undertaken by The Fair Treatment Tamworth Region Campaign, now a Tamworth-focused group called Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Treatment New England North West (DART). Council will write to the NSW Premier, NSW Minister for Health, and local State Member, Kevin Anderson to advocate for the repurposing of the NSW Health facility. Construction on the new Banksia Mental Health Unit building at Tamworth Hospital is expected to be completed by the end of 2025.
- Councillors voted to approve a \$20,000 sponsorship to support the hosting of the NSWRL Regional Magic Round 2025. This three-day Rugby League festival will be held from 9-11 May 2025 at Scully Park in West Tamworth. An estimated 3,500 attendees are expected each day, delivering significant economic, social, and community benefits to the region while further strengthening Tamworth's reputation as a leading hub for regional sport.
- The community will have the opportunity from next week to provide feedback about the draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy which aims to set a clear direction for the future use and management of rural lands in the Tamworth Regional Local Government Area. Councillors tonight agreed to place the draft strategy on public exhibition from Monday, 5 May 2025 for 28 days. The draft strategy emphasises the need for ongoing engagement with the community to ensure that planning aligns with the needs of rural residents, landowners, industries, and other stakeholders. The draft strategy has been developed following earlier community consultation which informed its eight focus areas. During the upcoming public exhibition, community consultation will include targeted letters and drop-in information sessions at Tamworth, Kootingal, Nundle, Manilla and Barraba. Consultation will also be undertaken with Government agencies and include industry stakeholder engagement sessions. Information about the draft Strategy will be available on Council's Have your Say page and in all of Council's branch offices. All feedback will inform a report to Council later this year when Councillors will consider the formal adoption of the strategy.
- Councillors have endorsed a number of recommendations put forward by the Local Traffic Committee including two safety improvements to local roads. This includes changing the existing road centreline between Maysteers Lane and Davidsens Lane in Moore Creek to a double two-way barrier line to restrict overtaking, and installing an additional Give Way sign at the intersection of Marsden Park Road and Whitehouse Lane in Calala.
- Councillors have appointed Mr Robert Lagaida to the role of independent chair to Tamworth Regional Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for an initial term of four years. His appointment comes after an Expressions of Interest process following the resignation of the previous chair. Mr Lagaida has held senior executive positions with more than 25 years' experience in the NSW public sector. He also has extensive experience as a board director and an independent chair or member of audit and risk committees in State and local government agencies and the disability and aged care sectors. Dr Meredith Caelli and Mr Glenn Inglis are the other two external members of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

3. Results

Social media

A total of four Facebook posts, four Instagram posts, two LinkedIn posts and eight Facebook Community Posts were made throughout the public exhibition, as well as being included in the post-Council Meeting wrap ups on Facebook and Instagram.

Facebook Organic	
Total Post Views (The number of times the posts were played or displayed)	24,069
Total Reach (Total number of people who saw content)	14,863
Total Interactions (Total number of post likes/reactions, shares, comments and saves)	58
Total link Clicks	166

Example of organic Facebook posts:

The Facebook post is from Tamworth Regional Council, published by Meltwater Engage on 30 April. The post discusses the Council Meeting and mentions the introduction of a drug and alcohol rehabilitation and detox centre, the Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy, and NSW Rugby League Cup support. It has 21 likes, 3.2K views, and 2 comments.

 Tamworth Regional Council
Published by Meltwater Engage
• 30 May at 08:03 · 
FINAL WEEK FOR FEEDBACK 
Community feedback on the draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy closes at 5pm this Thursday, 5 June.
The draft strategy identifies eight focus areas that will underpin Council's vision for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands. These are supported by a series of actions that will ensure the priorities may be achieved.
Focus Area 1: Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands
Focus Area 2: Reduce and manage land use conflicts
Focus Area 3: Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages
Focus Area 4: Support and diversify the rural economy
Focus Area 5: Support rural housing in the right locations
Focus Area 6: Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities
Focus Area 7: Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas
Focus Area 8: Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to a changing climate.
To provide your feedback, visit - <https://haveyoursay.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/tamworth-regional...>


Instagram Organic

Total Views	2,323
Total Reach	1,885
Total Interactions	65

Example of organic Instagram post:



Posts were published in the approved Manilla, Barraba, Kootingal and Nundle community groups, encouraging residents to come along to a drop-in session or submit their feedback online.

Facebook Community Group Posts	
Total Views	4,355
Total Reach	3,003
Total Interactions	30
Link Clicks	76

Example of Facebook Community Group post:



Stories		
Platform	Views	Interactions
Facebook	2200	3
Instagram	424	4

Example of Instagram Stories:

LinkedIn	
Total Interactions	29
Total reposts	3

Have Your Say page

A project page was created on Council's Have Your Say page and content included a copy of the draft strategy, timelines, supporting documents and a survey based on the draft strategy for page visitors to fill out, which received 51 genuine responses. A separate report with data from the page has been sent to the Project Sponsor and Owner.

The screenshot shows the 'Have Your Say' page for the Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy. At the top, there is a header with the project name and a call to action: 'Provide your feedback on the draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy by Thursday 5 June, 2025.' Below this is a large landscape image of a rural area with rolling hills and trees. To the right of the image is a 'Document Library' section containing two documents: 'Council Meeting Business Paper - 29 April 2025' and 'Council Meeting Minutes - 29 April 2025'. Below the library is a 'Community drop-in sessions' section listing various locations and dates for public consultation. The main content area contains a survey form with questions about the draft strategy, including a section for attaching documents. At the bottom of the page is a 'FAQs' section and a 'Timeline' showing the schedule for the project.

Signage

Flyers and corflute signs were created by the consultants (Gyde) for the campaign. Flyers were distributed to each of Council's Customer Service Offices to display and corflute signage was displayed in an A-Frame at each community drop-in session. An ad was also included in Barraba Community News on Wednesday 7 May, 2025.



8

QR code tracking

A QR code was created and added to signage and letters as an easy way to access the project page and resulted in 22 link clicks.

<https://trcnews.au/vVgqH8>

Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy QR code

<https://www.haveyoursay.tamworth.nsw.gov.au/tamworth-regional-rural-land-strategy>

22

Face-to-Face Consultation

Five community drop-in sessions were held during the campaign, in Tamworth, Kootingal, Barraba, Manilla and Nundle. The sessions were an opportunity for community members to talk with Planners and Consultants in a more relaxed setting.

Consultation data		
Location	Date	Number of attendees
Tamworth	15/05/2025	20
Kootingal	15/05/2025	9
Manilla	17/05/2025	9
Barraba	17/05/2025	4
Nundle	17/05/2025	



4. Observations

Social media results were strong in this campaign – receiving higher than usual reach and views than similar posts.

There is also a noticeable correlation between the timing of social media posts and survey responses, with submissions generally increasing following a social post. This can also be seen in the data in the Have Your Say report, with social media being the highest referral to the page. It would be my recommendation to use sponsored posts for future campaigns, if budget allows, to push reach and views to even higher numbers, which in turn could also boost numbers of residents attending community drop-in sessions.

There were some unrelated and unexpected issues with print advertising during the campaign period. In future to avoid this issue I would recommend placing an ad in the Northern Daily Leader and/or The Land in an attempt to reach some those outlying towns, if budget allows. This could also assist in improving drop-session attendance.

