



TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL

ANNEXURES for ORDINARY COUNCIL AGENDA

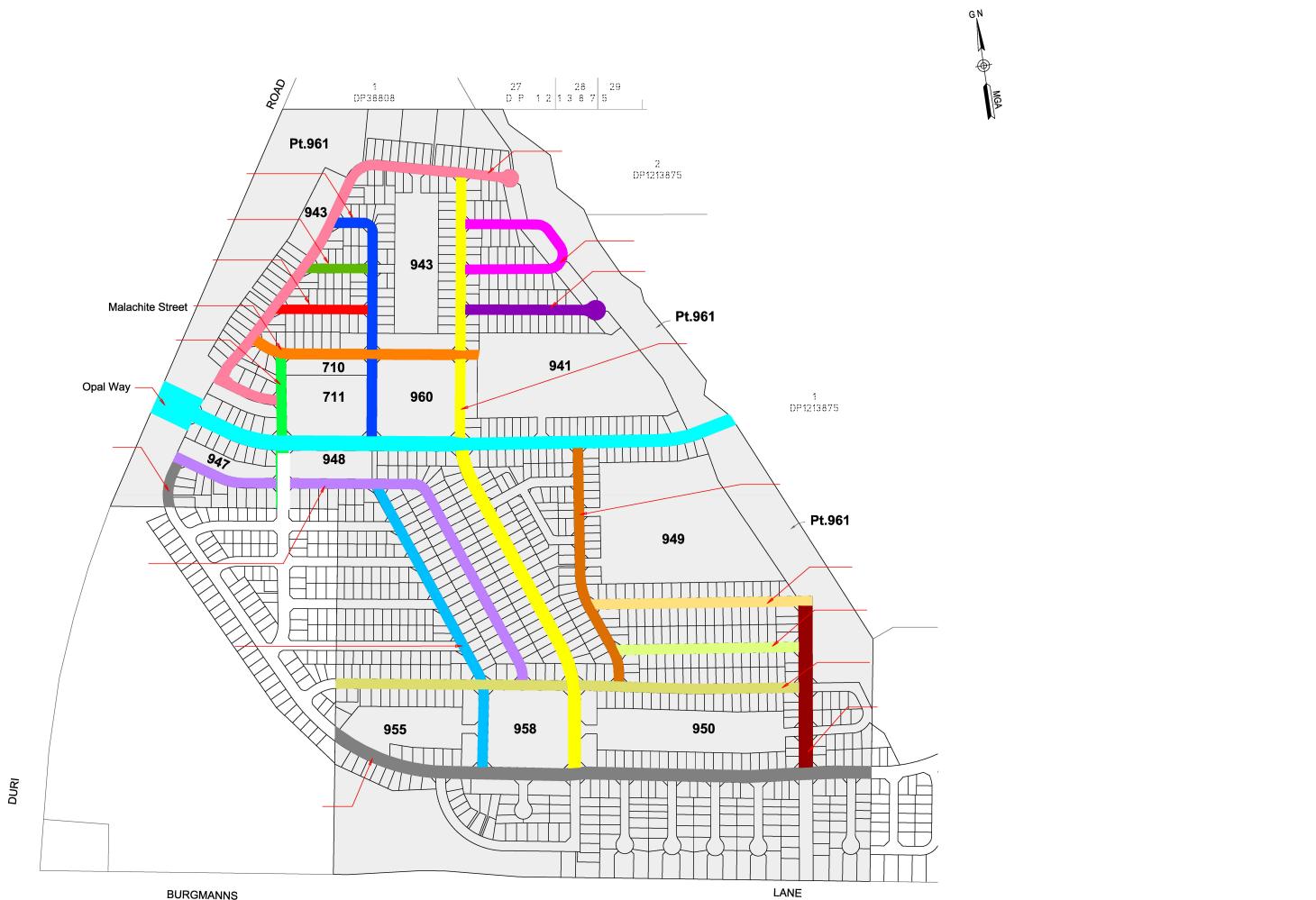
29 APRIL 2025

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26/02/2023	I	03061 FOR REVIEW	RTM	RTM
DATE	REV	DESCRIPTION	PREPARED	CHECKED
REVISIONS				

SCALE METRE
0 40 80 120 160 200 240 280 320 360 400
1:10000

CLIENT	MAAS PROPERTIES PTY LTD
SHEET TITLE	ARCADIA ESTATE STREET NUMBERING PLAN
SITE ADDRESS	DURI ROAD, HILLVUE, 2340
SITE DETAILS	LOT 1 IN DP1198645 AND LOT 6 IN DP1211122

	JOB CODE
	AR1 S_SR05
SHEET NUMBER	REV
01 / 01	1



Tamworth Regional Council

Locality Map

Proposed Road Naming for Arcadia West

Scale @ A4: 1:64,000

Printed: 27-Mar-2025

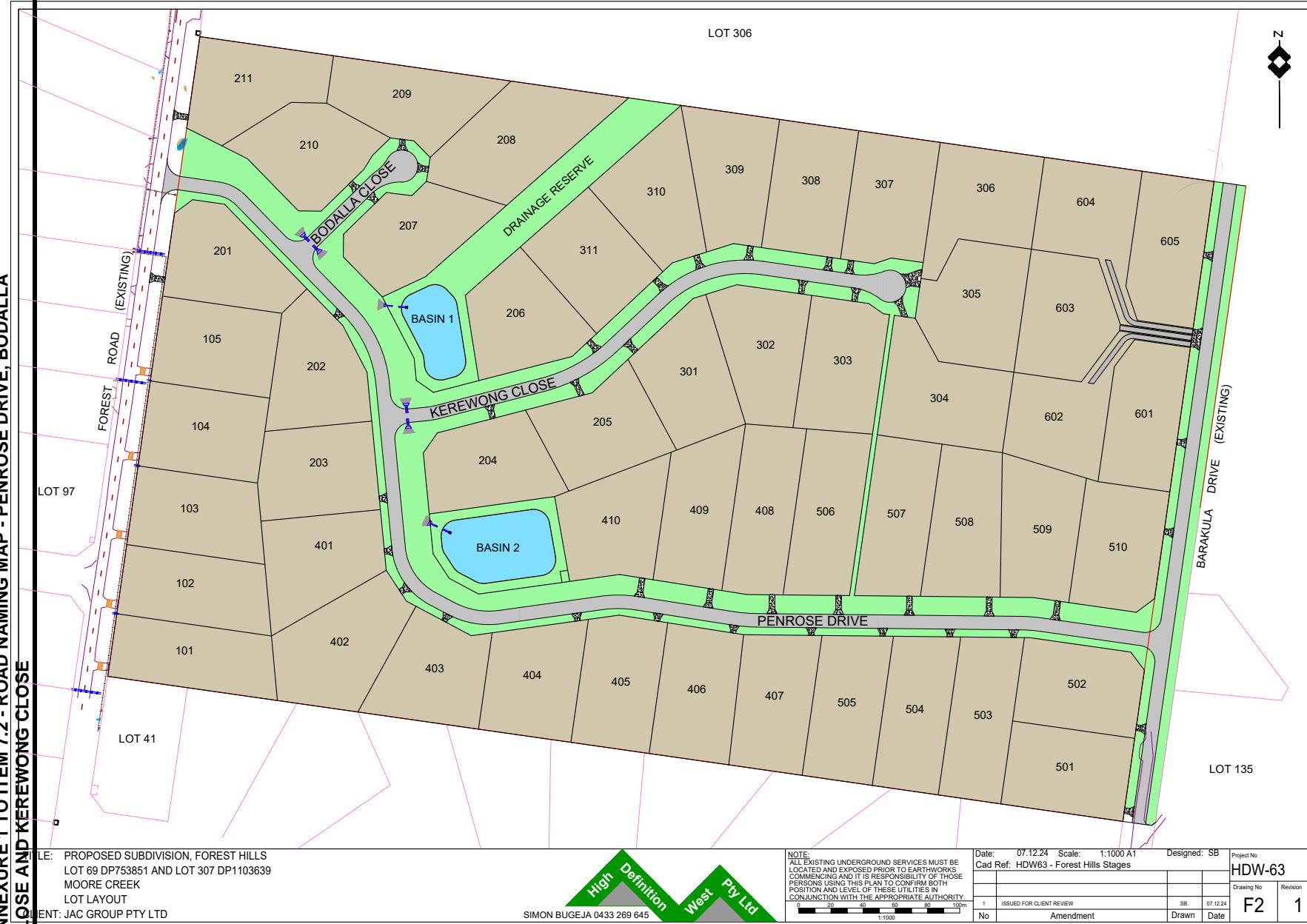
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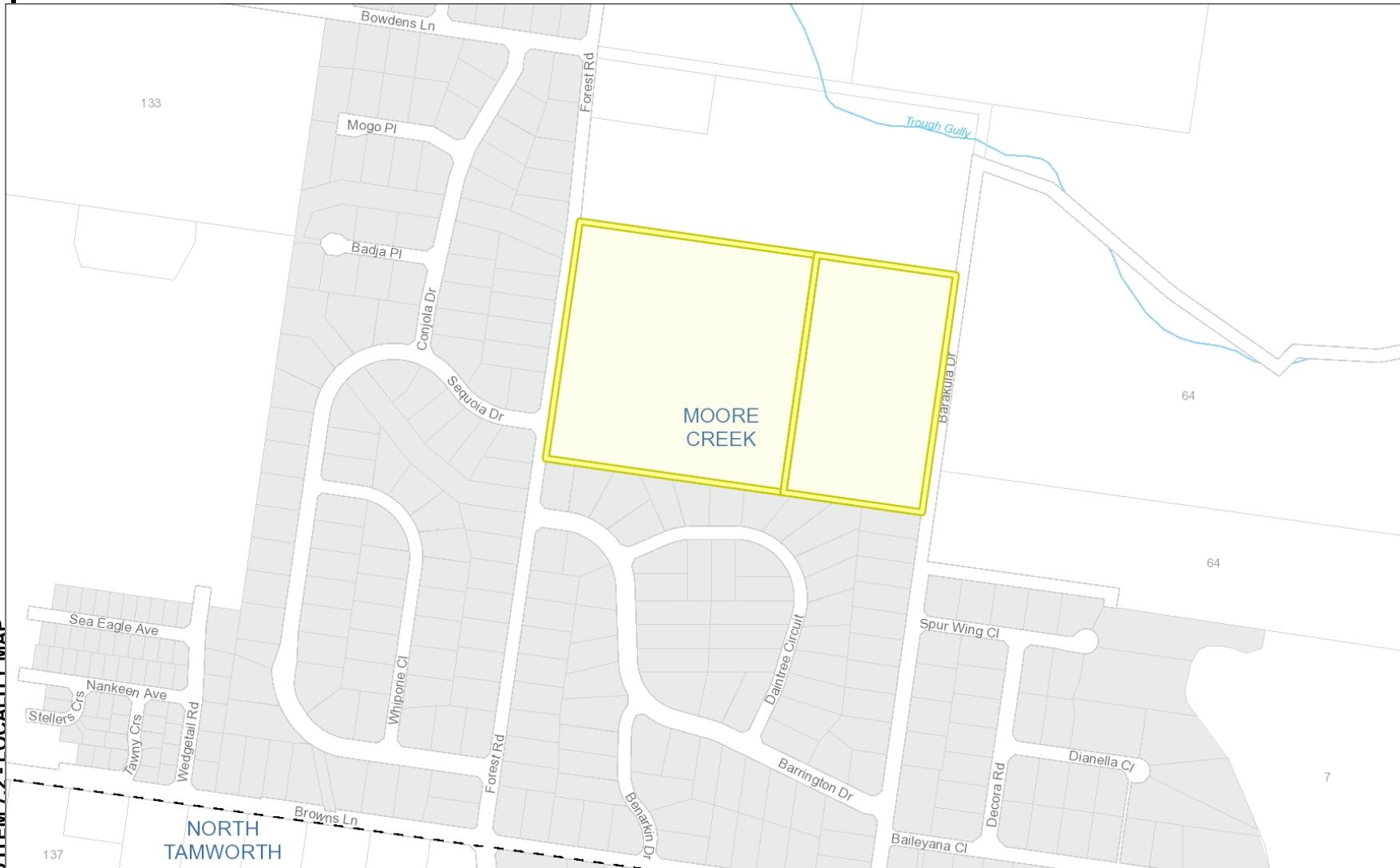
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Tamworth Regional Council

Forest Road
Locality Map

Scale @ A4: 1:8,000

Printed: 12-Feb-2025

By: Development

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GYDE

DRAFT Tamworth Regional Rural Lands Strategy

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.

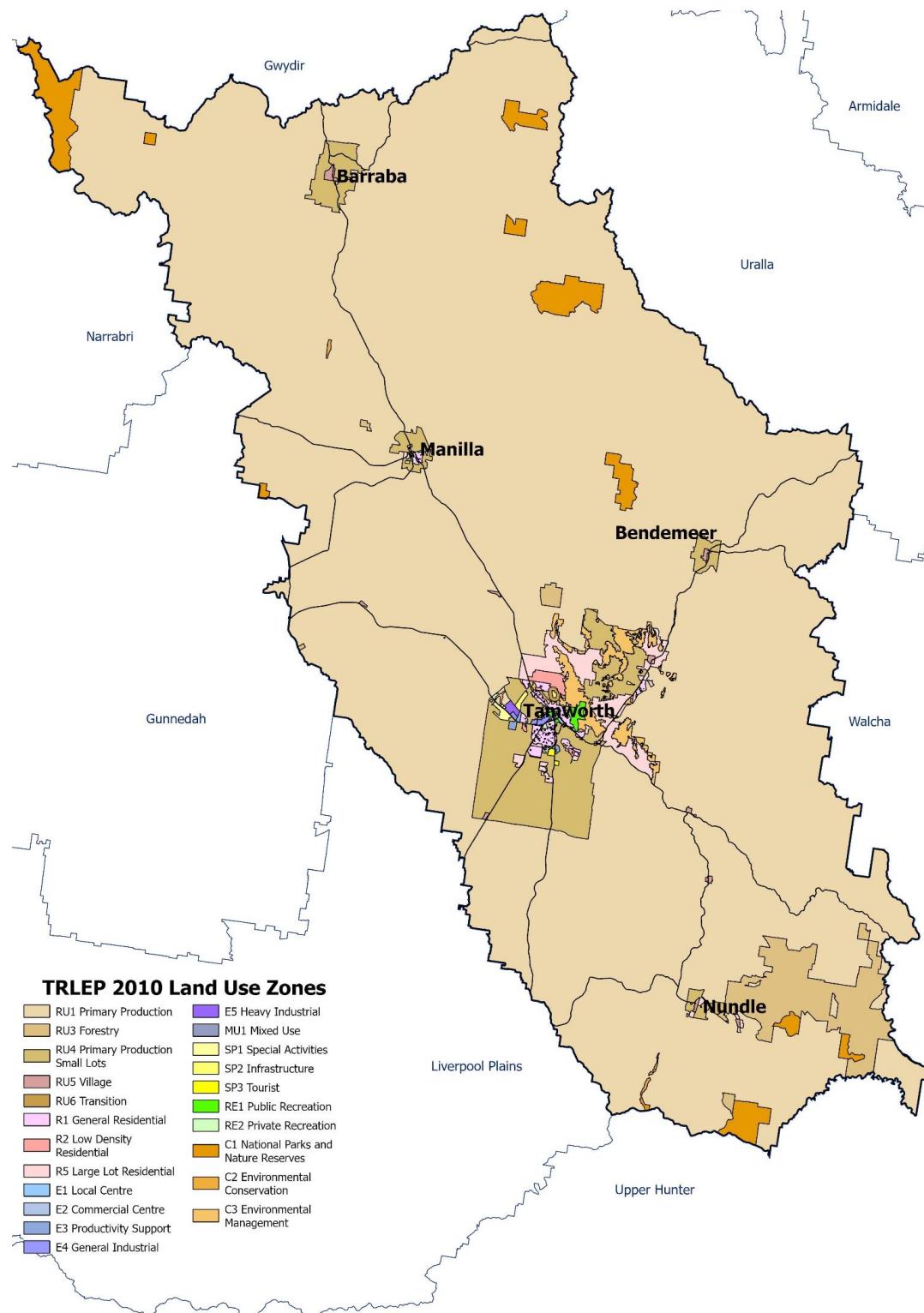


Figure 2: Land use zones in the Tamworth Regional LGA.

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.

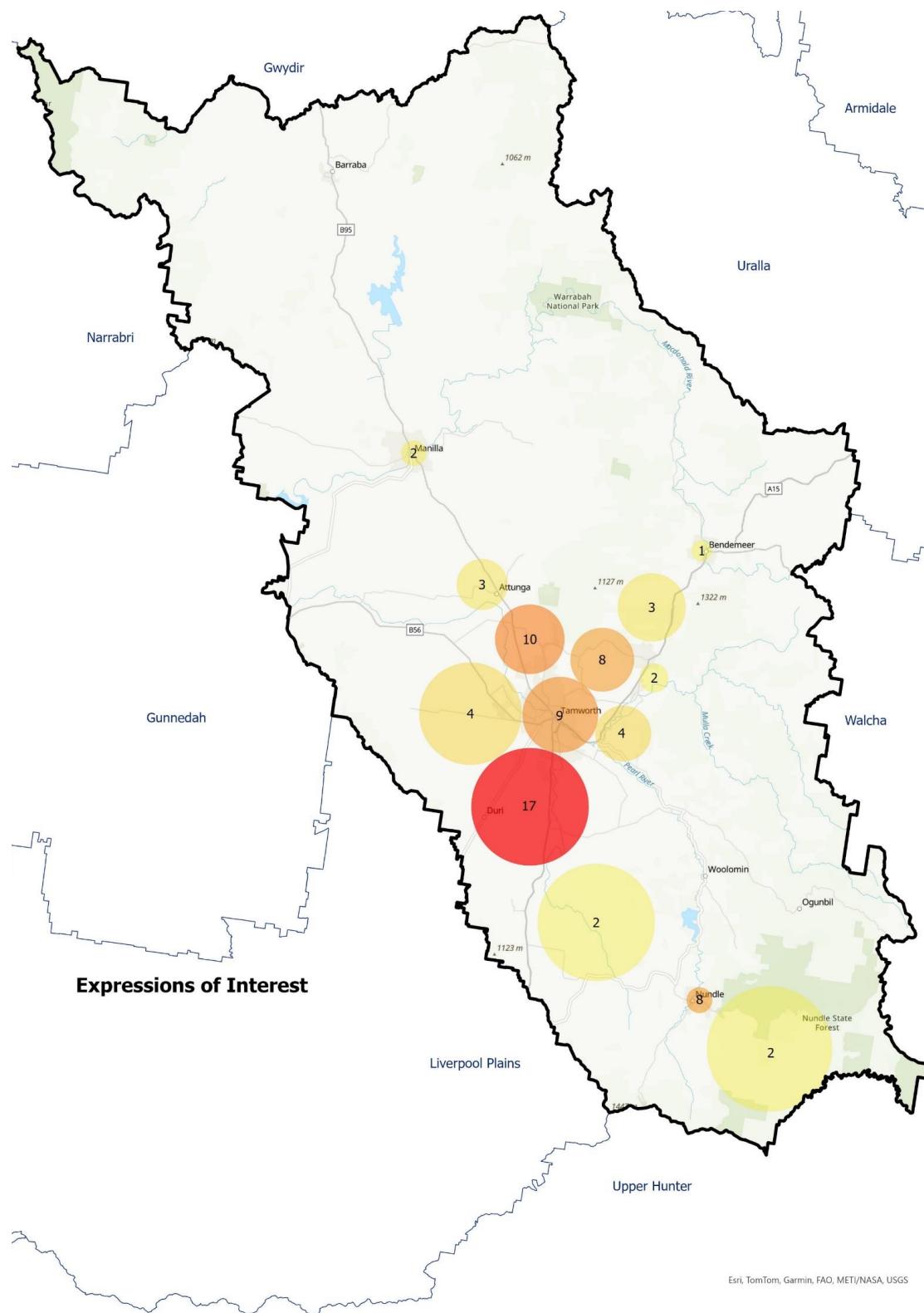


Figure 3: Landowner Expressions of Interest.