Tamworth Regional Council

Report Type: Project

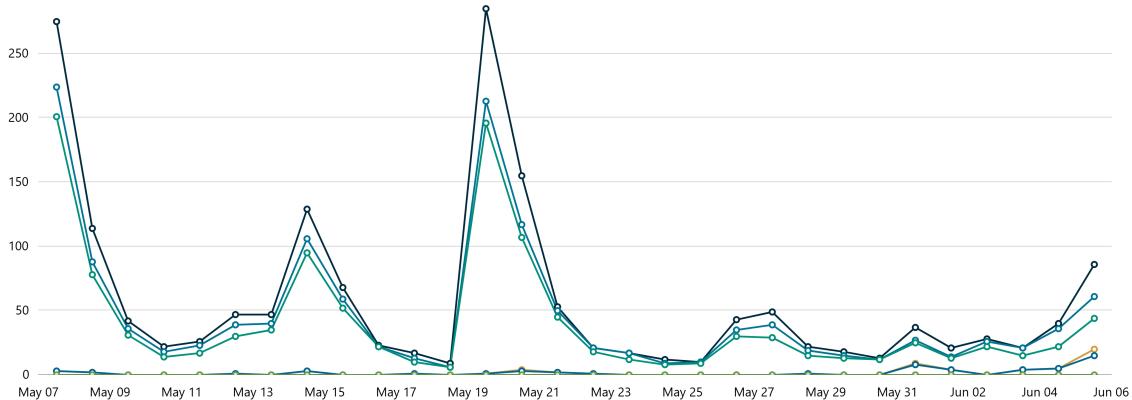
Project Name: Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy

Date Range: 07-05-2025 - 05-06-2025

Exported: 26-06-2025 11:56:46

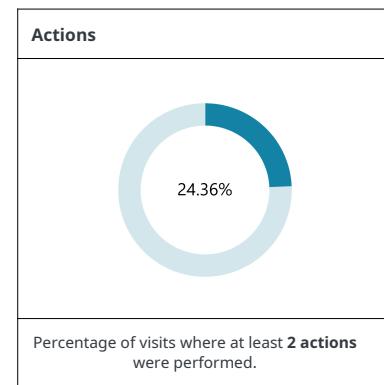
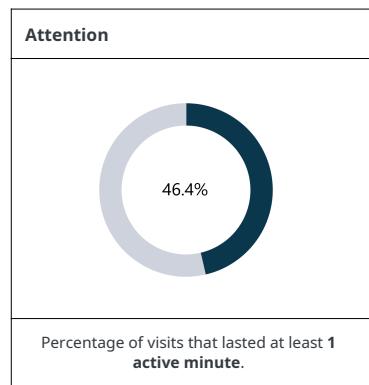
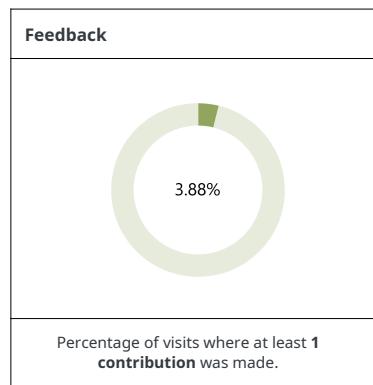
Performance Summary

Information regarding key visitation and utilisation metrics for your Site or projects.

1,750
Views1,416
Visits970
Visitors61
Contributions54
Contributors0
Followers**Views** - The number of times a Visitor views any page on a Site.**Visits** - The number of end-user sessions associated with a single Visitor.**Visitors** - The number of unique public or end-users to a Site. A Visitor is only counted once, even if they visit a Site several times in one day.**Contributions** - The total number of responses or feedback collected through the participation tools.**Contributors** - The unique number of Visitors who have left feedback or Contributions on a Site through the participation tools.**Followers** - The number of Visitors who have 'subscribed' to a project using the 'Follow' button.

Conversions

Information regarding how well your engagement websites converted Visitors to perform defined key actions.



Participation

Information regarding how people have participated in your projects and activities.

Contributions by Activity

Contributions by Activity is a breakdown of contributions across each tool

Activity	Contributions	%
Form	61	100%

Top Activities

Top Activities is the top 5 tools that received the highest contributions

Activity	Page Name	Contributions	Contributors
Form	Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy	61	54

Projects

The current number of published projects on your site

Engagement Time		
2	2	48
Days	Hours	Minutes

May 7th 2025	Wednesday
Peak Visitation Date	Peak Visitation Day

Top Visited Pages

Summary information for the top five most visited Pages.

Page Name	Visitation %	Visits	Visitors
Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy	100%	1,415	970

People

Information regarding who has participated in your projects and activities.

Follower Activity

Information regarding the activity of registered Members who have 'followed' or subscribed to one or more projects.



0 Total Followers	0 New Followers	0 Total Follows	0 New Follows
-----------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------	-------------------------

Total Followers - The number of unique Members who have 'followed' at least one project.

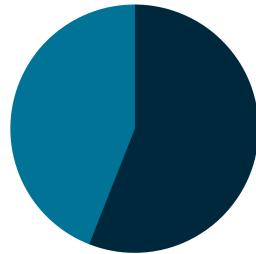
New Followers - The number of new unique Members who have 'followed' at least one project within the specified reporting date range.

Total Follows - The number of total 'follows' performed by all Followers across all projects. Each Follower may record multiple Follows.

New Follows - The number of new total 'follows' performed by all Members across all projects within the specified reporting date range.

Visit Profile

Visit Profile compares new visits and returning visits over the selected period.



● 1st Time: 793 - 56.00%

● Returning: 623 - 44.00%

First Time - The number of Visits that are visiting a Site for the first time within the reporting date range.

Returning - The number of Visits that have made more than one Visit to a Site within the reporting date range.

Acquisition

Information regarding the method by which Visitors arrived to your Site or projects.

Referral Types

Referral traffic is the segment of traffic that arrives on your website through another source, like through a link on another domain.



- Social Media: 554 - 39.12%
- Direct: 531 - 37.50%
- Search Engine: 181 - 12.78%
- Websites: 146 - 10.31%
- Campaigns: 4 - 0.28%

Direct - Visits from Visitors who enter the exact URL or click an untracked link (e.g., from emails without UTM parameters).

Search Engine - Visits from search results on engines like Google or Bing.

Websites - Visits from links on external sites, excluding search engines and social media.

Social Media - Visits from links on platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, or X.

Campaigns - Visits from tracked marketing efforts using UTM parameters, such as email campaigns or paid ads.

Downloads

Information regarding your downloads, the total set of unique documents downloaded, total downloads of all files, and your top downloads.



71

Total Downloads

Top Downloads

Top file downloads in your selection, ordered by the number of downloads.

File Title	File Type	Downloads
Council Meeting Business Paper - 29 April 2025.pdf	PDF	49
Council Meeting Minutes - 29 April 2025.pdf	PDF	22

Email Campaigns

Information regarding your email campaigns, your total campaigns, the total number of recipients, and your top campaigns by click-through rate (clicks as a percentage of total recipients).



1

Email Campaigns Sent



784

Total Recipients



10.46%

Click-through Rate

Top Campaigns

Top email campaigns that have activity in your selection, ordered by click-through rate (clicks as a percentage of total recipients).

Campaign Name	Recipients	Clicks	Click-through Rate
Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy	784	82	10.46%

GYDE

Tamworth Regional
Rural Lands Strategy
Engagement Outcomes Report

Prepared for Tamworth Regional Council
Issued December 2025

Acknowledgment of Country

Tamworth Regional Council would like to acknowledge the Gomeroi/Kamilaroi people, who are the traditional custodians of this land.

We would like to pay respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in and visiting our region.



The artwork on this page was created by Gomeroi artist Tess Reading. Her artwork was selected through an expression of interest where Aboriginal artists with a connection to the Kamilaroi/Gomeroi Nation were asked to create an artistic element for inclusion in Council's corporate brand.

Ms Reading describes her work as depicting the land and communities that spread across the Tamworth Regional Council footprint. Elements of the artwork will start to appear on Council's letterheads, business cards, signage and uniforms in 2025.

Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy - Engagement Outcomes Report

Date: December 2025

Status: Final

This report has been prepared by Gyde with input from a number of expert consultants. To the best of our knowledge, the information contained herein is neither false nor misleading and the contents are based on information and facts that were correct at the time of writing. Gyde accepts no responsibility or liability for any errors, omissions or resultant consequences including any loss or damage arising from reliance on information in this publication.

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy

The *Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy* will set the strategic vision for the future of rural lands within the Tamworth Regional Local Government Area (Tamworth Regional LGA).

The draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy (draft Strategy) identifies key existing and future considerations that are impacting the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural areas.

Key considerations of the Draft Strategy include:

- Managing land use conflict as a range of uses compete for space and resources;
- Preserving valuable and unique local character, scenic landscapes, natural environments and biodiversity;
- Ongoing demand for rural subdivision and the construction of dwellings in rural zones;
- Accommodating emerging industries in rural areas, particularly with the proposed development of renewable energy projects in parts of the Tamworth Regional LGA; and
- Responding to a changing climate and evolving lifestyle needs through sustainable rural land use practices.