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.

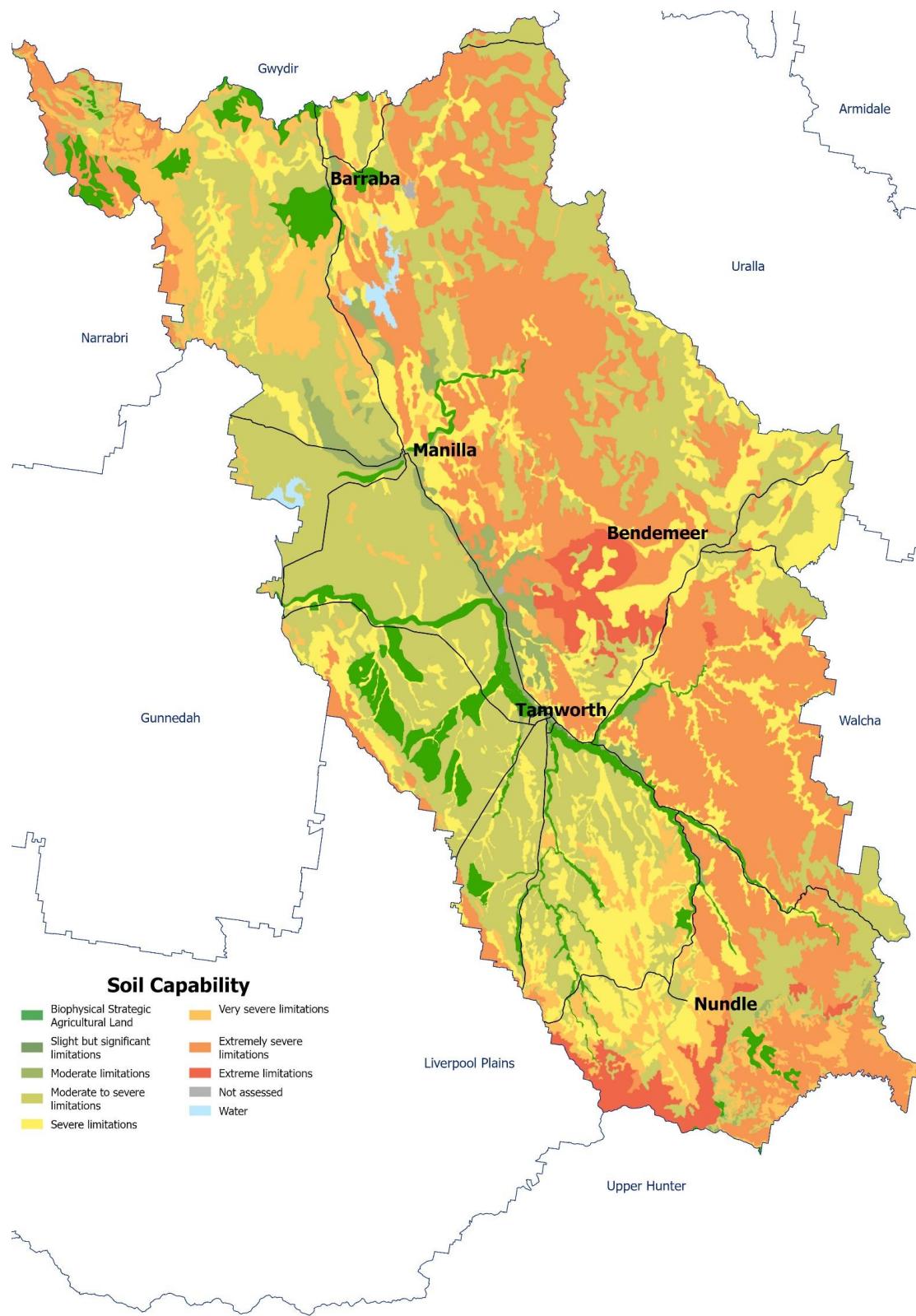


Figure 4: Soil Capability.

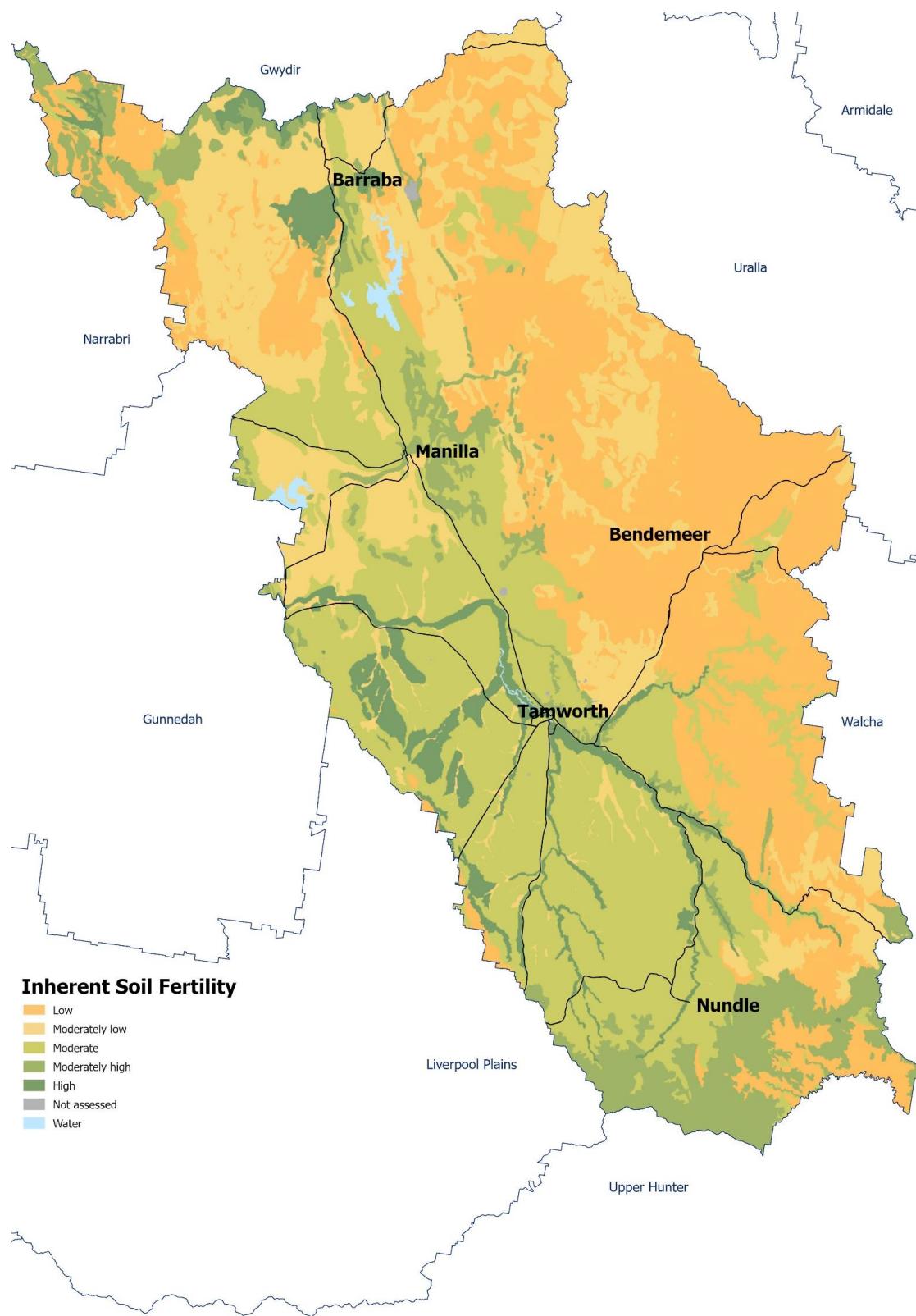


Figure 5: Inherent Soil Fertility.

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.

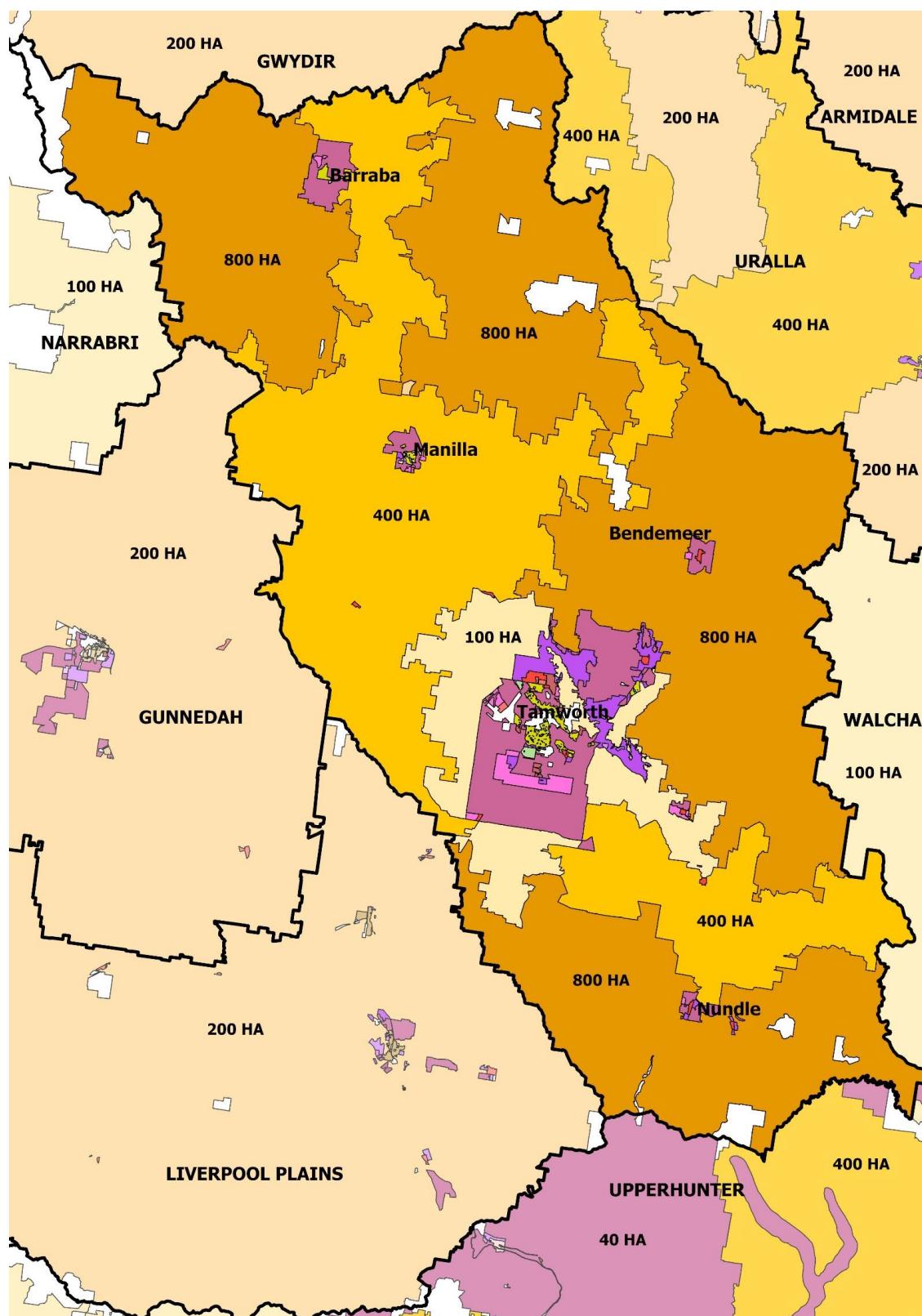


Figure 6: Current TRLEP 2010 minimum lot size in rural areas.

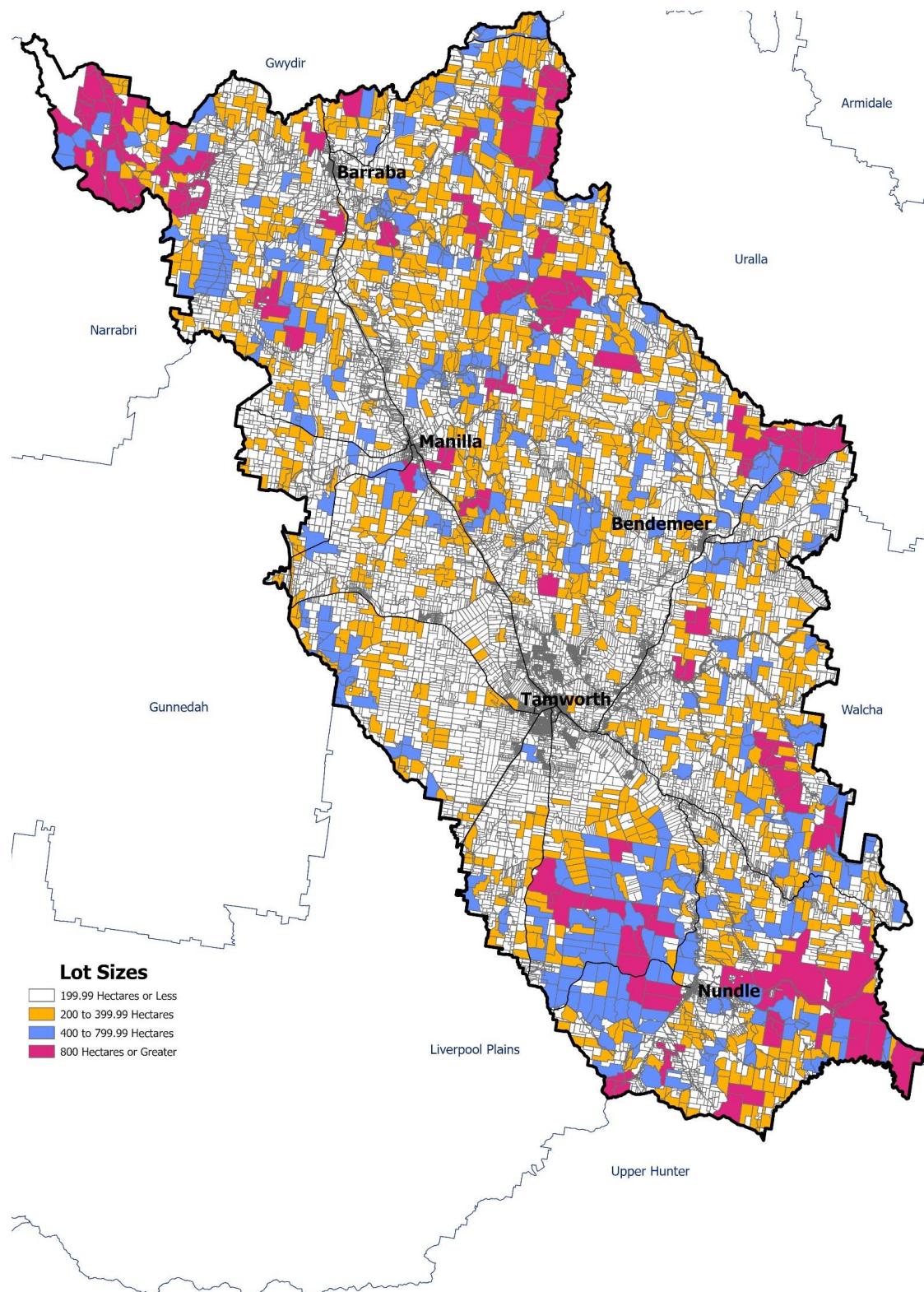


Figure 7: Actual lot size.

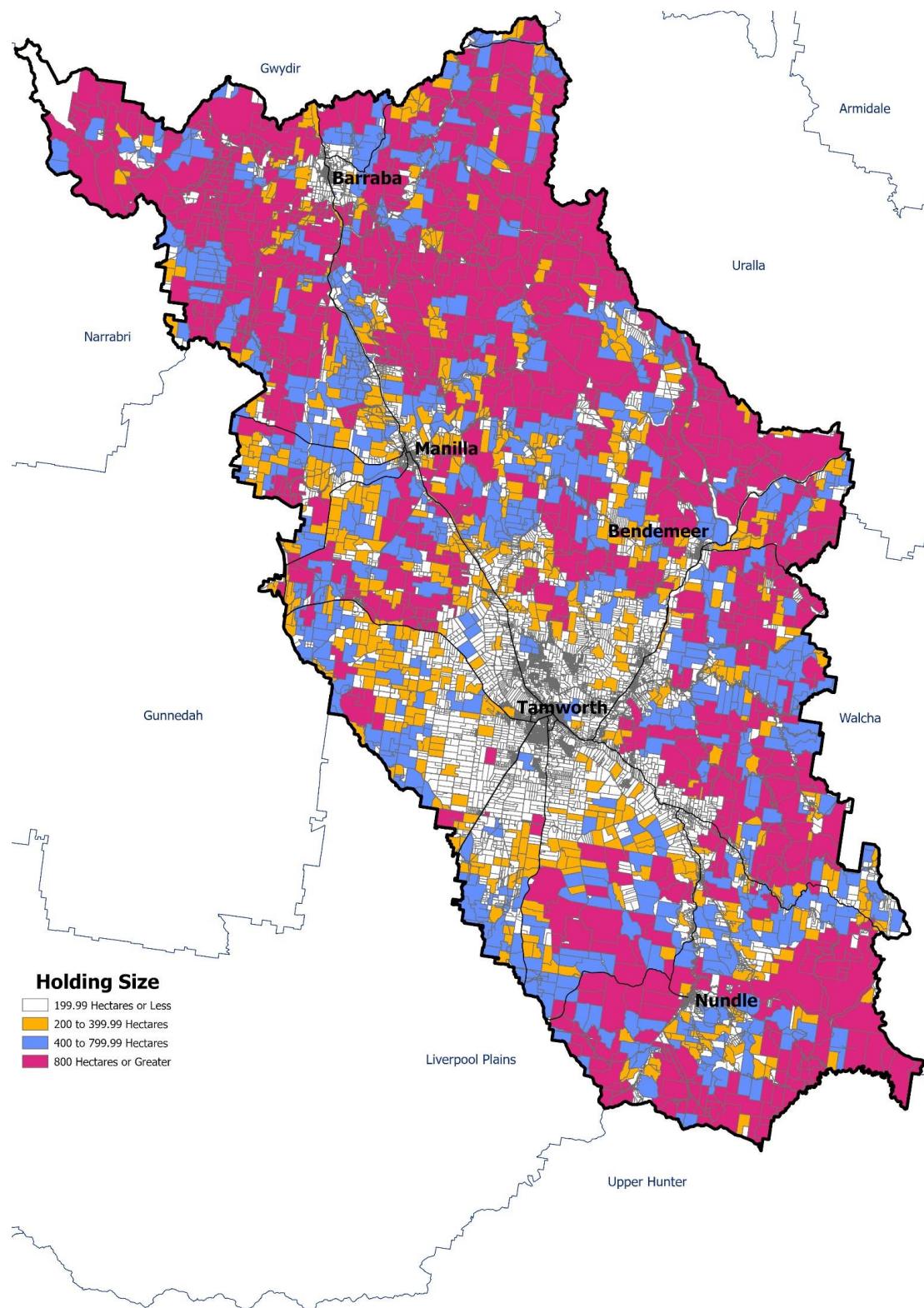


Figure 8: Holding lot size.

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.

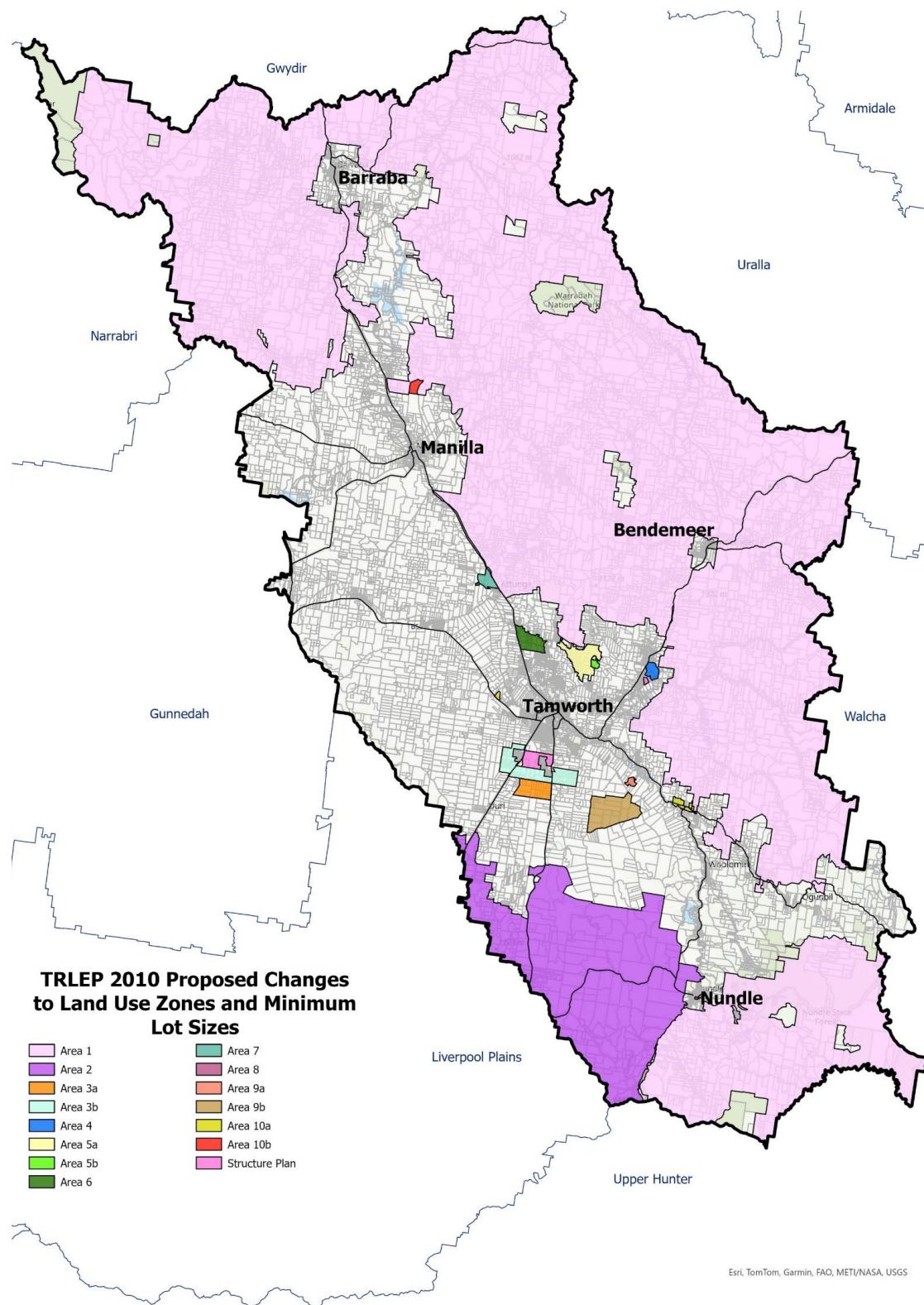


Figure 9: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (LGA-wide).

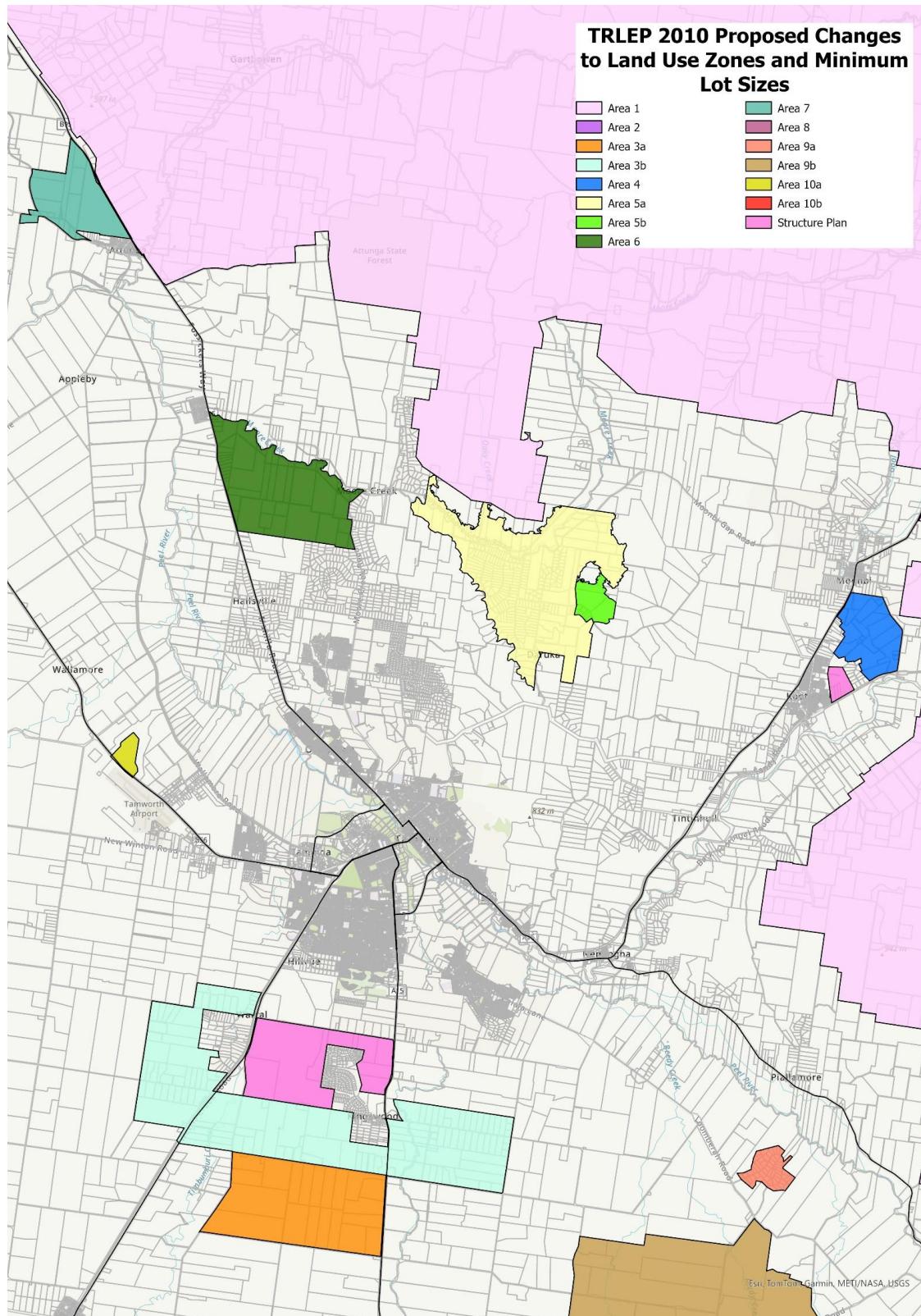


Figure 10: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (Tamworth City surrounds).

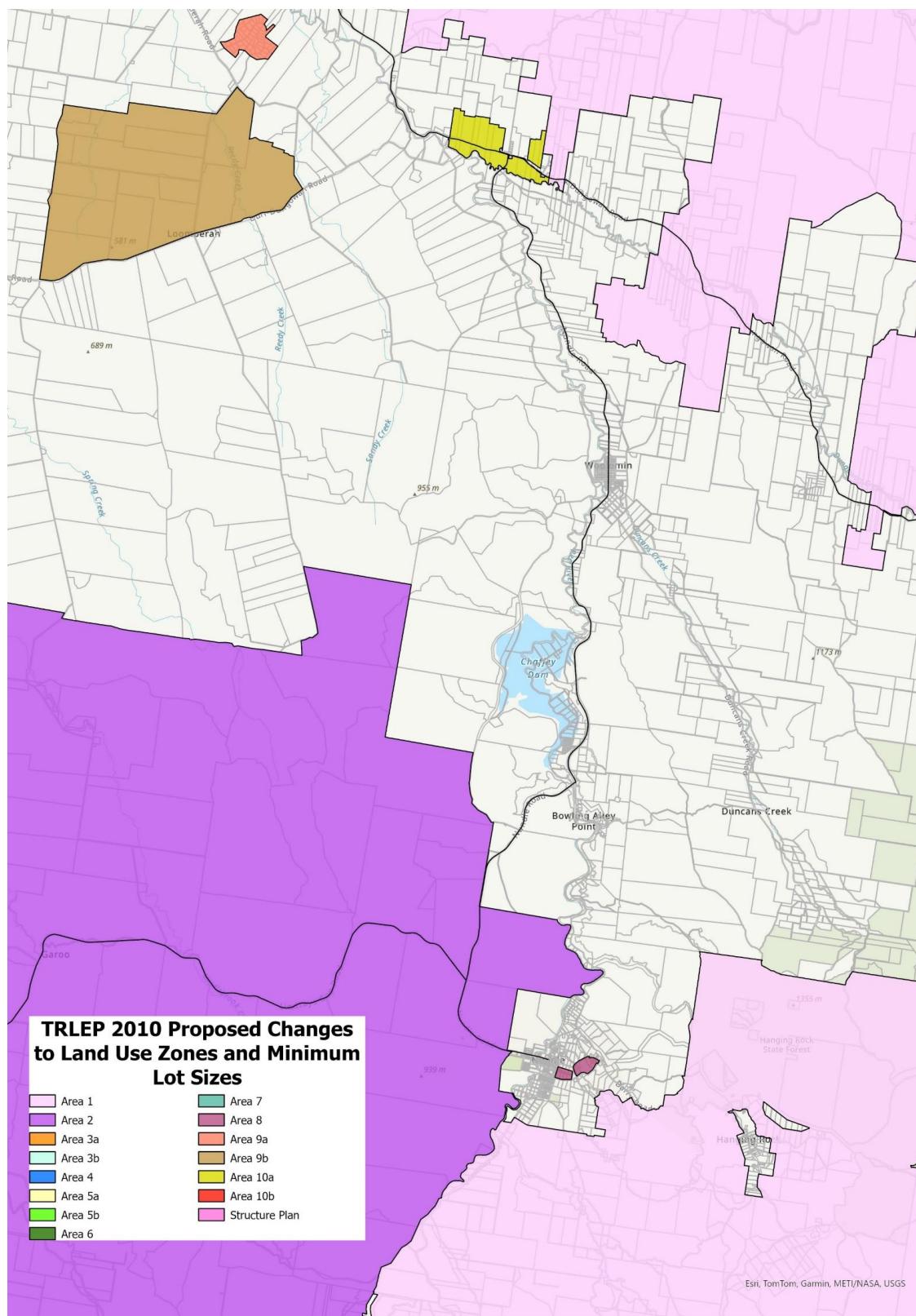


Figure 11: Proposed land use zone and minimum lot size amendments (Nundle surrounds).

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 northeast 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.

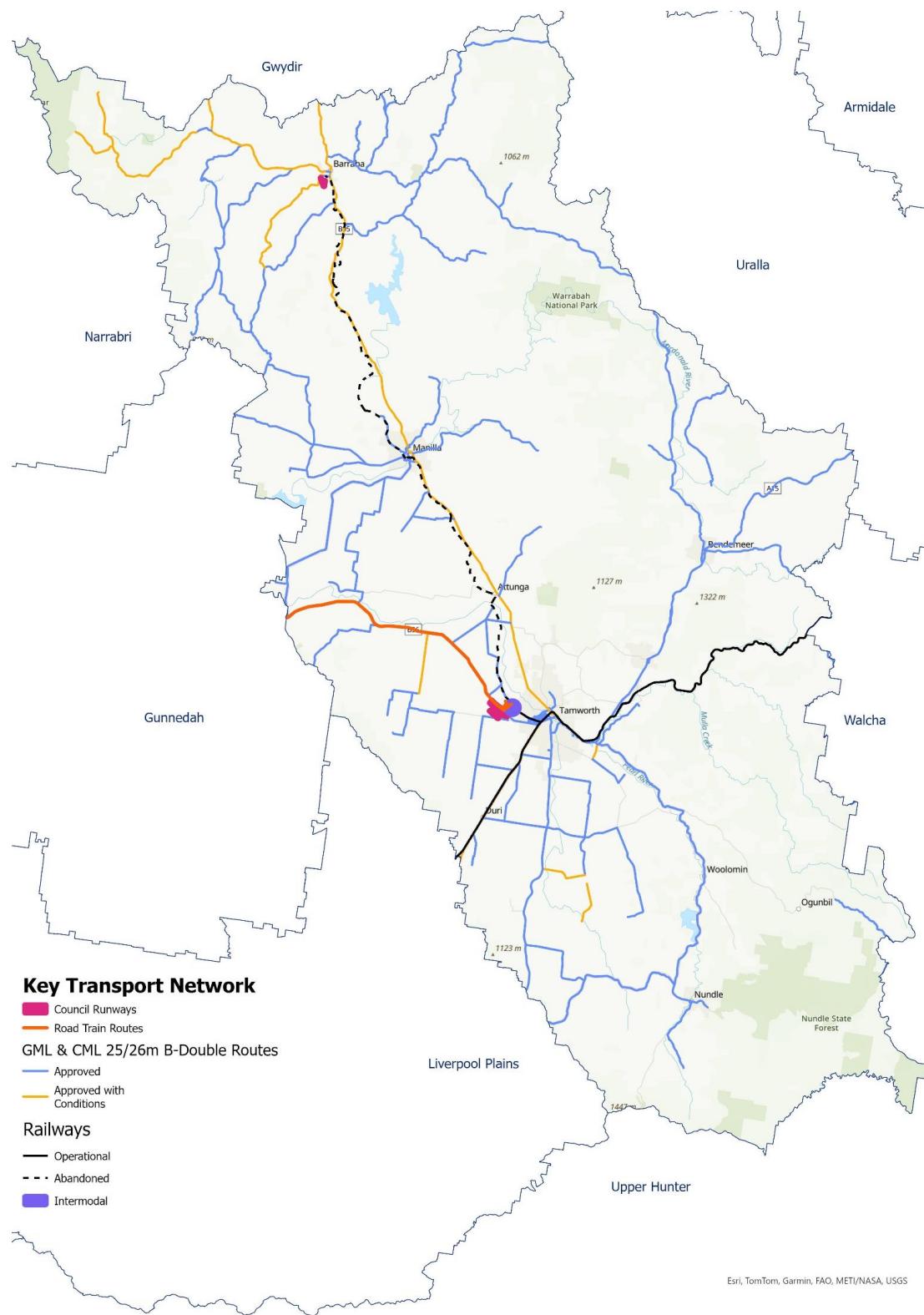


Figure 12: Key transport network.

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.

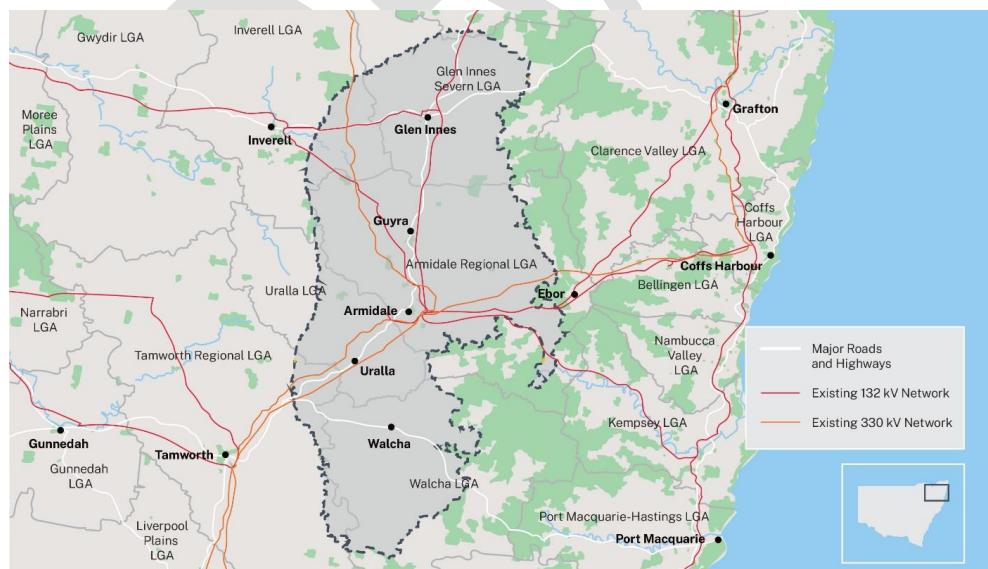


Figure 13: New England Renewable Energy Zone (NEREZ).