The draft Strategy identifies the following eight focus areas:

1. Prioritise Agriculture and Preserve the Productivity of our Rural Lands;
2. Reduce and Manage Land Use Conflicts;
3. Improve Safety and Efficiency of Inter- and Intra-Regional Linkages;
4. Support and diversify the rural economy;
5. Support Rural Housing in the Right Locations;
6. Facilitate the Prosperity of our Rural Communities;
7. Protect and Improve Environmental, Scenic and Heritage Values in Rural Areas; and
8. Encourage Sustainable and Resilient Rural Practices to Strengthen the Region's Ability to Respond to a Changing Climate.

1.2 Engagement Program

The draft Strategy was endorsed for public exhibition on 29 April 2025 and was exhibited between 7 May - 5 June 2025.

An extensive engagement program was undertaken with the community and wider stakeholders, including:

- Tamworth Regional Council Have Your Say webpage;
- Community survey;
- Community information drop-in sessions;
- Councillor briefing;
- Council staff internal workshop;
- Government agency stakeholder roundtable briefing; and
- Local service and industry stakeholder meetings.

Engagement activities were widely advertised in the community through flyers, social media and radio.

62 contributions were received through the Have Your Say page.

Approximately 45 community members attended the community drop-in sessions.

Eight (8) written responses were received from the following government agencies:

- Environment Protection Authority (EPA);
- Transport for NSW (TfNSW);
- EnergyCo;
- NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPCI);
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture (DPIRD Agriculture);
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group);
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Water Group); and
- NSW Natural Resource Access Regulator (NRAR).

1.3 Engagement Outcomes

There was a high level of consistency in the ideas, opportunities and priorities that the community and

stakeholders identified for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

The following key themes were repeatedly mentioned throughout the engagement:

- Demand for the construction of dwellings in rural areas;
- Potential land use conflict associated with the construction of dwellings in rural areas;
- Agricultural productivity;
- Water security;
- Protection of environmental and scenic values in rural areas; and
- Potential impacts of renewable energy projects.

Insights from engaging with the community and key stakeholders have informed the proposed vision, priorities, focus areas and recommended land use amendments for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

1.4 Key changes to the Strategy based on public exhibition feedback

A number of changes to the Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy have been proposed in the final Strategy as a result of the feedback received throughout the public exhibition of the draft document. Fundamental changes to the proposed land use planning amendments of the draft Strategy are explained in detail below.

1. Removal of the proposed minimum lot size reductions in rural areas for:
 - Eastern Rural Lands (Area 1)
(800ha to 400ha)
 - South Western Rural Lands (Area 2)
(800ha to 200ha)
 - Moore Creek (Area 6)
(800ha to 40ha)
 - Loomberah surrounds (Area 9b)
(400ha to 100ha)

Significant opposition to the proposed amendments to reduce the minimum lot size in the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural areas was received throughout the exhibition.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) outlined the following concerns in a written submission, which were reiterated in a stakeholder workshop:

- *"These amendments are considered inconsistent with the New England North West Regional Plan and Section 9.1 and 9.2 Ministerial Directions, and pose a high risk to existing and future agricultural production in parts of the LGA."*
- *"The Department does not support reducing the Minimum Lot Size (MLS) across large tracts of the rural landscape within the LGA."*
- *"Reducing the MLS will fragment this high-quality agricultural resource and reduce buffer distances for sensitive receptors. Reducing the MLS enables an increase in rural housing, which is likely to have a significant impact on agricultural production and increase the potential for land-use conflicts."*

DPIRD's submission further described the following position in relation to rural minimum lot sizes:

- *"Maintaining large lot sizes in rural areas is generally considered beneficial for agriculture. Larger lot sizes enable economies of scale to be achieved in agricultural production and land management and deter the purchase of rural land solely for rural lifestyle purposes.*
- A large MLS can prevent further fragmentation of rural land for residential purposes and in doing so limit the number of new sensitive receptors (dwellings) in primary production areas. This benefits not only agricultural operations but also minimises the burden on local government for providing services and infrastructure to service dwellings in rural areas."*

A written submission from the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) also required that:

- *"The strategy should consider and confirm in detail the economic viability of the proposed lot sizes for agricultural production in the Eastern and South Western Rural Lands in consultation with DPIRD - Agriculture and the impact on potential land use conflict from additional dwellings should they be adopted."*

A written submission was received from a community member with similar significant concerns for the proposed reduction of rural minimum lot sizes, stating:

- *"It is not appropriate to reduce minimum lot sizes in the rural area on the basis of very narrow*

considerations such as soil type and capacity. Such factors should only be used in more targeted assessments of the suitability of land adjoining existing urban and rural-residential areas for further expansion.”

- *“All things being equal, the more marginal the land, the larger the farm size needs to be, to make a comparable income as a farm on more productive land.”*
- *“it would be a retrograde step to reduce the minimum lot sizes for general rural areas, which in the long term would result in:*
 - *significant fragmentation of landholdings*
 - *reduced agricultural viability*
 - *increase the cost of agricultural land on a per ha basis*
 - *an increase of number of dwellings being located in high hazard fire prone areas*
 - *a reduction in active weed control and increase in noxious weeds*
 - *increased clearing of native vegetation to compensate for smaller farm sizes*
 - *increased pressure on Council to provide a higher standard of road access.”*

With regards for such significant feedback received in opposition to the draft Strategy's proposed reduction to rural minimum lot sizes, it is further noted that:

- The Tamworth rural lands are already of a high value and high productivity. Amending the minimum lot size has the potential to weaken this productivity by fragmenting land and introducing additional sensitive receptors into the landscape (residential dwellings).
- Reducing minimum lot sizes is not a sustainable mechanism to support farm succession planning. If implemented, this is a concern that would only continue to arise with each new generation.

2. Removal of the proposed land zoning and minimum lot size for:
 - Attunga (Area 7)
(RU1 Primary Production to RU4 Primary Production Small Lots; 400ha to 10ha)

Opposition to this proposed amendment was received throughout the public exhibition of the draft document.

DPIRD did not support this amendment, noting:

- *“This proposal will lead to further fragmentation, the cumulative impacts of which on agriculture have not been fully assessed.”*

A written submission was received from Graymont, which outlined significant concerns around the potential for land use conflict through the introduction of additional residential dwellings in Attunga, and existing and future extractive resource operations:

- *“The inherent impacts of limestone mining and processing, such as plant noise and road transport noise, as well as dust and blasting, are best managed with buffer areas from sensitive land uses such as residential.”*

1.4.1 Changes to 'Area' labels

As the changes detailed in Section 1.4 have been incorporated into the updated draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy and some 'Areas' are proposed to be removed, the relevant 'Area' labels have been updated as follows:

Draft Strategy	Updated Draft Strategy
Area 3a	Area 1a
Area 3b	Area 1b
Area 4	Area 2
Area 5a	Area 3a
Area 5b	Area 3b
Area 8	Area 4
Area 9a	Area 5
Area 10a	Area 6a
Area 10b	Area 6b

1.5 Summary of Engagement Activities

Engagement Activity	Stakeholders	Date
 Have Your Say webpage	LGA-wide	7 May – 5 June 2025
 Online survey	LGA-wide	7 May – 5 June 2025
 Community drop-in sessions	LGA-wide	15 - 17 May 2025
 Stakeholder workshops / discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC); • Baiada; • Qube; • Tamworth Coalition of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (TACCO); • Tamworth Land Care; • Tamworth Business Chamber; • AAM Investment Group; • NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture; • Environment Protection Authority; • Agribusiness banking industry representatives; and • Graymont (limestone mine operators). 	May – July 2025
 Agency Roundtable Briefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure; • NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development - Regional Development (DPIRD Regional Development); • NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW); • EnergyCo; • Transport for NSW; and • Local Land Services – North West Community Advisory Group. 	14 May 2025

2 Engagement Program

A comprehensive program of engagement was designed to gather community, government, industry and stakeholder feedback about the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

2.1 Tamworth Regional Council Have Your Say

Information about the draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy was made available on the Tamworth Regional Council Have Your Say webpage from 7 May 2025 – 5 June 2025.