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

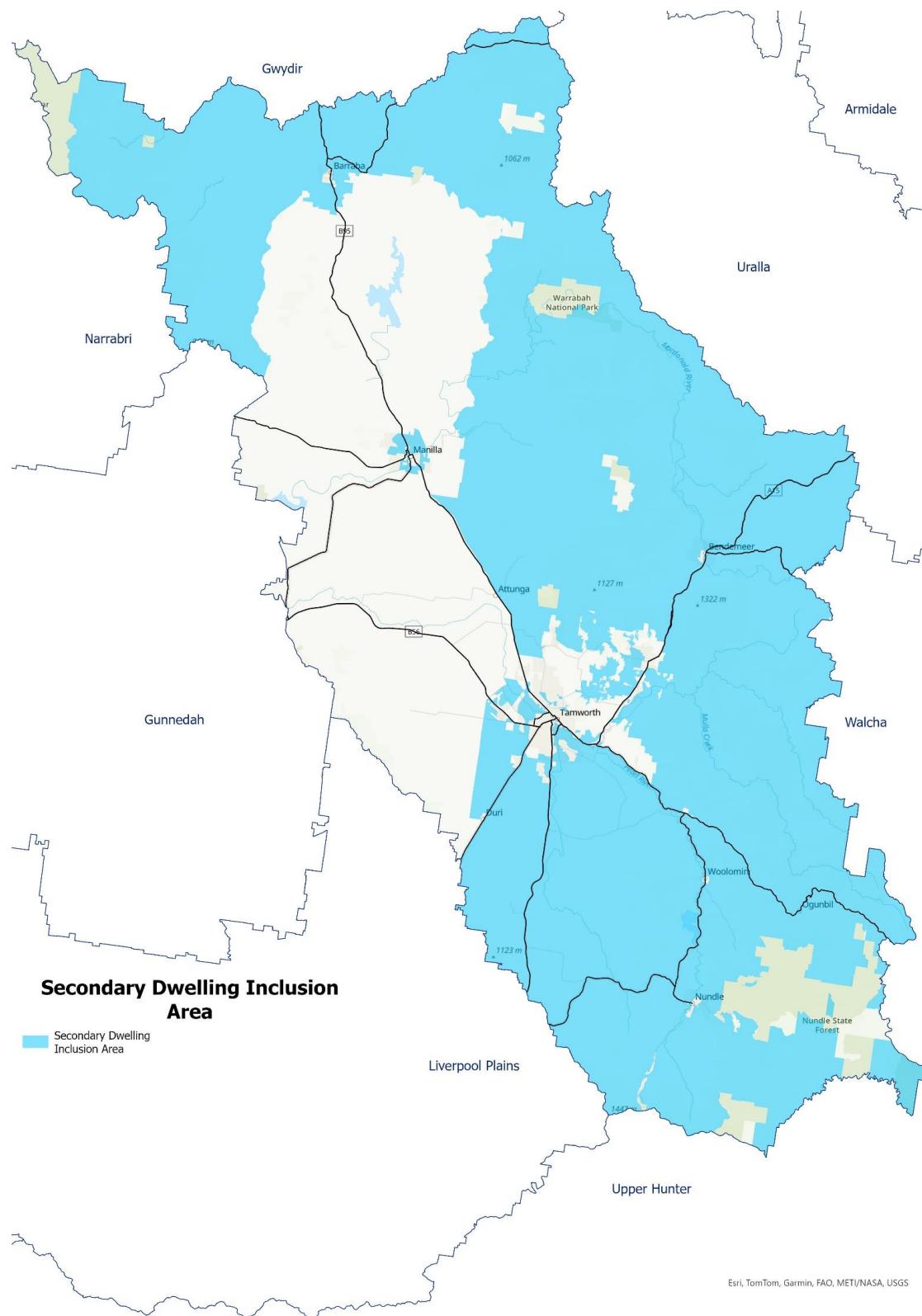


Figure 14: Secondary dwelling inclusion zone.

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.

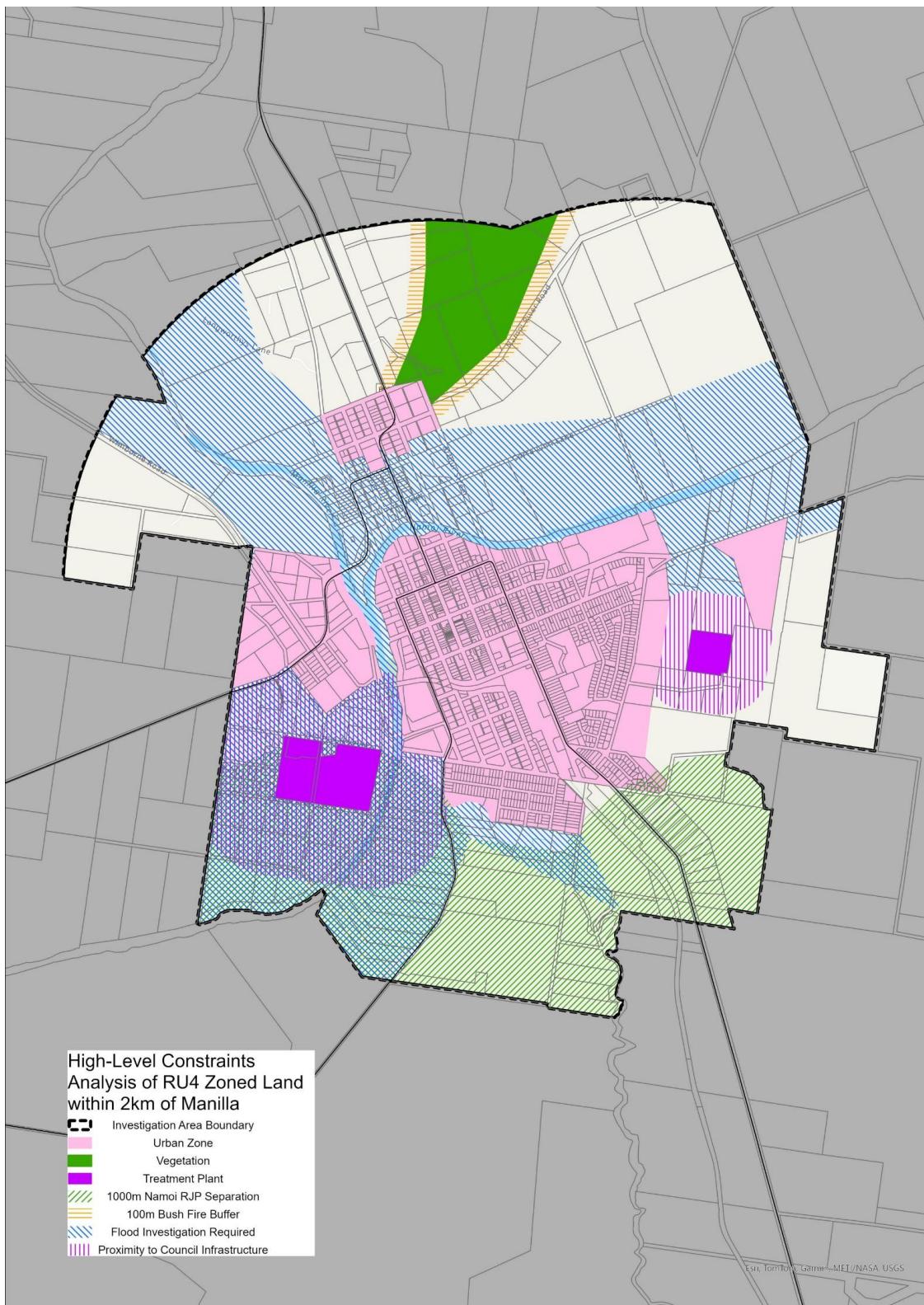


Figure 15: High level constraints map - Manilla.

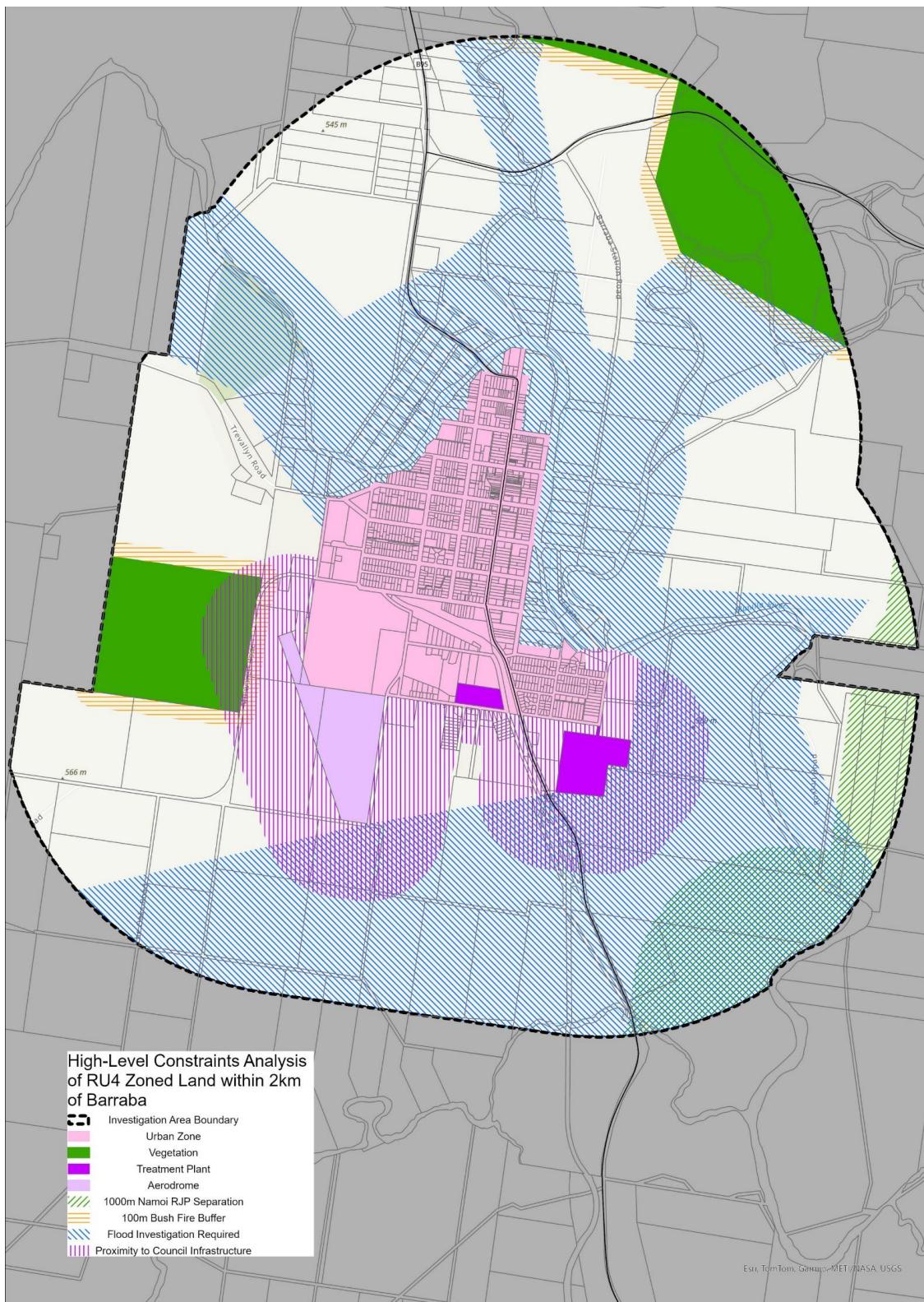


Figure 16: High level constraints map - Barraba.

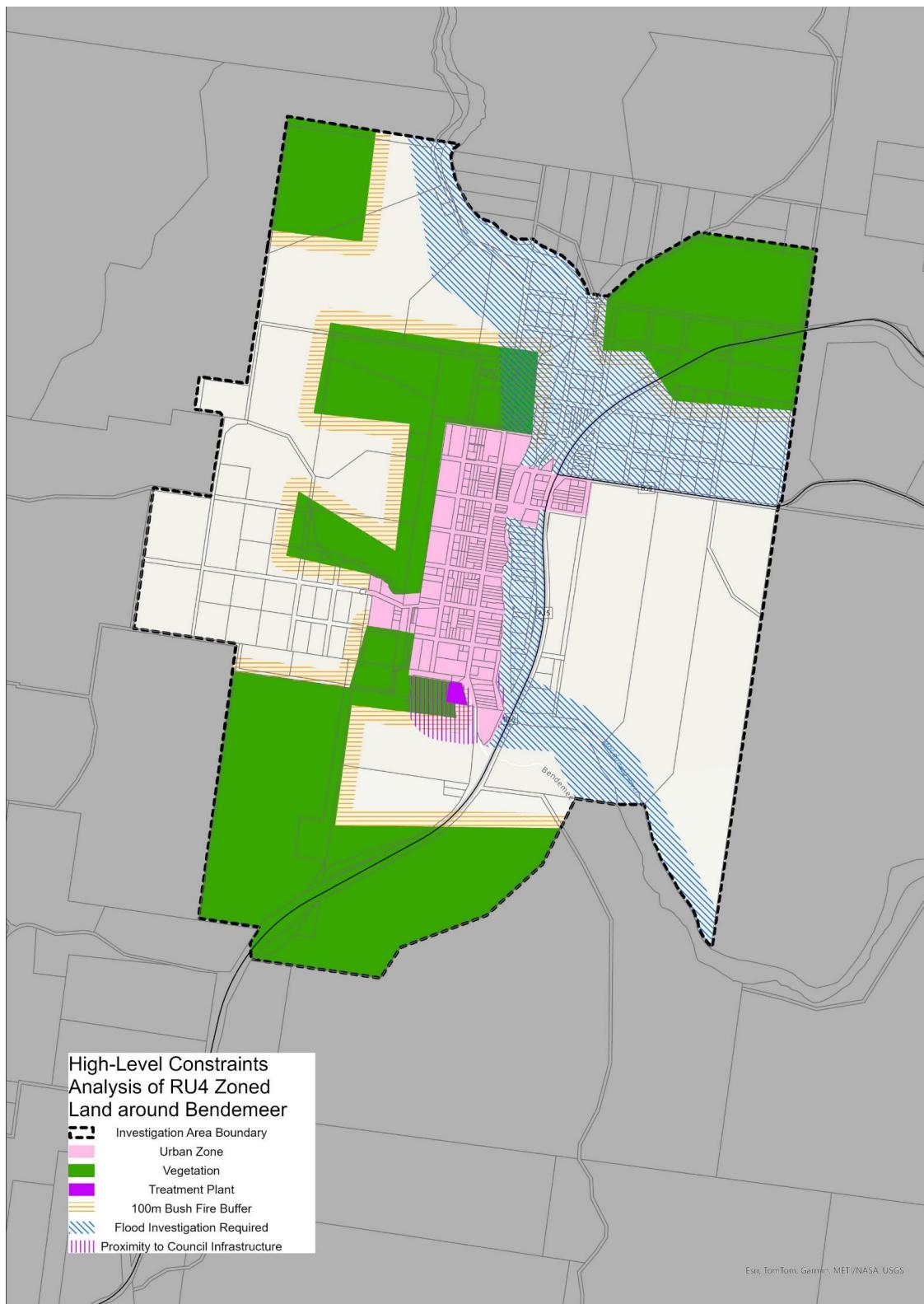


Figure 17: High level constraints map - Bendemeer.

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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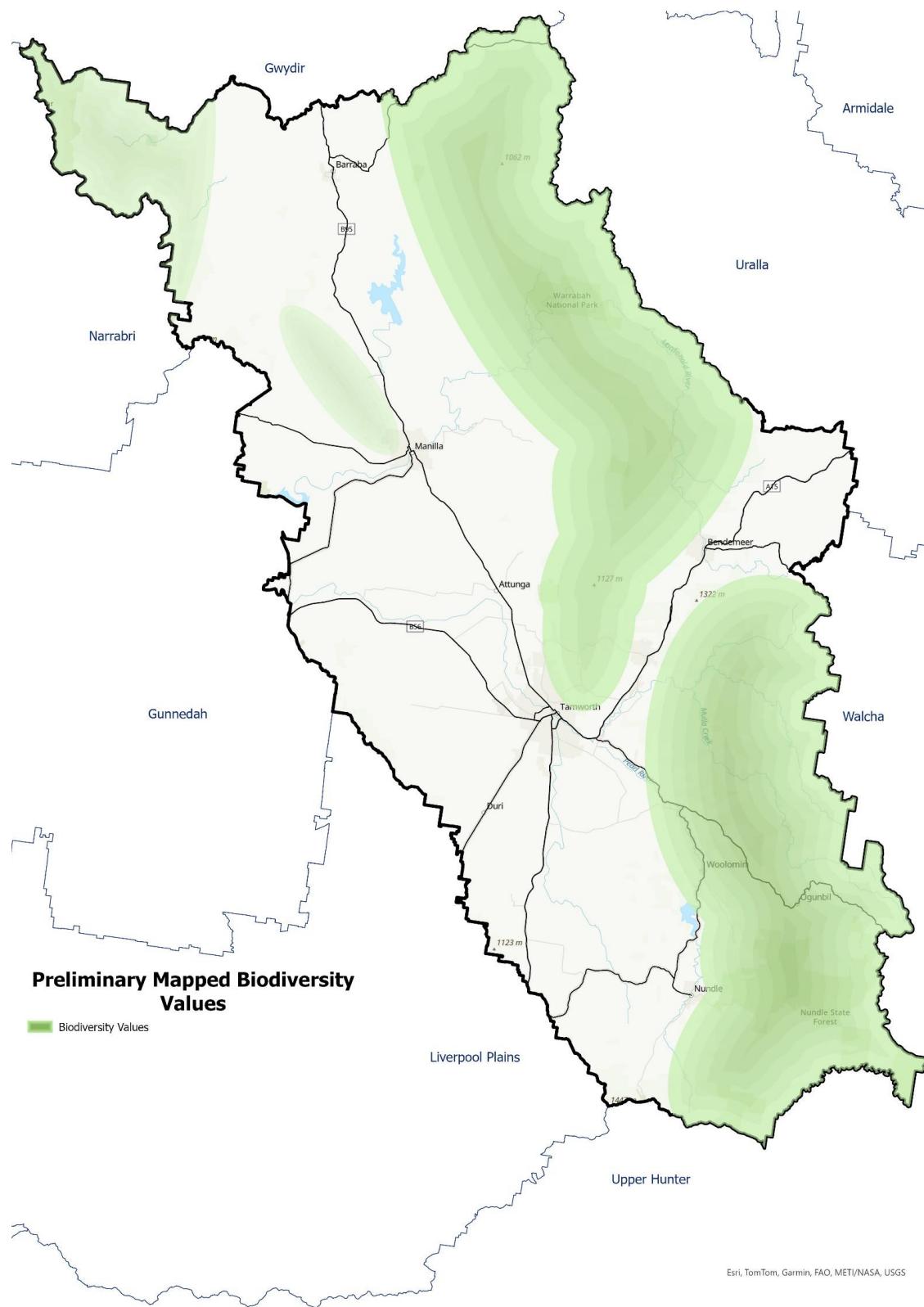


Figure 18: Preliminary mapped biodiversity values.