Community members were invited to provide feedback in a number of ways:

- Access project information and frequently asked questions;
- Complete a feedback survey;
- Upload feedback documentation;
- Access interactive Council mapping system with land use changes proposed within the Draft Strategy; and
- Contact the project team.

The Tamworth Regional Council Have Your Say webpage received 1,750 page views and 970 visitors.

62 contributions from members of the community were received.

Council's public MiMaps was updated to allow community members to search for their property to determine if they were affected by any changes (i.e. change to zone) proposed as part of the draft Strategy.

2.2 Community Survey

A community survey was created to capture the values, priorities and potential needs of the Tamworth Regional LGA's community members and stakeholders.

Surveys were made available on the Tamworth Regional Council Have Your Say webpage, and hard copies of the community survey were available at the community information drop-in sessions.

2.3 Community Information Drop-In Sessions

A series of community information drop-in sessions were held across the Tamworth Regional LGA to consult with the community and gather feedback.

The following community information drop-in sessions were held during the exhibition period:

- Fitzroy Street Plaza, Tamworth
Fitzroy Street, Tamworth
Thursday 15 May, 2025
11am - 1pm;
- Kootingal Multipurpose Centre
Denman Avenue, Kootingal
Thursday 15 May, 2025
11am - 1pm;
- Queen Street Mall, Barraba
111 Queen Street, Barraba
Saturday 17 May, 2025
9am - 11am;
- Manilla Mechanics Institute Meeting Room
191 Manilla Street
Saturday 17 May, 2025
9am - 11am; and
- Peel Inn Hotel, Nundle
89 Jenkins Street, Nundle
Saturday 17 May, 2025
9am - 11am.

Approximately 45 community members attended the community information drop-in sessions, and were able to consult with members of the project team, ask questions and search property addresses to determine how they may be impacted by the proposed land use planning amendments.

Copies of the draft Strategy and draft mapping included within the draft Strategy were available at the drop-in sessions, as well as display boards with key information, and laptops with Council's Mimaps available to inform discussion.

2.4 Stakeholder Workshops and Discussions

A series of meetings were held throughout the exhibition period with key local industries, businesses and service providers, as well as key government stakeholders, to discuss their aspirations for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

The stakeholder groups were asked to advise on matters such as rural land use priorities, opportunities, issues, pressures and aspirations as relevant to their operations, and provide feedback on the land use changes proposed within the draft Strategy.

Stakeholders consulted throughout this process included:

- AELEC;
- Baiada;
- Qube;
- TACCO;
- Tamworth Land Care;
- Tamworth Business Chamber;
- AAM Investment Group;
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Agriculture);
- Environment Protection Authority;
- Graymont; and
- Agribusiness banking industry representatives.

2.5 Agency Roundtable Briefing

A roundtable briefing with key government agencies was held on Wednesday 14 May 2025 to inform

relevant agencies of the purpose, focus areas and proposed land use planning amendments of the Draft Strategy.

The briefing was attended by:

- DPHI;
- DPIRD - Regional Development;
- NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water;
- EnergyCo;
- Transport for NSW; and
- Local Land Services – North West Community Advisory Group.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development - Agriculture was unable to attend the combined agency roundtable briefing, however separate consultation was conducted with representatives of this department to gain targeted insights, aspirations and feedback.

Bringing various government departments and agencies together from across the state ensures a holistic approach whereby key stakeholders can understand varied needs and aspirations, and develop a shared approach to identifying objectives, priorities and operational outcomes that will inform future planning for Council.

2.6 Council Staff Workshop

A workshop with relevant Tamworth Regional Council staff members from across the organisation was held on 12 September 2024 to identify their priorities for the draft Strategy, and discuss operational needs, strategic planning, local services and more.

2.7 Promotion of Engagement Activities

Engagement activities were widely advertised in the community through flyers, social media and radio.

Promotional activities included:

- Post-Council Meeting Media Update;
- Post-Council Meeting media and discussions with journalists about the Draft Strategy;
- On-air interview with ABC;
- E-News, Your Council News and the Moonbi-Kootingal newsletter articles;
- Social media, including:
 - Four Facebook posts;
 - Four Instagram posts;
 - Two LinkedIn posts; and
 - Eight Facebook Community Posts.
- Have Your Say page, including:
 - Copy of the Draft Strategy;
 - Indicative timelines;
 - Interactive mapping;
 - Supporting documents; and
 - Online survey.
- Signage:
 - Flyers were distributed to each of Council's Customer Service Offices;
 - Corflute signage was displayed in an A-Frame at each community drop-in session; and
 - An ad was also included in Barraba Community News.

Have Your Say on the future of Tamworth's rural lands



The logo for Tamworth Regional Council features a stylized yellow and green mountain range graphic above the word "Tamworth" in a serif font, with "REGIONAL COUNCIL" in smaller letters below it.

Tamworth Regional Council is planning the future vision of Tamworth's rural lands

We are developing a **Rural Lands Strategy** that will guide decision making for the ongoing planning and management of the rural lands within the Tamworth Regional local government area.

Have your say about Tamworth's rural lands:

Tamworth [venue]	Kootingal Multipurpose Centre	
Thursday 15 May	Thursday 15 May	
11AM – 1PM	11AM – 1PM	
Manilla [venue]	Barraba [venue]	Nundle [venue]
Saturday 17 May	Saturday 17 May	Saturday 17 May

Drop in at a time that suits you



Have Your Say on the future of Tamworth's rural lands



Tamworth Regional Council is planning for the future of the Tamworth LGA's rural lands.

What is the Tamworth Rural Lands Strategy?

We are developing a **Rural Lands Strategy** that will guide decision making for the ongoing planning and management of the rural lands within the Tamworth Regional LGA.

What are the focus areas of the draft Strategy?

Focus Area 1: Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands

Focus Area 2: Reduce and manage land use conflicts

Focus Area 3: Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages

Focus Area 4: Support and diversify the rural economy

Focus Area 5: Support rural housing in the right locations

Focus Area 6: Facilitate the prosperity of our rural communities

Focus Area 7: Protect and improve environmental, scenic and heritage values in rural areas

Focus Area 8: Encourage sustainable and resilient rural land practices to strengthen the region's ability to respond to a changing climate.



For more information about the project and to provide your feedback, scan the QR code or visit: haveyoursay.tamworth.nsw.gov.au

3 What We Heard

3.1 Have Your Say

An online Have Your Say was open to the public from 7 May 2025 to 5 June 2025. During this time, the site received 61 contributions.

Following is a summary of responses received for each Have Your Say question.

Q. What do you value most about where you live?

Participants identified the most valued aspects of where they live as being:

- Scenic landscape values;
- Biodiversity values;
- Community spirit in small towns;
- Rural lifestyle with access to town services;
- Fresh air;
- Peace, space and quiet;
- Location and convenience;
- Agricultural values; and
- Recreational opportunities.

Q. What do you value most about the Tamworth region's rural lands overall?

Respondents identified the most valued aspects of the Tamworth region's rural lands as being:

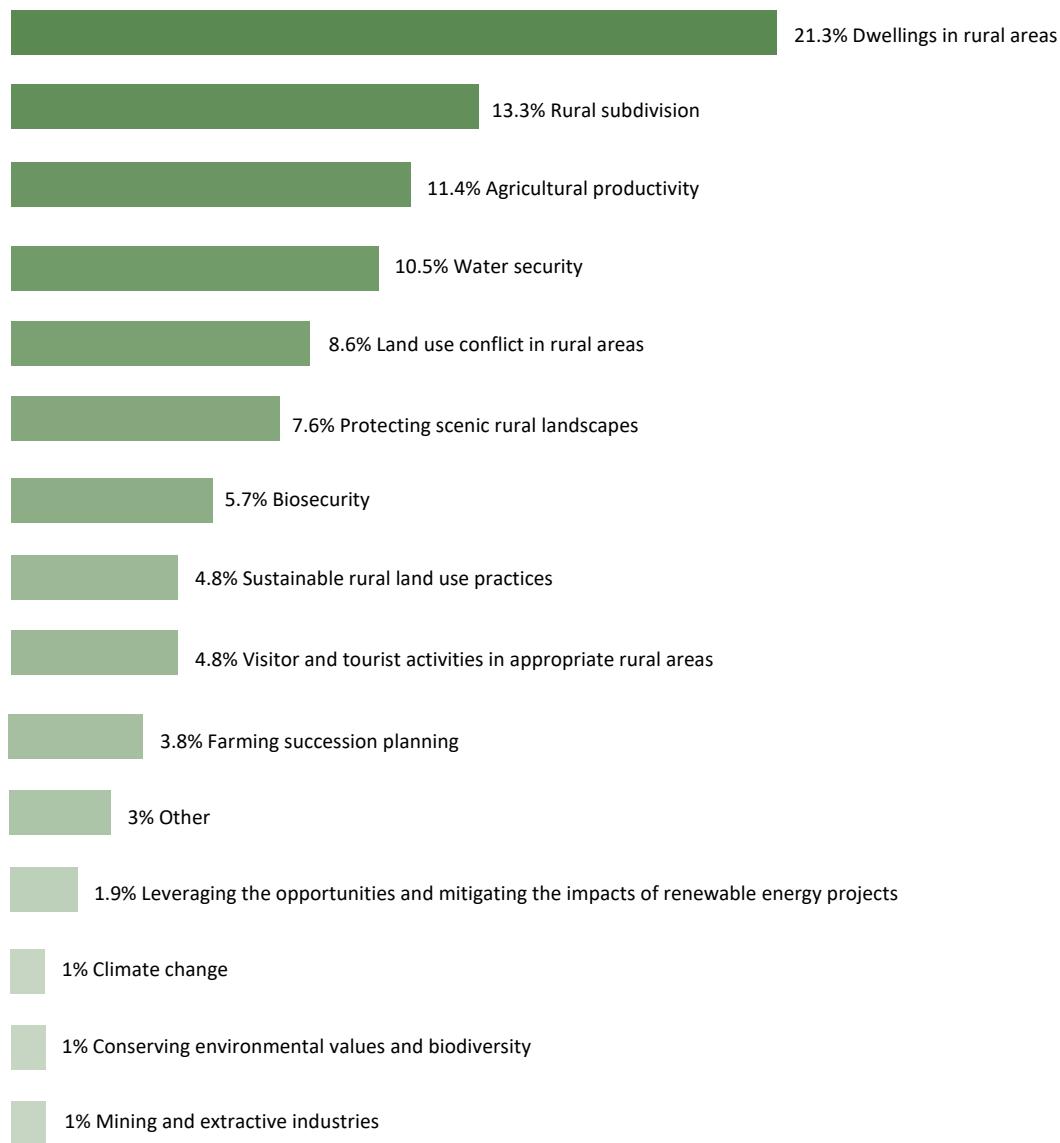
- Flora and fauna biodiversity;
- Opportunity;
- Quality and productivity of land;
- Space for various uses;
- Agricultural uses;
- Scenic values;
- Community;
- Sustainable lifestyle;
- Rural lifestyle; and
- Diversity of landscapes – mountainous, plains, farmland.

Q. Which of the following considerations are a particular priority for you when it comes to the planning of future rural land uses and development? (select up to 3)

The most common consideration prioritised by survey responses related to rural dwellings, with 21.3% of survey respondents selecting 'dwellings in rural areas (dwelling entitlements, secondary dwellings, rural workers' dwellings, temporary workers' accommodation, rural 'lifestyle' lots) as one of their highest three priorities.

This was followed by 'rural subdivision' (13.3%) and 'agricultural productivity' (11.4%).

Priorities for the planning of future rural land uses included:



3% of responses selected 'Other', specifying matters relating to proposed subdivision and land use zoning amendments.

Q. Do you have any other comments that you would like considered in the preparation of the Rural Lands Strategy?

Additional comments submitted by respondents for inclusion in the Rural Lands Strategy included:

- Inclusion of the following additional areas as mapped biodiversity values:
 - Melville Range adjacent to Oxley Highway
 - Klori
 - Somerton
 - Attunga
- Water security and licensing;
- Capacity of roads as main access point for intensive agricultural purposes;
- Labour shortages in agricultural livestock and cropping industries;
- Perception that the Namoi RJP mapping is an inaccurate basis for the secondary dwelling exclusion zone;
- Concern that substantial infrastructure introduced by the Namoi RJP will risk the loss of extensive agricultural activities, broadacre cropping and scenic values;
- Housing affordability and availability;
- Requests for subdivision of rural lands;
- Support for the secondary dwelling inclusion zone;
- Concern about the loss of agricultural land;
- Concern about crime in rural areas;
- Concern that growth and development would not be supported by the necessary infrastructure;
- Concern about impacts of renewable energy projects;
- Concern that climate change should not be a consideration of the Rural Lands Strategy;
- Suggestion that 130sqm secondary dwelling size should be increased to 200sqm or 50% of the primary dwelling;
- Support for rural worker's accommodation;
- Support for the proposed RU5 zoning in Nundle (Area 8);
- Support for the proposed RU4 zoning in Attunga (Area 7);
- Oppose the removal of existing dwelling entitlements;
- Road quality and maintenance; and
- Towns and villages should be supported to grow.

These comments have been considered within the public analysis contained in Section 3.2.

3.2 Analysis of Public Submissions

Analysis of the public submissions has identified consistent themes which have been considered in the table below.

Comment/Feedback Received	Response
Support for the secondary dwelling inclusion zone.	Noted – this is the intention of Focus Area 5: <i>Support rural housing in the right locations</i> and Action 5.1: <i>Permit secondary dwellings in certain rural lands to support housing diversity in rural areas in a manner that is unlikely to have a significant impact on agricultural lands or primary production.</i>
Suggestion that 130sqm secondary dwelling size should be increased to 200sqm or 50% of the primary dwelling	The size and location requirements for secondary dwellings are set out in clause 5.5 of the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> . These requirements are an important measure that ensures that secondary dwellings provide flexibility and function for rural landowners while reducing the risk of additional land use conflicts by restricting the size and placement of secondary dwellings.
Request that rural subdivision is permitted - two lot subdivisions, large lot residential subdivisions.	The Draft Strategy and future Final Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy set out proposed amendments to minimum lot size (MLS) in certain rural areas. Reducing the MLS, permitting further subdivision and enabling the construction of additional dwellings in unsuitable rural areas has the potential to fragment high quality and important agricultural lands and resources, reduce buffer distances between producers and sensitive receivers, impact agricultural productivity and increase the potential for land use conflict.
Oppose the reduction of minimum lot sizes in the Eastern Rural Lands (Area 1) and the South Western Rural Lands (Area 2).	In accordance with feedback from key government agencies and community stakeholders citing concerns over the potential increased risk of land use conflict and the loss of important agricultural land, the draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to no longer include amendments to Area 1 and Area 2. Amending the minimum lot size has the potential to weaken Tamworth's agricultural productivity by fragmenting land and introducing additional sensitive receptors into the landscape. In response to the previously proposed reduction of minimum lot sizes in rural areas, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture submitted that,

	<p><i>"These amendments are considered inconsistent with the New England North West Regional Plan and Section 9.1 and 9.2 Ministerial Directions, and pose a high risk to existing and future agricultural production in parts of the LGA."</i></p>
Support for the proposed 5ha MLS in Daruka (Area 5a and Area 5b).	<p>Noted – this is the intention of Action 1.2: <i>Implement minimum lot size changes as recommended, accounting for landscape characteristics, viability of agricultural productivity and strategic objectives for the zones</i> and the proposed amendments set out for Areas 5a and 5b.</p>
Support for the proposed 10ha MLS in Kingswood/Warral (Area 3a and Area 3b)	<p>Noted – this is the intention of Action 1.2: <i>Implement minimum lot size changes as recommended, accounting for landscape characteristics, viability of agricultural productivity and strategic objectives for the zones</i> and the proposed amendments set out for Area 3a and Area 3b.</p>
Support for the proposed 10ha MLS in Attunga (Area 7).	<p>Feedback from key government and community stakeholders cited concerns over the potential increased risk of land use conflict and the loss of important agricultural and resource land in Attunga as a result of the proposed amendments to MLS in Attunga (Area 7). In particular, the introduction of additional dwellings in rural areas has the potential to increase land use conflict with important resource extraction activities occurring around Attunga.</p> <p>Accordingly, the draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to no longer include amendments to Attunga (Area 7).</p>
Oppose changes that would increase sensitive receptors in rural areas, such as secondary dwellings, and the proposed 40ha MLS in Moore Creek (Area 6) and 10ha MLS in Attunga (Area 7).	<p>In accordance with feedback from key government and community stakeholders citing concerns over the potential increased risk of land use conflict and the loss of important agricultural land, the draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to no longer include amendments to Area 6 and Area 7.</p>
Support for protection of the LGA's environmental values.	<p>Noted – this is the intention of Action 7.2: <i>Complete the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Baseline Study and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 by introducing a terrestrial biodiversity clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the study.</i></p>
Support the removal of historical dwelling entitlements for existing lots that are smaller than the minimum lot size.	<p>Noted – this is the intention of Action 5.3: <i>Include a three (3) year sunset provision in the TRLEP 2010 whereby the dwelling entitlement on vacant existing holdings and rural and conservations lots below the current minimum lot size would lapse.</i></p>