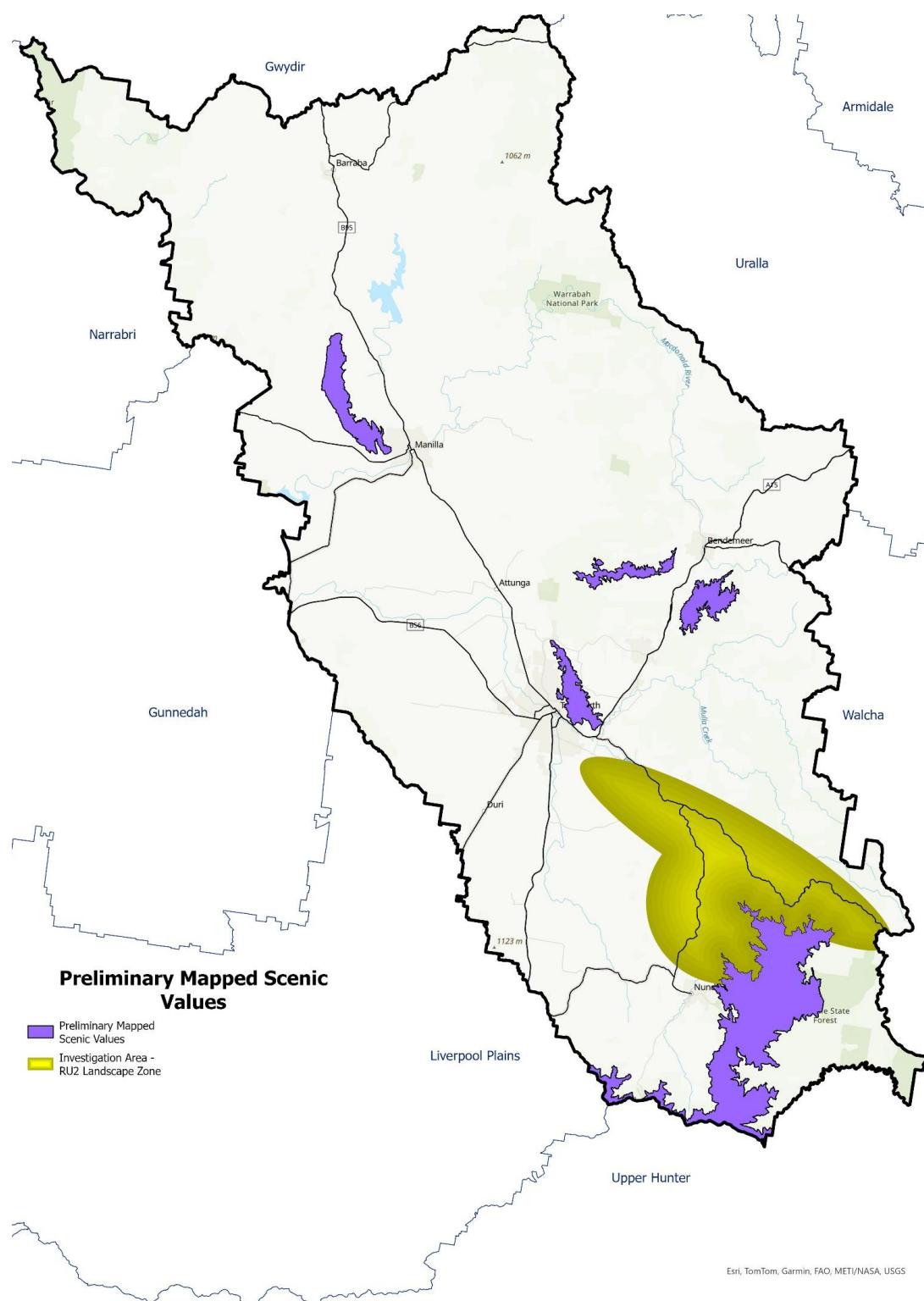


Figure 19: Preliminary mapped scenic values.

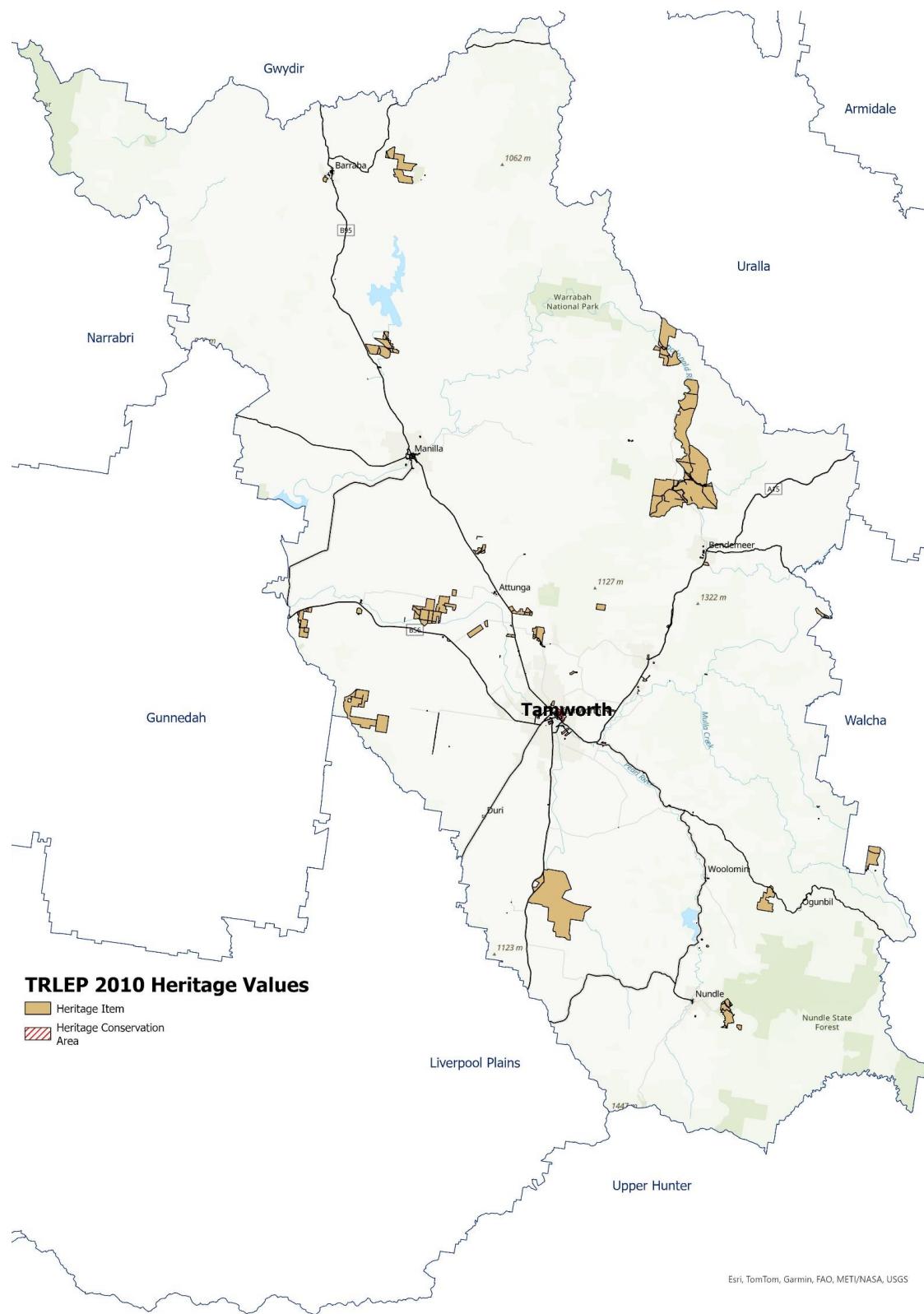


Figure 20: TRLEP 2010 Heritage Values.

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.

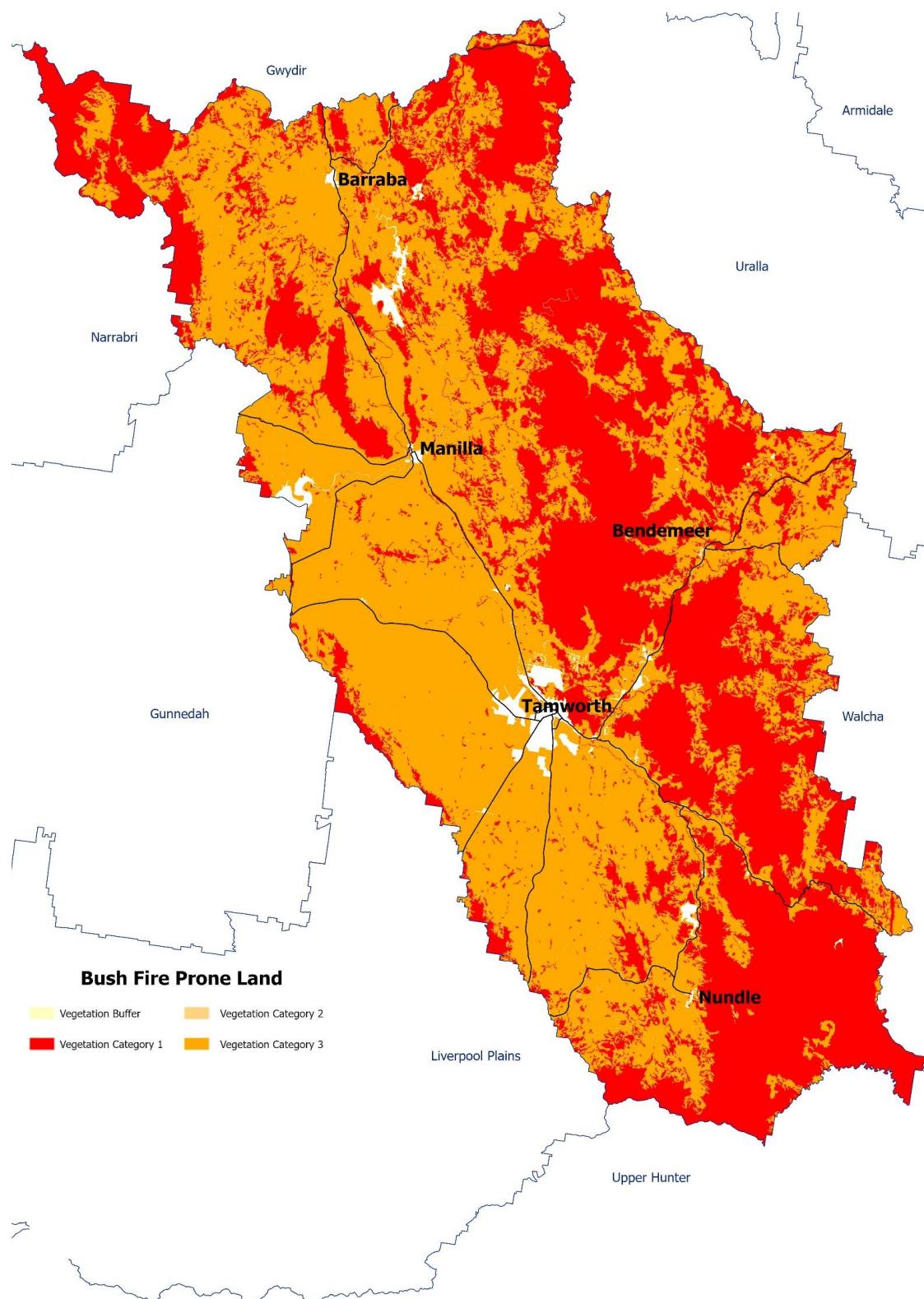


Figure 21: Bush Fire Prone Land.

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
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 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

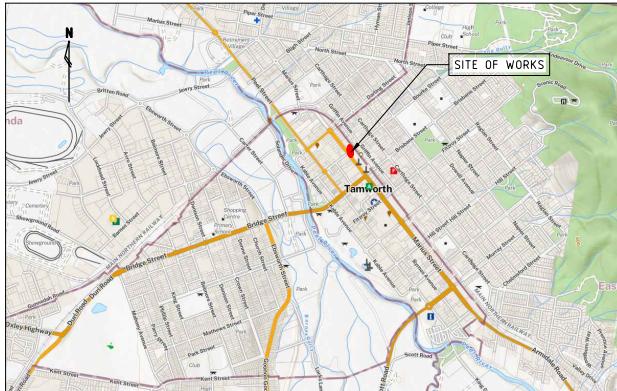




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LOCALITY PLAN
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PREPARED BY REGIONAL
SERVICES DIRECTORATE
SURVEY & DESIGN

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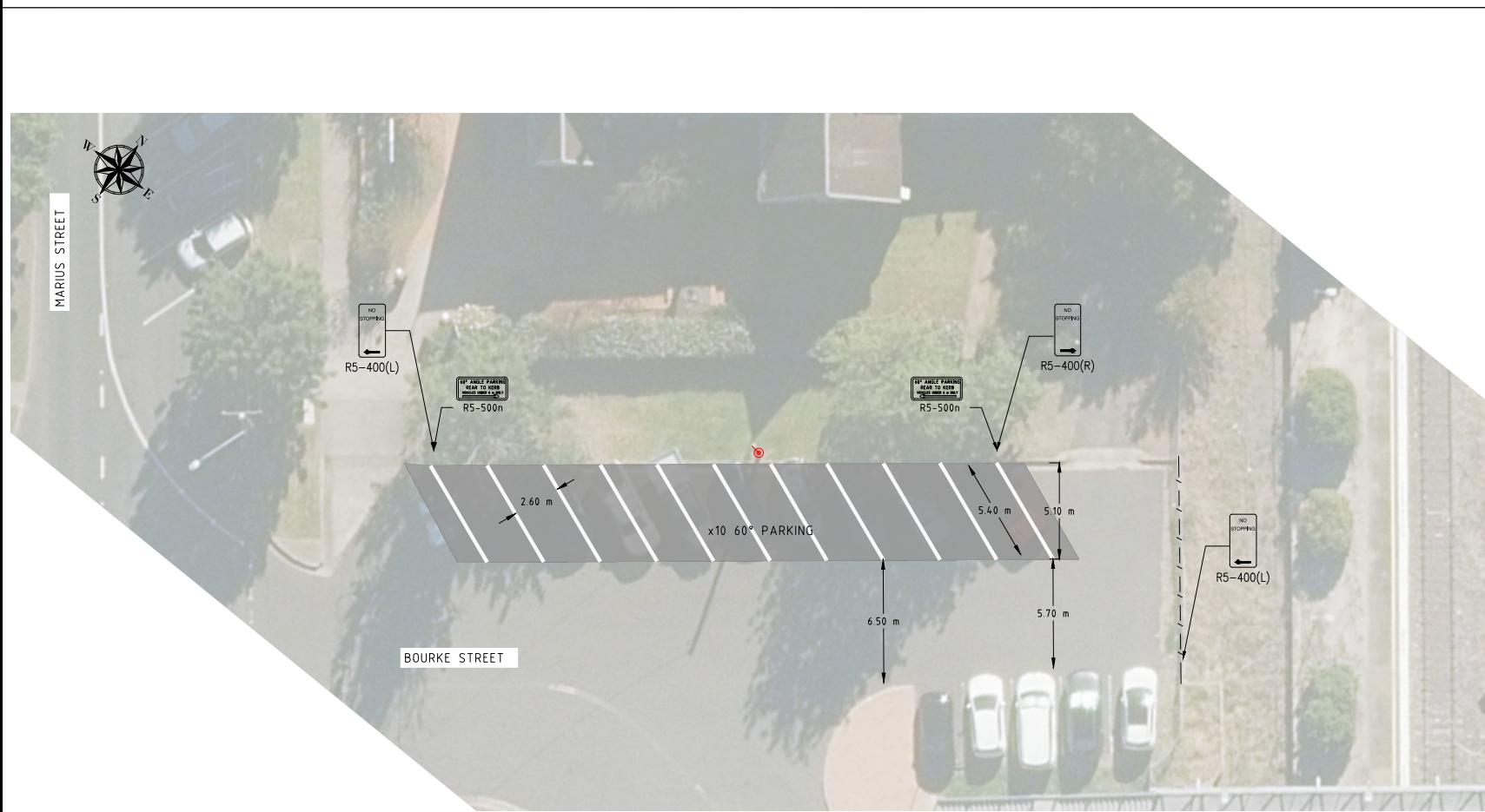
SHEET INDEX

SHEET INDEX

LEGEND

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GAS MAIN AND PIT		GAS
GATE, FENCE		
GUARD RAIL		
MAIL BOX		
OPTIC FIBRE (OPTUS)		OPTO
OPTIC FIBRE (AARNET)		OPTP
OPTIC FIBRE (TELSTRA)		OPTT
PROPERTY BOUNDARY		
OVERHEAD POWER HV		OHP
UNDERGROUND ELECTRICITY		UGE
POWER POLE		
LIGHT POLE		
SEWER MAIN (& SIZE)		SM 150
SEWER SERVICE CONNECTION		SM
SEWER MANHOLE		
STORMWATER (& SIZE)		SW 375
STORMWATER MANHOLE		
TELSTRA CABLES AND PIT		TC
INDICATIVE SERVICE NOT ABLE		WM ??
TO BE LOCATED		WM ??
SIGN		
TREE		
POTHOLE		
CONTROL POINT		
WATER MAIN (& SIZE)		WM 100
WATER SERVICE CONNECTION		
PROPOSED WATER MAIN		WM 150
PROPOSED SEWER MAIN		SM 150
PROPOSED STORMWATER LINE		
PROPOSED DESIGN ALIGNMENT		





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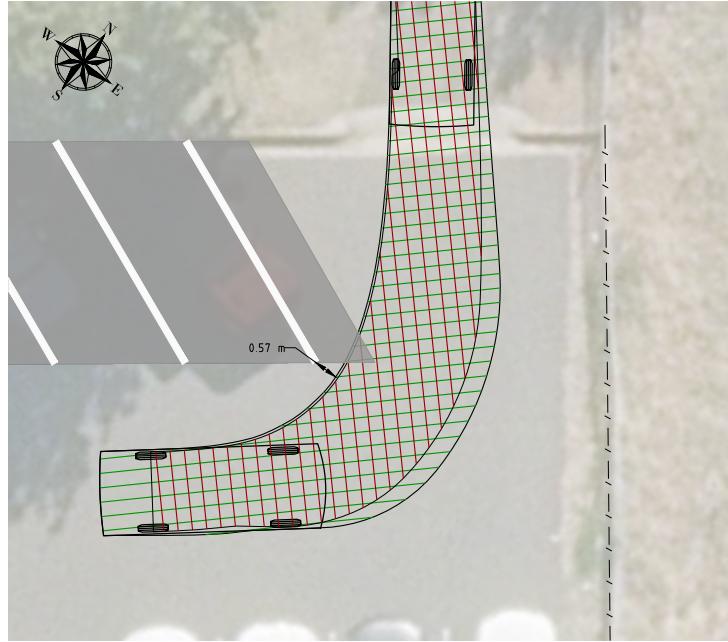
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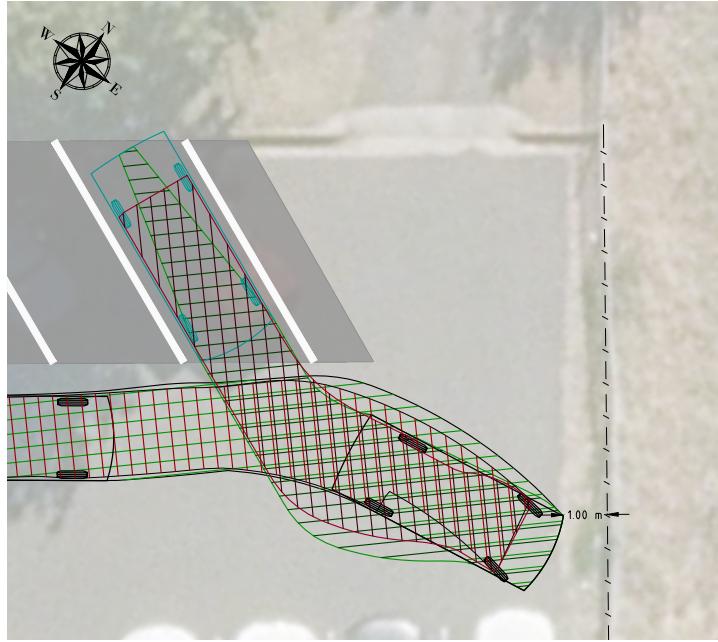
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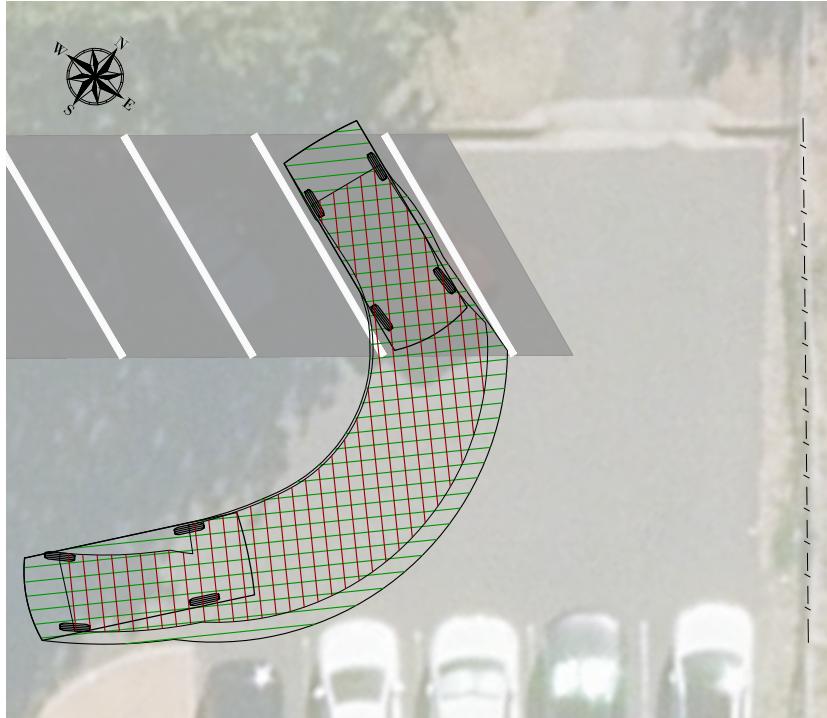
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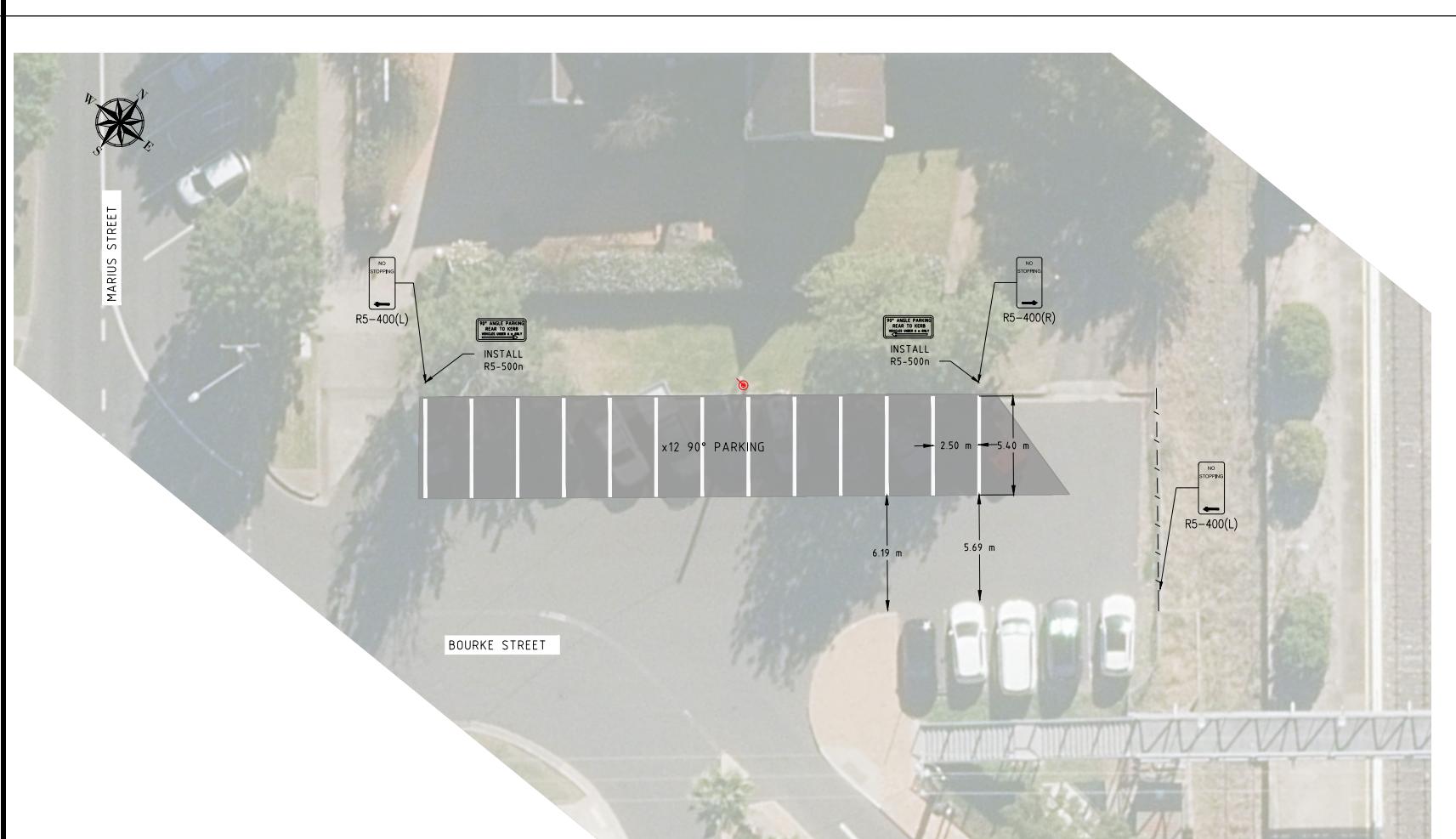
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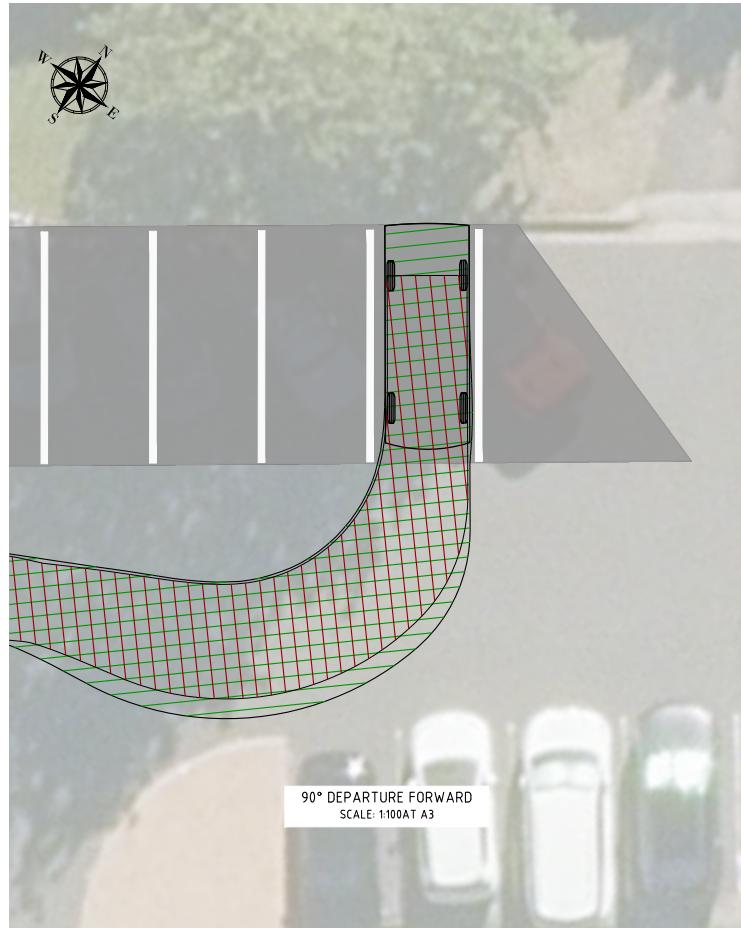
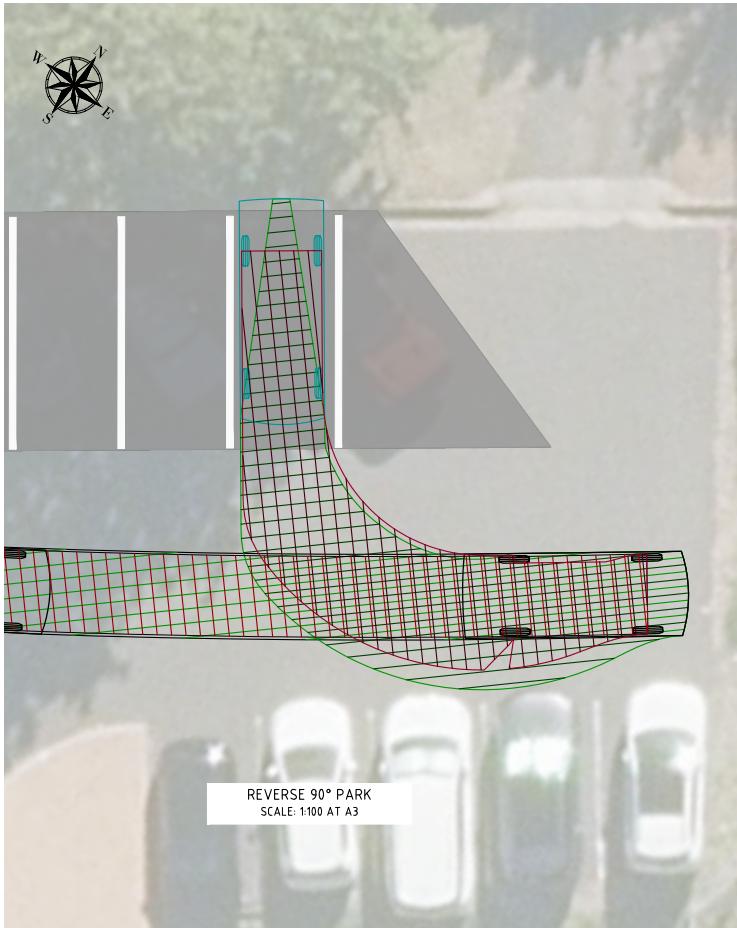
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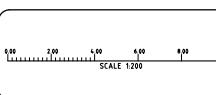
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SWEEP PATHS (90° OPTION)

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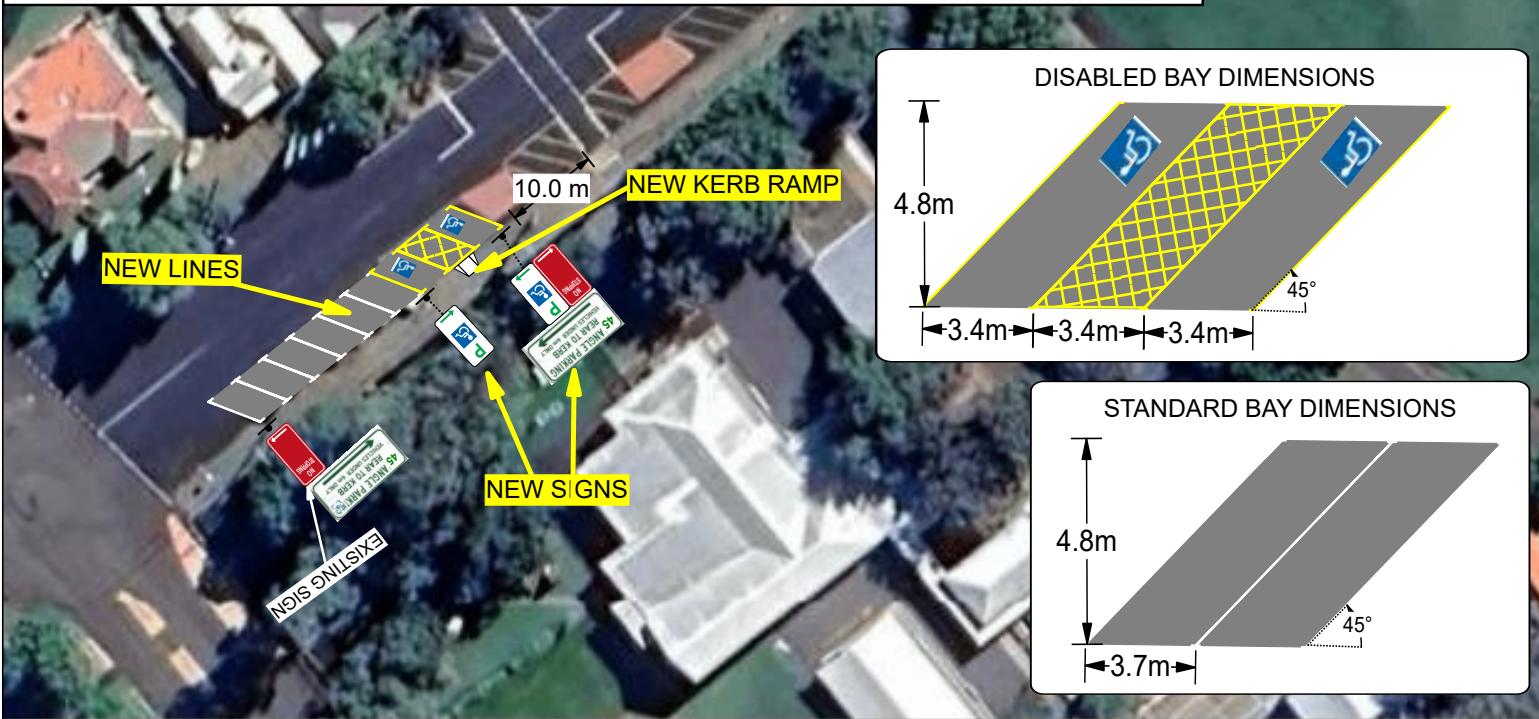
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Date: 21/03/2025 Author: Tamworth Regional Council Project: Tamworth Public School - Disabled Bays

Comments:

- Formalize Parking Bays on Bourke Street (Between Children's Crossing and Upper Street)
DIMENSIONS : Width = 3.7m, Length (D1) = 4.8m, Angle = 45deg

- Install two new Disabled Bays adjacent to existing traffic island.
DIMENSIONS : Width = 3.4m, Length (D1) = 4.8m, Angle = 45deg
SHARED ZONE DIMENSIONS: Width = 3.4m