Oppose the removal of historical dwelling entitlements for existing lots that are smaller than the minimum lot size.	Historical dwelling opportunities can result in 'ad hoc' development in rural areas, fragment the rural landscape, introduce sensitive receptors, and undermine strategic planning objectives, increasing the potential for land use conflict and uncertainty by introducing incompatible land uses into rural areas. Council seeks to implement a sunset provision whereby dwelling opportunities on vacant existing holdings below the MLS would lapse in order to avoid adverse outcomes for agriculture, rural landscapes and potential land use conflict.
Support the expansion of the poultry industry by advocating for the operational needs of poultry farms and streamlining approval processes for poultry projects in appropriate locations.	Noted – this is the intention of Focus Area 1: <i>Prioritise agriculture and preserve the productivity of our rural lands</i> and Focus Area 2: <i>Reduce and Manage Land Use Conflicts</i> . Supporting the expansion of the poultry industry in appropriate locations is also the intention of the Namoi Regional Job Precinct. Note that the approval of state significant developments is the role of the State Government.
<p>Approval processes and regulatory burdens should be streamlined to encourage intensive livestock agriculture via options such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of a SEPP to facilitate a poultry cluster • The introduction of an intensive rural production zone • An increase in the State Significant Development threshold for intensive livestock from \$30m to \$60m • An increase in the Designated Development threshold from 250,000 to 500,000 birds. 	Amendments to NSW state planning policies are the role of the State Government, however Council will continue to support the growth of the poultry industry in the region and prioritise agriculture.
Support the expansion of Tamworth Regional Airport into an international freight airport.	Noted – this is the intention of Focus Area 3: <i>Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages</i> and Action 3.4: <i>Continue to investigate and protect the Tamworth Regional Airport as a future air freight hub for agricultural produce</i> .
Support for the enhancement of regional transport infrastructure, including the expansion of haulage routes and road maintenance practices.	Noted – this is the intention of Focus Area 3: <i>Improve safety and efficiency of inter- and intra-regional linkages</i> .
The Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy should consider lime and limestone mining and processing and appropriate buffer zones.	Feedback from community stakeholders cited concerns over the potential increased risk of land use conflict and the loss of important resource land in Attunga as a result of the proposed amendments to MLS in Attunga (Area 7). In particular, the introduction of additional dwellings in rural areas has the potential to increase

	<p>land use conflict with important resource extraction activities occurring around Attunga.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to no longer include amendments to Attunga (Area 7).</p>
Water security and licensing is an ongoing concern for the Tamworth Regional LGA.	<p>Noted – this is the intention of Action 8.2: <i>Complete the Tamworth Water Security Plan and where relevant, outcomes should be introduced into the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010.</i></p>
<p>Inclusion of the following additional areas as mapped biodiversity values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Melville Range adjacent to Oxley Highway – Klori – Somerton – Attunga. 	<p>The areas of high biodiversity value identified within the draft and final Strategy are high level in nature. The Biodiversity Baseline Study is well underway and once completed, will present a snapshot of key species and habitats across the Tamworth Regional LGA, including communities or individual sightings of native flora and fauna.</p>

3.4 Stakeholder Workshops & Discussions

A series of semi-structured interviews and workshops were held from May – July 2025 with key stakeholders from a range of relevant local stakeholders, businesses, service providers and government agencies. These included:

- AELEC;
- Baiada;
- Qube;
- TACCO;
- Tamworth Land Care;
- Tamworth Business Chamber;
- AAM Investment Group;
- DPIRD – Agriculture;
- EPA;
- Agribusiness banking industry representatives; and
- Graymont.

A roundtable briefing was also held with key government agencies.

The briefing was attended by:

- DPHI;
- DPIRD - Regional Development;
- DCCEEW;
- EnergyCo;
- TfNSW; and
- Local Land Services – North West Community Advisory Group.

3.4.1 Questions Posed

Questions asked of the participants included or were similar to:

- What is the scope of your organisation/ business?
- Are you based in, or do you have land holdings/assets within rural lands?
- Do you rely on or have ties to any other organisations or businesses in the Tamworth region or beyond?
- What are your main operational constraints or challenges?
- What is your agency doing or responsible for in the Tamworth region that may have a bearing on the LGA's rural land?
- What do you see as being the main pressures on rural areas?
- What do you see as being the main opportunities for rural lands?
- What are the (say 3) highest priority issues that the Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy should address?
- Are there industry trends (in relation to farming, rural industries or extractive industries) or new data sources that could inform the Draft Tamworth Regional Rural Land Strategy?
- Do you have any feedback on the proposed changes to the existing land use planning provisions (RU2 Rural Landscape Zone, minimum lot size, scenic protection, biodiversity etc) within rural lands?
- Are there any other topics or issues that you feel should be considered in the Tamworth Regional Rural Land Strategy?

3.4.2 Feedback Received

Consistent themes and feedback emerged across the stakeholder workshops and discussions.

A summary of key themes identified is provided below.

Key Issue/Theme	Comment/Feedback Received
Growth and development of important rural industries.	Tamworth Regional LGA's rural industries are valuable, diverse and often interrelated, supporting a wide range of local businesses and contributing significant economic value to the region.
	The combination of productive agricultural lands, high environmental values and scenic amenity have attracted many businesses to the Tamworth Regional LGA. Continued growth was identified as a key aspiration by many rural industry representatives.
	Council and state government authorities should support the growth of valuable rural industries by enabling faster planning approval pathways and stronger advocacy.
	Planning approval timeframes are often prohibitively long and can constrain development.
	Water security and licencing is a significant constraint for the growth of many rural industries and a regional water recycling facility is considered vital.
	Rural industries and key services would be supported by continued engagement with Council and state government.
Land use conflict in rural areas.	Council should continue to support education and advocacy for rural services, industries and responsible practices throughout the community.
	Dwellings in rural areas can lead to land use conflict with many important rural industries,
	Buffer zones and separation distances support many rural industry operations, helping to mitigate land use conflict.
	Support for the removal of historical dwelling entitlements for existing lots that are smaller than the minimum lot size to reduce potential for land use conflict.
Minimum lot size in rural areas.	The Strategy should consider lime and limestone mining and processing and appropriate buffer zones.
	Larger land holdings were frequently considered prohibitive for rural industry operations (impractical, expensive, and requiring excessive maintenance and weed management).
	A diversity of lot sizes, including smaller lots in proximity to Tamworth would support diverse rural industries.

	Equine industry representatives described 10ha lots as sufficiently sized to provide for specific operational needs.
Environmental values and biodiversity in rural areas.	Biodiversity values are vital in supporting healthy ecosystems, sustaining agriculture and livelihoods, and preserving cultural and natural heritage for future generations.
	Biodiversity values can constrain the expansion of certain activities in rural areas.
	Biodiversity offset requirements can prohibit development.
Practice of cultural heritage	Development in rural areas can have a cumulative impact on cultural heritage values.
	Access to Crown Land would support cultural heritage practice.
Regional connectivity	Many rural industries rely on strong regional connectivity, and support enhanced regional road networks.
	Support for the expansion of Tamworth Regional Airport into an international freight airport.
	Support for the enhancement of regional transport infrastructure, including the expansion of haulage routes and road maintenance practices.
Renewable Energy	Many rural industries are embracing renewable energy generation, such as solar and biogas sources. However, the growth of renewables must mitigate potential impacts on the environment and other rural activities.