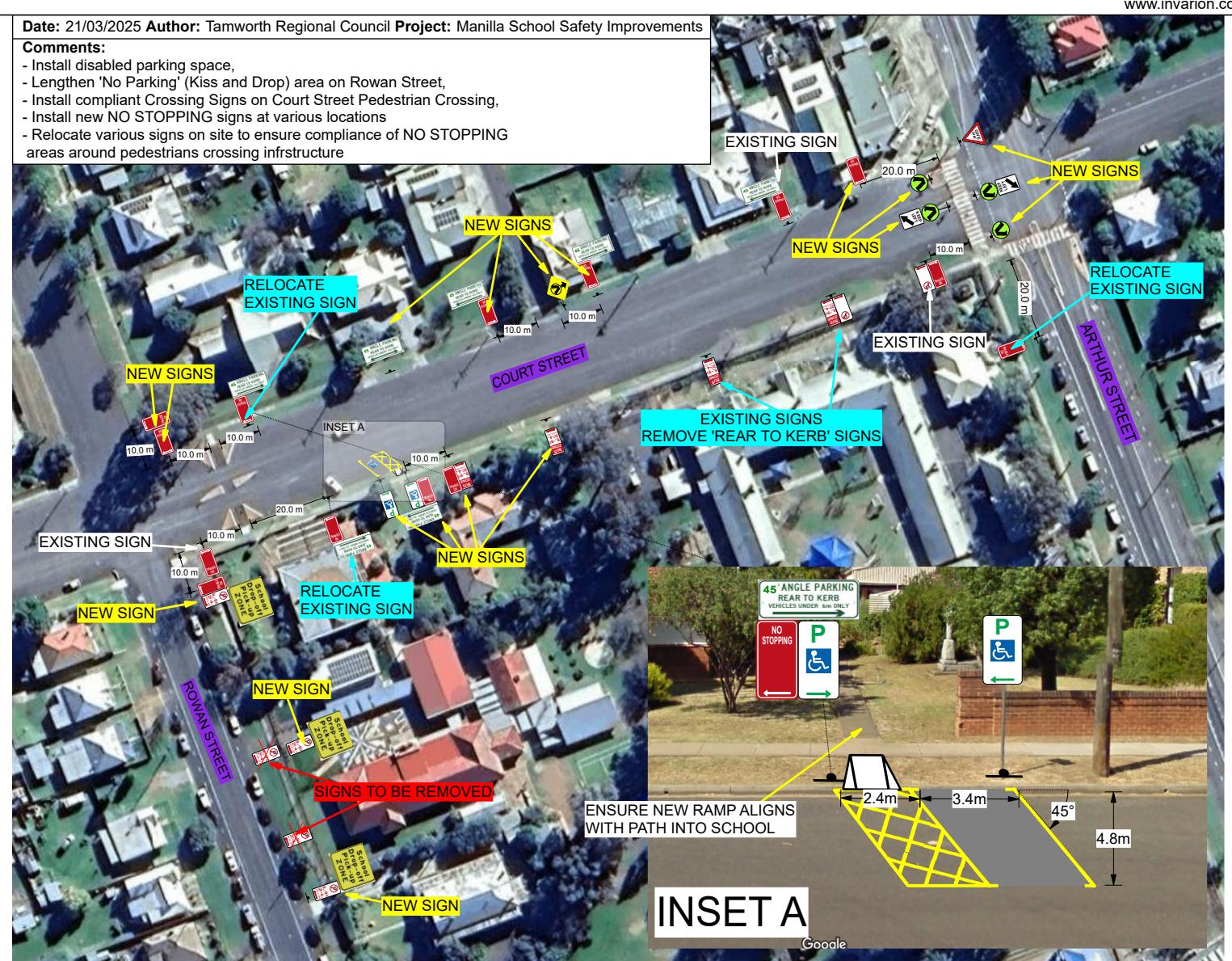




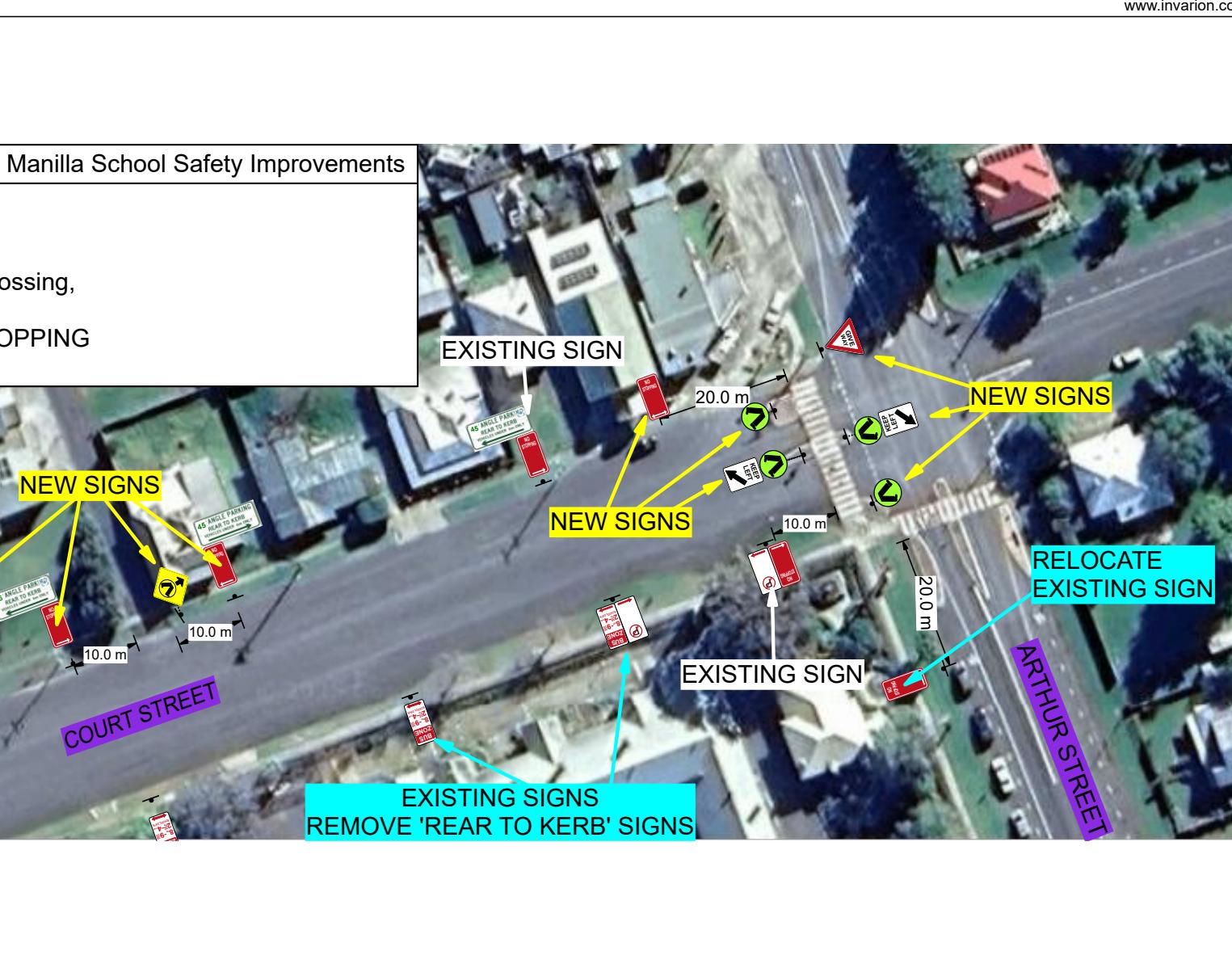












TAMWORTH REGIONAL COUNCIL INVESTMENT REGISTER AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

Investment Type: Term Deposit

Financial Institution	S&P Credit Rating	IFRS Classification	Investment Type	Investment Date	Maturity Date	No of Days	Interest Rate	Term Deposit Value
Westpac	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	4/03/2024	7/04/2025	399	5.07%	4,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	19/08/2024	15/04/2025	239	4.95%	10,000,000
Westpac	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	18/04/2024	22/04/2025	369	5.12%	4,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	8/05/2024	6/05/2025	363	5.25%	3,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	3/09/2024	13/05/2025	252	4.95%	10,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	22/05/2024	20/05/2025	363	5.15%	2,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	3/09/2024	27/05/2025	266	4.95%	10,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	3/06/2024	3/06/2025	365	5.26%	5,000,000
Westpac	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	18/06/2024	17/06/2025	364	5.12%	8,000,000
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	28/06/2024	1/07/2025	368	5.45%	6,000,000
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	2/07/2024	15/07/2025	378	5.45%	6,000,000
RAB	BBB+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	16/01/2025	15/07/2025	180	5.05%	5,000,000
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	2/07/2024	29/07/2025	392	5.45%	6,000,000
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	31/07/2024	12/08/2025	377	5.30%	4,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	18/10/2024	26/08/2025	312	4.95%	4,000,000
BOQ	A-2	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	27/02/2025	26/08/2025	180	4.70%	10,000,000
RAB	BBB+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	3/02/2025	9/09/2025	218	4.92%	5,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	3/12/2024	23/09/2025	294	5.05%	6,000,000
RAB	BBB+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	16/01/2025	7/10/2025	264	4.95%	5,000,000
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	18/10/2024	21/10/2025	368	4.95%	4,000,000
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	20/02/2025	4/11/2025	257	4.70%	3,000,000
BOQ	A-2	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	6/03/2025	18/11/2025	257	4.72%	2,000,000
Westpac	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	22/11/2024	24/11/2025	367	5.17%	12,000,000
BOQ	A-2	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	6/03/2025	12/12/2025	281	4.72%	8,000,000
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	20/02/2025	16/12/2025	299	4.70%	3,000,000
NAB	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	19/03/2025	13/01/2026	300	4.65%	8,000,000
Westpac	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	18/02/2025	17/02/2026	364	4.76%	7,000,000
Westpac	A-1+	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	20/02/2025	24/02/2026	369	4.78%	6,000,000
Westpac	AA-	Held to Maturity	Term Deposit	8/03/2023	10/03/2026	1098	4.70%	2,000,000
TOTAL						5.00%	\$ 168,000,000	

Investment Type: Floating Rate Note, Fixed Rate Bond

Financial Institution	S&P Credit Rating	IFRS Classification	Investment Type	Investment Date	Maturity Date	No of Days	Interest Rate	Purchase Value	# Maturity Value
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Fixed Rate Bond	4/11/2022	30/05/2025	938	3.90%	1,000,000	1,000,000
Bendigo	BBB+	Held to Maturity	Floating Rate Note	19/01/2023	2/12/2025	1048	BBSW+0.52%	4,000,000	4,000,000
Bendigo	BBB+	Held to Maturity	Floating Rate Note	15/05/2023	15/05/2026	1096	BBSW+1.25%	3,000,000	3,000,000
Suncorp	A-1	Held to Maturity	Floating Rate Note	19/01/2023	15/09/2026	1335	BBSW+0.48%	5,000,000	5,000,000
NAB	AA-	Held to Maturity	Fixed Rate Bond	4/03/2024	25/02/2027	1088	2.90%	5,000,228	5,241,000
CBA	AA-	Held to Maturity	Floating Rate Note	18/10/2022	18/08/2027	1765	BBSW+1.02%	1,000,000	1,000,000
ANZ	AA-	Held to Maturity	Floating Rate Note	8/11/2022	4/11/2027	1822	BBSW+1.20%	4,000,000	4,000,000
TOTAL							\$ 23,000,228	\$ 23,241,000	

Floating Rate Notes can be purchased at a premium or a discount. The difference between the Purchase Value and Market Value is recognised by Council on a monthly basis as interest.

Investment Type: On Call, On Hold

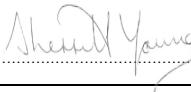
Financial Institution	S&P Credit Rating	IFRS Classification	Investment Type	Date Invested	Due Date	No of Days	Interest Rate	Market Value at 31 March 2025
NAB	A-1+	N/A	On Call	N/A	N/A		4.20%	14,869,861
Westpac	A-1+	Held to Maturity	On Hold		90 Day Maturity		4.85%	5,843,472
TOTAL								\$ 20,713,333
TOTAL INVESTMENT REGISTER								\$ 211,954,333

Comparative Rates

RBA Cash Rate: 4.10%

BBSW: 4.13%

I, Sherrill Young, Tamworth Regional Council Manager of Financial Services (Responsible Accounting Officer) certify as required under Section 16(1)(b) of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1999, that Council's investments have been made in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, Regulations and Tamworth Regional Council Investment Policy.


Signed.....

Investment By Rating (excluding cash accounts)

S&P Credit Rating		Portfolio Limit	Counterparty Limit	Bank	Amount invested as at 31 March 2025 (\$)	% of Total Investments	Maturity	
Long Term	Short Term						Less than 12 months (\$)	One to five years (\$)
AAA	A-1+	100%	100%		-	0.00%	-	-
AA+ to AA-	A-1+	100%	100%	ANZ	4,000,000	2.09%	-	4,000,000
				CBA	1,000,000	0.52%		1,000,000
				NAB	96,000,228	50.26%	91,000,000	5,000,228
				Westpac	43,000,000	22.51%	43,000,000	-
A+ to A	A-1	100%	30%	Suncorp	5,000,000	2.62%	-	5,000,000
A-	A-2	40%	20%	Bendigo	7,000,000	3.66%	4,000,000	3,000,000
				BOQ	20,000,000	10.47%	20,000,000	-
BBB+	A-2	30%	10%	RAB	15,000,000	7.85%	15,000,000	-
					\$ 191,000,228	100.00%	\$ 173,000,000	\$ 18,000,228

The General Manager or his delegated representative is authorised to approve variations to Council's investment policy if the investment is to Council's advantage or due to revised legislation.

Council's investments are mostly comprised of restricted funds that have been received for specific purposes or funds held for future renewal works. The following table provides an indicative summary of investments held by each fund. The figures provided are based on opening balances from the last completed and audited financial year. The figures provide a guide on the proportion of total cash that is restricted in use:

Investments Held by Fund (including cash accounts)

Fund	Restriction	Amount	%
General	Unrestricted	12,994,360	6.13%
General	Internally Restricted	39,087,463	18.44%
General	Externally Restricted	33,015,958	15.58%
General Fund Total		\$ 85,097,781	40.15%
Water	Unrestricted	2,131,655	1.01%
Water	Internally Restricted	19,347,595	9.13%
Water	Externally Restricted	15,578,502	7.35%
Water Fund Total		\$ 37,057,752	17.48%
Sewer	Unrestricted	2,187,583	1.03%
Sewer	Internally Restricted	68,540,200	32.34%
Sewer	Externally Restricted	19,071,017	9.00%
Sewer Fund Total		\$ 89,798,800	42.37%
Total Investments		\$ 211,954,333	100.00%

Tamworth Regional Council Policy

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

OBJECTIVE

The Councillors, staff and other officials of Tamworth Regional Council (TRC) are committed to upholding and promoting the following principles of social media engagement:

Openness	Our social media platforms are places where anyone can share and discuss issues that are relevant to our Council and the community we represent and serve.
Relevance	We will ensure our social media platforms are kept up to date with informative content about our Council and community.
Accuracy	The content we upload onto our social media platforms and any other social media platform will be a source of truth for our Council and community and we will prioritise the need to correct inaccuracies when they occur.
Respect	Our social media platforms are safe spaces. We will uphold and promote the behavioural standards contained in this policy and our Council's Code of Conduct when using our social media platforms and any other social media platforms.

1. COMMENCEMENT OF THE POLICY

This policy is adopted in accordance with the Office of Local Governments Model Policy, This Policy will commence from June 2025, and is to be revised when changes are made to the model or annually.

POLICY

2. Administration framework for Council's Social Media Platform

- 2.1 Council will maintain a presence on the following social media platforms:
 - Tamworth Regional Council Facebook Page;
 - Other social media platforms to be provided.
- 2.2 Council's social media platforms must specify or provide a clearly accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.
- 2.3 A new Council social media platform, or a social media platform proposed by a Council related entity (for example, a Council Committee), can only be established or deleted with the written approval of the General Manager or their delegate.
- 2.4 Where a Council social media platform is established or deleted in accordance with clause 2.3, the General Manager or their delegate may amend clause 2.1 of this Policy without the need for endorsement by the Council's Governing Body.
- 2.5 The General Manager will appoint a member of Council staff to be the Council's Social Media Coordinator (SMC). The SMC should be a senior and suitably qualified member of staff, at TRC this will be the Manager Marketing and Communications.
- 2.6 The General Manager may appoint more than one SMC.
- 2.7 The SMC's role is to:
 - a) approve and revoke a staff member's status as an authorised user;
 - b) develop and/or approve the training and/or induction to be provided to the authorised users;

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- c) maintain a register of authorised users
- d) maintain effective oversight of authorised users
- e) moderate Council's social media platforms in accordance with part 5 of this Policy
- f) ensure that Council complies with its record keeping obligations under the State Records Act 1998 in relation to social media (see clauses 7.1 to 7.2 of this policy)
- g) ensure the Council adheres to the rules of the social media platform(s)
- h) coordinate with the Communication and Marketing Department to ensure the Council's social media platforms are set up and maintained in a way that maximises user friendliness and any technical problems are resolved promptly

2.8 The SMC may delegate their functions under paragraphs (e) and (f) of clause 2.7 to authorised users

2.9 The SMC is an authorised user for the purpose of this policy.

Authorised Users

2.10 Authorised users are members of Council staff who are authorised by the SMC to upload content and engage on social media on the Council's behalf.

2.11 Authorised users should be members of Council staff that are responsible for managing, or have expertise in, the events, initiatives, programs or policies that are subject of the social media content.

2.12 The SMC will appoint authorised users when required.

2.13 An authorised user must receive a copy of this Policy and induction training on social media use and Council's obligations before uploading content on Council's behalf

2.14 The role of an authorised user is to:

- (a) ensure, to the best of their ability, that the content they upload onto social media platforms is accurate;
- (b) correct inaccuracies in Council generated content;
- (c) engage in discussions and answer questions on Council's behalf on social media platforms;
- (d) keep the Council's social media platforms up to date; and
- (e) where authorised to do so by the SMC:
 - (i) moderate Council's social media platforms in accordance with Part 5 of this Policy; and
 - (ii) ensure Council complies with its record keeping obligations under the State Records Act 1998 in relation to social media (see clauses 7.1 to 7.4 of this Policy).

2.15 When engaging on social media on Council's behalf (such as, but not limited to, on a community social media page), an authorised user must identify themselves as a member of Council staff but they are not obliged to disclose their name or position within Council.

2.16 Authorised users must not use Council's social media platforms for personal reasons.

Administrative Tone

2.17 Authorised users upload content and engage on social media on the Council's behalf. Authorised users must use language consistent with that function and avoid expressing or appearing to express their personal views when undertaking their role.

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2.18 Authorised users may use more personal, informal language when engaging on Council's social media platforms, for example when replying to comments.

Register of Authorised Users

2.19 The SMC will maintain a register of authorised users. This register is to be reviewed annually to ensure it is fit-for-purpose.

2.20 The SMC may revoke a staff member's status as an authorised user, if:

- (a) the staff member makes such a request
- (b) the staff member has not uploaded content onto any of the Council's social media platforms in the last six months.
- (c) the staff member has failed to comply with this policy
- (d) the SMC is of the reasonable opinion that the staff member is no longer suitable to be an authorised user.

3. Administrative Framework for Councillors Social Media Platforms

3.1 For the purposes of this Policy, Councillor social platforms are not Council social media platforms. Part 2 of this Policy does not apply to Councillors' social media platforms.

3.2 Councillors are responsible for the administration and moderation of their own social media platforms (in accordance with Parts 3 and 5 of this policy), and ensuring they comply with the record keeping obligations under the State Records Act 1998 (see clauses 7.1 to 7.4 of this policy) and Council's records management policy in relation to social media.

3.3 Clause 3.2 also applies to Councillors in circumstances where another person administers, moderates, or uploads content onto their social media platform.

3.4 Councillors must comply with the rules of the platform when engaging on social media.

Induction and Training

3.5 Councillors who engage, or intend to engage, on social media must receive induction training on social media use. Induction training can be undertaken either as part of the Councillor's induction program or as part of their ongoing professional development program.

Identifying a Councillor

3.6 Councillors must identify themselves on their social media platforms in the following format:
Councillor "First Name and Last Name".

3.7 A Councillor's social media platform must include a profile photo which is a clearly identifiable image of the Councillor.

3.8 If a Councillor becomes or ceases to be the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or the holder of another position (for example, Chairperson of a Committee), this must be clearly stated on the Councillor's social media platforms and updated within three months of a change in circumstances.

Other General Requirements for Councilors' Social Media Platforms

3.9 Councillor social media platforms must specify or provide a clearly accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.

3.10 A Councillor's social media platform must include a disclaimer to the following effect:
"The views expressed and comments made on this social media platform are my own and not that of the Council".

Tamworth Regional Council Policy

- 3.11 Despite clause 3.10, Mayoral or Councillor media releases and other content that has been authorised according to the Council's media and communications protocols may be uploaded onto a Councillor's social media platform.
- 3.12 Councillors may upload publicly available Council information onto their social media platforms.
- 3.13 Councillors may use more personal, informal language when engaging on their social media platforms.

Councillor Queries Relating to Social Media Platform

- 3.14 Questions from Councillors relating to their obligations under this Policy, technical queries relating to the operation of their social media platforms, or managing records on social media may be directed to the SMC or Executive Manager Strategy & Performance in the first instance, in accordance with Council's Councillor requests protocols.

Other Social Media Platforms Administered by Councillors

- 3.15 A Councillor must advise the SMC of any social media platforms they administer on which content relating to the Council or Council Officials is, or is expected to be, uploaded. The Councillor must do so within:
 - a) Three months of becoming a Councillor, or
 - b) Three months of becoming the administrator.

4. Standards of Conduct in Social Media

- 4.1 This Policy only applies to Council Officials' use of social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council Official. The Policy does not apply to personal use of social media that is not connected with a person's role as a Council Official.
- 4.2 Council Officials must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct when using social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council Official.
- 4.3 Council Officials must not use social media to post or share comments, photos, videos, electronic recordings or other information that:
 - a) is defamatory, offensive, humiliating, threatening or intimidating to other Council Officials or members of the public;
 - b) contains profane language or is sexual in nature;
 - c) constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW, or is unlawfully discriminatory;
 - d) is contrary to their duties under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and their responsibilities under any policies or procedures adopted by the Council to ensure workplace health and safety;
 - e) contains content about the Council, Council Officials or members of the public that is misleading or deceptive;
 - f) divulges confidential Council information;
 - g) breaches the privacy of other Council Officials or members of the public;
 - h) contains allegations of suspected breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct or information about the consideration of a matter under the Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW;
 - i) could be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of the Council where they have not been authorised to make such comment;
 - j) commits the Council to any action;

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- k) violates an order made by a Court;
- l) breaches copyright;
- m) advertises, endorses or solicits commercial products or business;
- n) constitutes spam; or
- o) is in breach of the rules of the social media platform.