3.6 Analysis of Agencies Submissions

In response to the public exhibition of the Draft Rural Lands Strategy, written responses were received from the following key government agencies:

- Environment Protection Authority;
- Transport for NSW;
- Energy Co;
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Conservation Programs, Heritage & Regulation Group);
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Water Group);
- Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure;
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Agriculture and Biosecurity);
- NSW Natural Resource Access Regulator (NRAR)

Analysis of the Agencies submissions has identified consistent themes which have been considered in the table below

Comment/Feedback Received	Response
<p>Permitting secondary dwellings in certain areas has the potential to introduce sensitive receivers and may increase the risk of land use conflict.</p>	<p>A planning proposal to amend the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> by permitting secondary dwellings on certain rural lands received gateway approval from DPHI in December 2024.</p> <p>The intended outcome of this amendment was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase housing diversity in rural areas in a manner that is unlikely to have a significant impact on agricultural lands or primary production • Support primary producers by providing additional options for succession planning and ageing in place. <p>Importantly, this amendment excludes land identified as containing high agricultural values, including the Namoi Regional Job Precinct.</p> <p>Permitting secondary dwellings in certain rural areas is supported by the Tamworth Regional Housing Strategy and will contribute to the supply of diverse housing in the Tamworth Regional LGA.</p>

	The definition of a secondary dwelling under the <i>TRLEP 2010</i> requires that it can only be undertaken in conjunction with another dwelling (the principal dwelling). Therefore, the residential land use already exists (the principal dwelling) and the secondary dwelling is a small-scale intensification.
Consider the existing capacity of Tamworth's sewage and waste infrastructure to accommodate population growth and industrial expansion.	Noted. Tamworth Regional Council will continue to monitor the capacity of the LGA's sewage and waste infrastructure in accordance with population growth and in response to development proposed.
Consider the NSW Government's waste recovery targets, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovering 80% of all waste streams by 2030. • Halving the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030. 	Noted. Tamworth Regional Council is committed to environmental sustainability and sustainable development, in accordance with Council's <i>Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2022-2026</i> .
The Western Freight Link will improve the resilience of the transport network, particularly when flooding at Timbumburi Creek cuts the Oxley Highway.	The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to include this additional advice.
The Eastern Detour should be noted for further investigation only.	The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to refer to the Eastern Detour as under investigation only.
With regards to the Restricted Access Vehicle network, consider the Performance Based Standard network and participation in the Farm Gate Access network to support more productive freight movements for agricultural products.	The Performance Based Standard network will be considered with regards to the Restricted Access Vehicle network. The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to refer to participation in the Farm Gate Access network.
Labelling for 'railways' should be adjusted to read Country Regional Network – Operational and Country Regional Network – Non-operational (where applicable).	The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to amend this labelling accordingly.
Consider updating Action 5.4 to include engaging with TfNSW during the preparations of Council's future <i>Temporary Workforce Accommodation Strategy</i> and ensuring the future Strategy aligns with the <i>Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation</i> .	The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to include reference to the <i>Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation</i> , and the need for collaboration with key stakeholders including TfNSW in the preparation of Council's future <i>Temporary Workers Accommodation Strategy</i> .
Consider TfNSW's updated <i>Heavy Vehicle Access Policy</i> which outlines access targets for State Roads and a range of actions.	Noted.
Consider targeted funding opportunities available to councils for local and regional roads, such as the federally funded <i>Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program</i> .	Noted. Tamworth Regional Council will continue to investigate targeted funding opportunities available for local and regional roads and will consider the <i>Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program</i> .

Support for Action 7.1 to ' <i>Complete the Tamworth Regional Biodiversity Baseline Study and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP2010 by introducing a terrestrial biodiversity clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the study</i> '.	Noted.
Support for Action 8.2 to ' <i>Continue to review and update Council's flood studies and plan in accordance with the NSW Flood Risk Management Manual Framework</i> '.	Noted.
Consider NSW Government water policy initiatives, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tamworth Advanced Water Treatment Plant • Tamworth Intervalley Pipelines and Off-River Storages Project • NSW Water Efficiency Program and Regional Leakage Reduction Program • Integrated Water Cycle Management Framework • Recycled Water Roadmap • Managed Aquifer Recharge • Water Sharing Plan for the Namoi Alluvial Groundwater • Peel Regulated River Water Sharing Plan • NSW Government updated climate datasets. 	Noted. The draft Strategy is proposed to be amended to include reference to and discussion of the relevant identified NSW Government water policy initiatives.
The final strategy must be consistent with all relevant state environmental planning policies, <i>Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions</i> and the <i>New England North West Regional Plan 2041</i> .	Noted. The intent of the draft and final Rural Lands Strategy is to be consistent with all relevant state environmental planning policies, <i>Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions</i> and the <i>New England North West Regional Plan 2041</i> .
The strategy should define and map important farmland and consider the appropriate zoning regime and land use tables. Where change is proposed, the strategy should justify how that change supports the agricultural enterprises desired for that area.	The draft Strategy contains mapping that identifies important farmland, existing land use zoning, proposed land use zoning amendments and associated justification. The Strategy is proposed to be updated to include relevant land use tables and further detailed justification, where required.
The strategy should consider and confirm in detail the economic viability of the proposed lot sizes for agricultural production in the Eastern and South-Western Rural Lands in consultation with DPIRD - Agriculture and the impact on potential land use conflict from additional dwellings should they be adopted.	The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to no longer include amendments to Area 1 (Eastern Rural Lands) and Area 2 (Western Rural Lands).
Indicative lot yields for areas subject to minimum lot size changes should be included and detailed in the final strategy.	The draft Strategy will be updated to include high level lot yields for areas subject to minimum lot size changes.

The statement that renewable energy is likely to result in land use conflict for many rural landholders and communities should be amended as it is considered that it is possible for these uses to co-exist subject to an appropriate assessment at the development stage based on the site-specific circumstances and a determination of whether any potential impacts can be appropriately mitigated.	The draft Strategy discusses the potential for land use conflict of renewable energy projects in rural areas, and does not include a statement that it is 'likely'.
Reference to 'dwelling entitlement' should be amended to 'dwelling opportunity' to clarify that dwellings are not an entitlement but rather there is an opportunity to lodge an application to be considered on its merits.	The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to replace references to 'dwelling entitlement' with 'dwelling opportunity'.
Include appropriate discussion on how the proposed expanded 10ha equine industry areas will be maintained for equine purposes and not become de facto rural residential/lifestyle areas.	The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to include further detailed discussion of how the 10ha equine industry areas will be maintained for equine purposes. Primarily, it is proposed that a 'Key Sites' map is prepared and incorporated into the TRLEP 2010 with site-specific controls applicable to any proposed subdivision of land.
The 'preliminary mapped scenic values' and 'investigation area – RU2 Rural Landscape Zone' mapping be combined into a single 'scenic investigation' layer for better clarity and the evidence used to identify these initial areas be detailed in the final strategy.	The draft Strategy is proposed to be updated to combine the 'preliminary mapped scenic values' and 'investigation area – RU2 Rural Landscape Zone' mapping into a single 'scenic investigation' layer.
Consultation with DPIRD – Agriculture, NSW Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR), Energy Co and Transport for NSW be undertaken to inform the preparation of the final strategy.	Noted. Consultation with these agencies has occurred throughout the public exhibition of the Draft Strategy.
Oppose reducing the MLS for Eastern Rural Lands (Area 1). While it is recognised that parts of Area 1 have higher constraints for agriculture than some other parts of the LGA, the area is still considered highly important for agricultural production.	Amending the minimum lot size has the potential to weaken Tamworth's agricultural productivity by fragmenting land and introducing additional sensitive receptors into the landscape. In response to the previously proposed reduction of minimum lot sizes in rural areas, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture submitted that, <i>"These amendments are considered inconsistent with the New England North West Regional Plan and Section 9.1 and 9.2 Ministerial Directions, and pose a high risk to existing and future agricultural production in parts of the LGA."</i>
Oppose reducing the MLS for South Western Rural Lands (Area 2). While it is acknowledged that these lands contain inherent biophysical characteristics that provide ideal conditions for a range of agricultural activities, reducing the MLS will fragment this quality agricultural resource and reduce buffer distances with sensitive receivers.	
Further detail is required to justify reducing the MLS for Kingswood / Warral (Area 3a).	The final Strategy has been updated to include further justification for the proposed reduced MLS for Area 3a.

	<p>Notably, it is proposed that a 'Key Sites' map is prepared and incorporated into the TRLEP 2010 with site-specific controls applicable to the proposed subdivision of land for equine purposes only. This will support the growth of equine-related industries in the Tamworth Regional LGA in a strategic location in proximity to the Australian Equine and Livestock Events Centre (AELEC) while ensuring that Area 3a does not develop for rural residential purposes only.</p>
Support for the adjustment of the MLS for Kingswood / Warral (Area 3b), Daruka (Area 5b), Loomberah (Area 9a) and Administrative Changes (Areas 10a and 10b).	<p>Noted.</p>
Oppose the inclusion of R5 Large Lot Residential investigation areas as proposed for Kootingal / Moonbi (Area 4).	<p>Certain areas between Kootingal and Moonbi are proposed to be rezoned from RU4 Primary Production Small Lots to R5 Large Lot Residential with a minimum lot size of 2ha (Area 4).</p> <p>The proposed rezoning of Area 4 will contribute to the supply of diverse housing choice in an appropriate area of the Tamworth Regional LGA.</p> <p>A lot yield analysis has been prepared for the final Strategy, which concludes that a potential lot yield of 137 lots may be expected within Area 4.</p> <p>While this land is currently zoned for primary production, viable agricultural productivity is constrained due to its proximity to the centres of Kootingal and Moonbi and the potential for land use conflict. As a consequence, much of this land is already not used for primary production, but for residential living on large lots.</p>
Consider the impacts of the proposed amendments to Daruka (Area 5a) and the inefficient use of existing R5 zoned land creating demand for new rural residential housing opportunities in other locations that may be adjacent to productive agricultural land.	<p>An increase of the MLS in Daruka (Area 5a) from 2ha to 5ha has been proposed in recognition of a long-standing issue of water supply in Daruka and the need to encourage sustainable rural residential development.</p> <p>A lot yield analysis has been prepared for the final Strategy, which concludes that a potential lot yield of 252 lots may be expected within Area 5a.</p> <p>While this might suggest a reduction in the theoretical supply of R5 lots as the minimum lot size is proposed to be increased, the amendment is actually expected to significantly improve Tamworth Regional LGA's practical supply of R5 land as it will involve the removal of long-standing water supply restrictions that have previously significantly constrained rural residential development in existing R5 zoned areas of Daruka.</p>

<p>Oppose reducing the MLS for Moore Creek (Area 6) as providing a transition between adjacent rural lot sizes is not sufficient justification for reducing the MLS.</p>	<p>In accordance with feedback from key government and community stakeholders citing concerns over the potential increased risk of land use conflict and the loss of important agricultural land, the draft Rural Lands Strategy is proposed to be updated to no longer include amendments to Moore Creek - Area 6.</p> <p>Amending the minimum lot size has the potential to weaken Tamworth's agricultural productivity by fragmenting land and introducing additional sensitive receptors into the landscape.</p> <p>In response to the previously proposed reduction of minimum lot sizes in rural areas, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture submitted that,</p> <p><i>"These amendments are considered inconsistent with the New England North West Regional Plan and Section 9.1 and 9.2 Ministerial Directions, and pose a high risk to existing and future agricultural production in parts of the LGA."</i></p>
<p>Oppose reducing the MLS for Attunga (Area 7) as there is insufficient justification and there are a considerable number of smaller land parcels that would meet the needs of the equine industry in the LGA.</p>	<p>In accordance with feedback from key government and community stakeholders citing concerns over the potential increased risk of land use conflict and the loss of important agricultural land, the draft Rural Lands Strategy is proposed to be updated to no longer include amendments to Attunga - Area 7.</p> <p>The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture did not support this amendment, noting:</p> <p><i>"This proposal will lead to further fragmentation, the cumulative impacts of which on agriculture have not been fully assessed."</i></p> <p>A written submission was also received from Graymont, which outlined significant concerns around the potential for land use conflict through the introduction of additional residential dwellings in Attunga, and existing and future extractive resource operations.</p>
<p>Oppose the rezoning of Nundle (Area 8) as population data for Nundle does not suggest that there is a need for further R5 zoned land.</p>	<p>Certain land in Nundle (Area 8) is proposed to be rezoned to R5 Large Lot Residential. This proposal will contribute to the supply of diverse housing choice in an appropriate area of the Tamworth Regional LGA, with a modest increase in housing helping to provide additional rural living opportunities, supporting the local rural village community and ensuring that land use zones are consistent with existing land uses.</p> <p>A lot yield analysis has been prepared for the final Strategy, which concludes that the majority of existing</p>

	<p>lots within Area 8 are already developed with a lot size equal to approximately 2ha. A total yield of 18 lots is expected within Area 8.</p>
Oppose reducing the MLS for Loomberah (Area 9b).	<p>In accordance with feedback from key government and community stakeholders citing concerns over the potential increased risk of land use conflict and the loss of important agricultural land, the draft Rural Lands Strategy is proposed to be updated to no longer include amendments to Loomberah (Area 9b).</p> <p>Amending the minimum lot size has the potential to weaken Tamworth's agricultural productivity by fragmenting land and introducing additional sensitive receptors into the landscape.</p> <p>In response to the previously proposed reduction of minimum lot sizes in rural areas, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Agriculture submitted that,</p> <p><i>"These amendments are considered inconsistent with the New England North West Regional Plan and Section 9.1 and 9.2 Ministerial Directions, and pose a high risk to existing and future agricultural production in parts of the LGA."</i></p>
Support for the introduction of a RU2 Rural Landscape zone. However, these lands should be identified accurately and the current RU2 area being considered contains irrigated cropping lands, which should be zoned RU1 Primary Production.	<p>Noted. The draft Rural Lands Strategy does not intend to propose specific areas for the introduction of a RU2 Rural Landscape zone. Rather, the discussion and preliminary mapping of scenic values is provided in support of Action 7.1: <i>Prepare a Scenic Landscape Strategy and amend the TRLEP 2010 and TRDCP 2010 by introducing a scenic protection clause and accompanying mapping based on the outcomes of the strategy.</i> It is proposed that the findings of the Scenic Landscape Strategy will provide the basis for any future proposed rezoning.</p>

4 Conclusion

A comprehensive engagement program has been undertaken to allow the Tamworth community and key stakeholders to identify their needs, priorities and aspirations for the Tamworth Regional LGA's rural lands.

An extensive engagement program was undertaken with the community and wider stakeholders, including:

- Tamworth Regional Council Have Your Say webpage;
- Community survey;
- Community information drop in sessions
- Councillor briefing;
- Council staff internal workshop;
- Government agency stakeholder roundtable briefing; and
- Local and industry stakeholder meetings.

Participation across the public exhibition of the draft Strategy included:

- 62 'Have Your Say' contributions;
- 1,750 Have Your Say webpage views and 970 visitors;
- Approximately 45 community attendees at five drop-in sessions;
- 10 stakeholder workshops/discussions; and
- Government agency roundtable briefing.

Discussions included the opportunities, concerns, priorities and aspirations associated with a wide range of land uses within the Tamworth rural lands.

Responses were gained from a range of different stakeholders including from industry experts, local business and community service providers, relevant government agencies and the residents of the Tamworth Regional LGA.

The following key themes were repeatedly mentioned throughout the engagement:

- Demand for the construction of dwellings in rural areas;
- Potential land use conflict associated with the construction of dwellings in rural areas;
- Agricultural productivity;
- Water security;

- Protection of environmental and scenic values in rural areas; and
- Potential impacts of renewable energy projects on rural lands.

4.1 Next Steps

The findings and recommendations of this Engagement Outcomes Report will be considered by Tamworth Regional Council.

Subject to Council's consideration, the strategy will be updated in accordance with the recommendations, with an updated draft Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy will be submitted to Council for final adoption.

The Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy will be forwarded to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure seeking endorsement. If endorsed, the Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy will become a key strategic document for future, more detailed land use planning, such as to amend the *Tamworth Regional Local Environmental Plan 2010*.



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