4.4 Council Officials must:

- a) attribute work to the original author, creator or source when uploading or linking to content produced by a third party; and
- b) obtain written permission from a minor's parent or legal guardian before uploading content in which the minor can be identified.

4.5 Council Officials must exercise caution when sharing, liking, retweeting content as this can be regarded as an endorsement and/or publication of the content.

4.6 Council Officials must not incite or encourage other persons to act in a way that is contrary to the requirements of this Part.

4.7 Councillors must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council's governing body but may explain why they voted on a matter in the way that they did. (see section 232(1)(f) of the Local Government Act 1993).

5. Moderation of Social Media Platforms

5.1 Council Officials who are responsible for the moderation of the Council's or Councillors' social media platforms may remove content and 'block' or ban a person from those platforms. Such actions must be undertaken in accordance with this Part.

5.2 For the purposes of this Part, 'social media platform' and 'platform' means both the Council's and Councillors' social media platforms.

House Rules

5.3 Social media platforms must state or provide an accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.

5.4 At a minimum, the House Rules should specify:

- a) the principles of social media engagement referred to in clause 1.1 of this policy;
- b) the type of behaviour or content that will result in that content being removed or 'hidden', or a person being blocked or banned from the platform;
- c) the process by which a person can be blocked or banned from the platform and rights of review;
- d) a statement relating to privacy and personal information (see clause 7.4 of this Policy);
- e) when the platform will be monitored weekdays 8.30am – 5pm, during the Council's business hours; and
- f) that the social media platform is not to be used for making complaints about the Council or Council Officials. Complaints to Council can be made by using the online forms on Council's website.

5.5 For the purposes of clause 5.4(b), third parties engaging on social media platforms must not post or share comments, photos, videos, electronic recordings or other information that:

Tamworth Regional Council Policy

- a) is defamatory, offensive, humiliating, threatening or intimidating to Council Officials or members of the public;
- b) contains profane language or is sexual in nature;
- c) constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW, or is unlawfully discriminatory;
- d) contains content about the Council, council officials or members of the public that is misleading or deceptive;
- e) breaches the privacy of council officials or members of the public;
- f) contains allegations of suspected breaches of the Council's code of conduct or information about the consideration of a matter under the Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW;
- g) violates an order made by a Court;
- h) breaches copyright;
- i) advertises, endorses or solicits commercial products or business;
- j) constitutes spam; or
- k) would be in breach of the rules of the social media platform.

Removal or 'Hiding' of Content

- 5.6 Where a person uploads content onto a social media platform that, in the reasonable opinion of the moderator, is of a kind specified under clause 5.5, the moderator may remove or 'hide' that content.
- 5.7 Prior to removing or 'hiding' the content, the moderator must make a record of it (for example, a screenshot).
- 5.8 If the moderator removes or 'hides' the content under clause 5.6, they must, where practicable, notify the person who uploaded the content that it has been removed and the reason(s) for its removal and their rights of review.
- 5.9 A person may request a review of a decision by a moderator to remove or 'hide' content under clause 5.6. The request must be made in writing to the General Manager and state the grounds on which the request is being made.
- 5.10 Where a review request is made under clause 5.9, the review is to be undertaken by the SMC or a member of staff nominated by the General Manager who is suitably qualified and who was not involved in the decision to remove or 'hide' the content.

Blocking or Banning

- 5.11 If a person uploads content that is removed or 'hidden' under clause 5.6 of this Policy on five occasions, that person may be blocked or banned from the social media platform(s).
- 5.12 A person may only be blocked or banned from a Council social media platform with the approval of the SMC. This clause does not apply to blocking or banning a person from a Councillor's social media platform.
- 5.13 Prior to blocking or banning a person from a social media platform, the person must, where practicable, be advised of the intention to block or ban them from the platform/all platforms and be given a chance to respond. Any submission made by the person must be considered prior to a determination being made to block or ban them.
- 5.14 The duration of the block or ban is to be determined by the SMC, or in the case of a Councillor's social media platform, the Councillor.

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- 5.15 Where a determination is made to block or ban a person from a social media platform/all social media platforms, the person must, where practicable, be notified in writing of the decision and the reasons for it. The written notice must also advise the person which social media platforms they are blocked or banned from and the duration of the block or ban and inform them of their rights of review.
- 5.16 Despite clauses 5.11 to 5.15, where a person uploads content of a kind referred to under clause 5.5, and the moderator is reasonably satisfied that the person's further engagement on the social media platform poses a risk to health and safety or another substantive risk (such as the uploading of defamatory content), an interim block or ban from the platform/all platforms may be imposed on the person immediately for a period no longer than three months.
- 5.17 A person who is blocked or banned from the platform/all platforms under clause 5.16 must, where practicable, be given a chance to respond to the interim block or ban being imposed. Any submission made by the person must be considered when determining whether the interim block or ban is to be removed or retained under clauses 5.11 to 5.15.
- 5.18 A person may request a review of a decision to block or ban them from a social media platform. The request must be made in writing to the General Manager and state the grounds on which the request is being made.
- 5.19 Where a review request is made under clause 5.18, the review is to be undertaken by the General Manager or a member of staff nominated by the General Manager who is suitably qualified and who was not involved in the decision to block or ban the person. Where the decision to block or ban the person was made by the General Manager, the review must be undertaken by another senior and suitably qualified member of staff who was not involved in the decision.
- 5.20 Where a person that is the subject of a block or ban continues to engage on a social media platform(s) using an alternative social media account, profile, avatar, etc., a moderator may block or ban the person from the platform(s) immediately. In these circumstances, clauses 5.11 to 5.19 do not apply.

6. Use of Social Media During Emergencies

- 6.1 During emergencies, such as natural disasters or public health incidents, the Marketing and Communications team will be responsible for the management of content on the Council's social media platforms.
- 6.2 To ensure consistent messaging both during and after an emergency, authorised users and council officials must not upload content onto the Council's or their own social media platforms which contradicts advice issued by the agency coordinating the emergency response, or agencies supporting recovery efforts.
- 6.3 Training on social media use during emergencies should be included in training and/or induction provided to authorised users and Councillors.

7. Records Management and Privacy Requirements

Records Management

- 7.1 Social media content created, sent and received by Council Officials (including Councillors) acting in their official capacity is a Council record and may constitute open access information or be subject to an information access application made under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. These records must be managed in accordance with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 and the Council's approved records management policies and practices.
- 7.2 You must not destroy, alter, or remove social media content unless authorised to do so. If you need to alter or remove social media content, you must do so in accordance

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with this Policy and consult with the Council's records manager and comply with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998.

- 7.3 When/if a Councillor's term of office concludes, the Councillor must contact the Council's records manager and SMC to manage/transfer records of social media content created during their term of office and comply with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998.
- 7.4 In fulfilling their obligations under clauses 7.1 to 7.3, Council Officials should refer to any guidance issued by the State Archives and Records Authority of NSW relating to retention requirements for Councils' and Councillors' social media content

Privacy Considerations and Requirements

- 7.5 Social media communications are in the public domain. Council Officials should exercise caution about what personal information, if any, they upload onto social media.
- 7.6 The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, applies to the use of social media platforms by the Council and Councillors. To mitigate potential privacy risks, Council Officials will:
 - a) advise people not to provide personal information on social media platforms;
 - b) inform people if any personal information they may provide on social media platforms is to be used for official purposes;
 - c) moderate comments to ensure they do not contain any personal information; and
 - d) advise people to contact the Council or councillors through alternative channels if they have personal information they do not want to disclose in a public forum.
- 7.7 Council Officials must ensure they comply with the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002, when engaging on and/or moderating social media platforms. In fulfilling their obligations, council officials should refer to any guidance issued by the Information and Privacy Commission of NSW, such as, but not limited to, the Health Privacy Principles.

8. Private Use of Social Media

What Constitutes Private Use

- 8.1 For the purposes of this policy, a Council Official's social media engagement will be considered 'private use' when the content they upload:
 - a) is not associated with, or does not refer to, the Council, any other Council Officials, contractors, related entities or any other person or organisation providing services to or on behalf of the Council in their official or professional capacities; and
 - b) is not related to or does not contain information acquired by virtue of their employment or role as a Council Official.
- 8.2 If a Council Official chooses to identify themselves as a Council Official, either directly or indirectly (such as in their user profile), then they will not be deemed to be acting in their private capacity for the purposes of this Policy.

Use of Social Media During Work Hours

- 8.3 Council staff may access and engage on social media in their private capacity during work hours for a period of time to be specified by their Manager.
- 8.4 Council staff who access and engage on social media in their private capacity during work hours must ensure it not does not interfere with the performance of their official duties.

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9. Concerns and Complaints

- 9.1 Concerns or complaints about the administration of Council's social media platforms should be made to Council's SMC in the first instance.
- 9.2 Complaints about the conduct of Council Officials (including Councillors) on social media platforms may be directed to the General Manager.
- 9.3 Complaints about a General Manager's conduct on social media platforms may be directed to the Mayor.

Definitions

Item	Description
Authorised User	members of Council staff who are authorised by the General Manager or SMC to upload content and engage on the Council's social media platforms on the Council's behalf
Council Official	Councillors, members of staff and delegates of the Council (including members of Committees that are delegates of the Council);
Minor	for the purposes of clause 4.4(b) of this Policy, is a person under the age of 18 years
Personal Information	information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database and whether or not recorded in a material form) about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion
SMC	is a Council's social media coordinator appointed under clause 2.7 of this policy
Social Media	online platforms and applications - such as but not limited to social networking sites, wikis, blogs, microblogs, video and audio sharing sites, and message boards - that allow people to easily publish, share and discuss content. Examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Yammer, YouTube, Instagram, Flickr and Wikipedia
Note: Councils and council officials should be aware that they may be considered a 'publisher' of any content uploaded onto a social media platform they administer, including content that:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• is uploaded by a third party; and/or• appears on their social media platform because they have 'liked', 'shared', or 'retweeted' the content, or similar.	

ASSOCIATED COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

- Code of Conduct
- Media Policy

Tamworth Regional Council Policy

REFERENCES AND LEGISLATION

- Office of Local Government Model Social Media Policy

POLICY VERSION AND REVISION INFORMATION

Policy Authorised by: Karen Litchfield Title: Acting Executive Manager Strategy & Performance	Original issue: 29 April 2025 Revision Period: 12 Months
Policy Maintained by: Executive Services	Current Version

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♦ HISTORY – *(maintained by Governance – Keep blank)*

March 2025 Budget Variations

Description	Reason	Budget Type	Budget Variation	Revenue	Reserves	Grants/Contributions	Loans
Future Communities							
TRC-Regional Halls & Facility - Improvements	Project complete	Cap Rec	(37,306)	0	(37,306)	0	0
Mines & Extractive Industries	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(30,000)	0	0	(30,000)	0
Tamworth - NUP - Sec 94 Subdivisions	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(40,000)	0	0	(40,000)	0
Urban Roads - Catch 1	Reduced Income	Cap Inc R	1,500	0	0	1,500	0
Urban Roads - Catch 3	Reduced Income	Cap Inc R	7,500	0	0	7,500	0
Urban Roads - Catch 4	Reduced Income	Cap Inc R	7,500	0	0	7,500	0
Urban Roads - Catch 5 Hills Plain	Reduced Income	Cap Inc R	3,750	0	0	3,750	0
Admin/Studies 2.6%	Reduced Income	Cap Inc R	750	0	0	750	0
Open Space Embellishment	Reduced Income	Cap Inc R	11,250	0	0	11,250	0
Community Facilities	Reduced Income	Cap Inc R	3,750	0	0	3,750	0
Cycleways	Reduced Income	Cap Inc R	1,500	0	0	1,500	0
Calala - Roads	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(100,000)	0	0	(100,000)	0
Calala - Open Space & Recreation (Capital)	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(70,000)	0	0	(70,000)	0
Hills Plain - Roads	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(250,000)	0	0	(250,000)	0
Hills Plain - Open Space and Recreation (Capital)	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(40,000)	0	0	(40,000)	0
Plan Preparation & Administration	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(40,000)	0	0	(40,000)	0
S94A Contributions	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(400,000)	0	0	(400,000)	0
Hills Plains	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(300,000)	0	0	(300,000)	0
Tamworth	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(100,000)	0	0	(100,000)	0
Tamworth	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(200,000)	0	0	(200,000)	0
Water - Hills Plains	Additional Income	Cap Inc R	(900,000)	0	0	(900,000)	0
Sub Total			(2,469,806) ↑	0	(37,306) ↑	(2,432,500) ↑	0
Sports & Recreation Services							
Barraba Mall Disability Toilet Renewal	Project completed	Cap Exp	(4,322)	0	0	(4,322)	0
Woolomin Evac Centre Ramp/Stair Renewal	New project	Cap Exp	20,000	0	20,000	0	0
Sports Dome - Sewer Pump Station Renewal	New project	Cap Exp	35,000	0	35,000	0	0
Sub Total			50,678 ↓	0	55,000 ↓	(4,322) ↑	0
Civil & Works Sub Ledger							
Disaster Support - Lismore LGA - AGRN1198 - Exp	Project - emergency response	Op Exp NR	100,000	0	0	100,000	0
Disaster Support - Tweed LGA - AGRN1198 - Exp	Project - emergency response	Op Exp NR	100,000	0	0	100,000	0
Disaster Support - Lismore LGA - AGRN1198 - Inc	Project - emergency response	Op Inc NR	(100,000)	0	0	(100,000)	0
Disaster Support - Tweed LGA - AGRN1198 - Inc	Project - emergency response	Op Inc NR	(100,000)	0	0	(100,000)	0
Sub Total			0	0	0	0	0

March 2025 Budget Variations

Description	Reason	Budget Type	Budget Variation	Revenue	Reserves	Grants/Contributions	Loans
Project Costing							
Longyard Drive - Road Safety Program - Exp	New Grant	Cap Exp	10,000	0	0	10,000	0
Longyard Drive - Road Safety Program - Inc	New Grant	Cap Inc NR	(10,000)	0	0	(10,000)	0
Sub Total			0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total			(2,419,128) ↑	0	17,694 ↓	(2,436,822) ↑	0

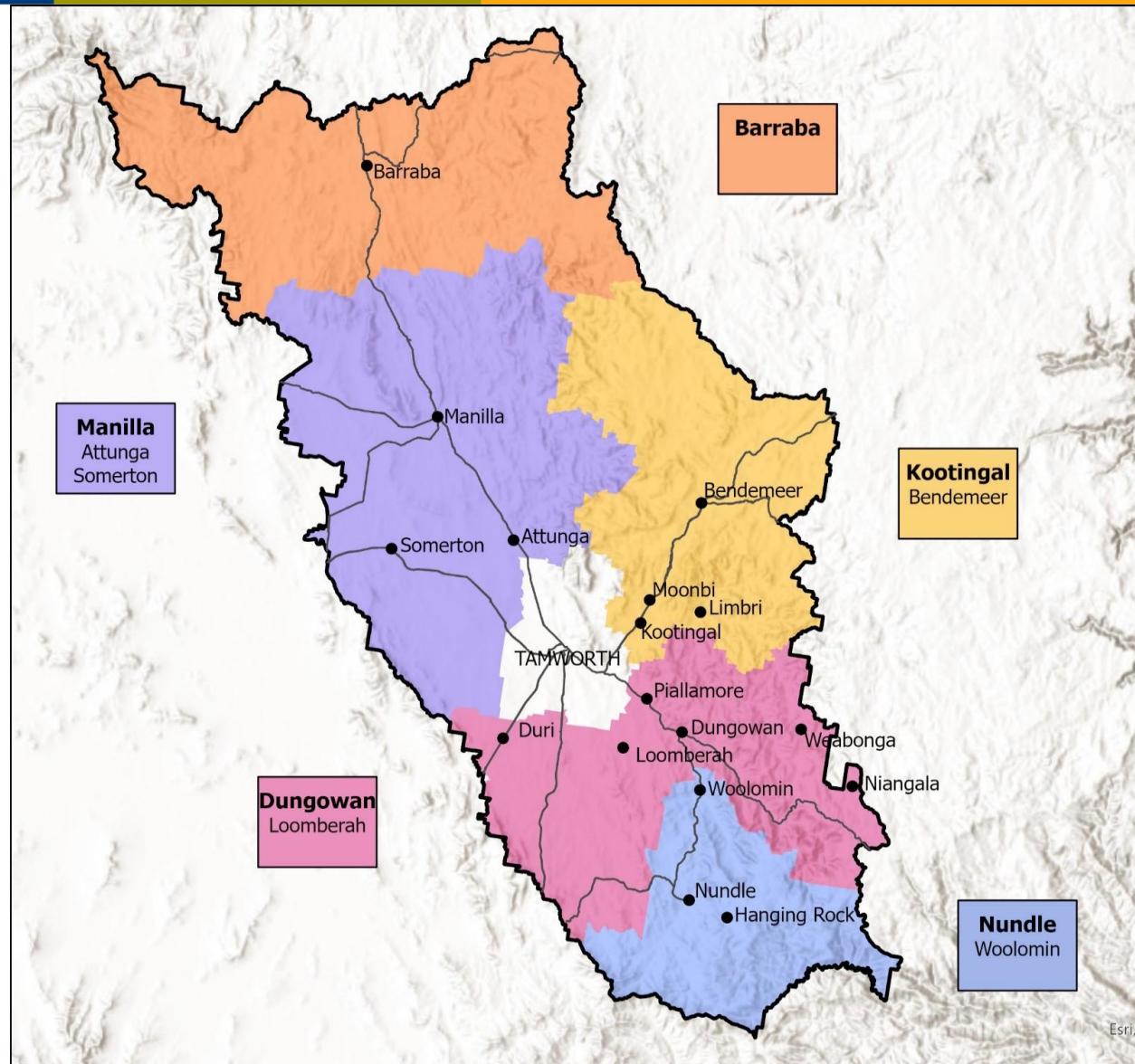
↓ Budget variation will reduce Council's forecast net operating result and/or bank balance

↑ Budget variation will increase Council's forecast net operating result and/or bank balance

0 If the amount is zero there has been no impact on the forecast operating result and/or bank account balance

Care needs to be taken with regards to analysis

Council spends money to provide services and renew infrastructure for the benefit of the community. Expenditure increases need to be assessed accordingly.





Tamworth Regional Precinct Advisory Committees (TRPAC)

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The aim of the Tamworth Regional Precinct Advisory Committees is to strengthen Council's connection with local communities by enabling enhanced avenues of communication with community members and providing direct access to Council's decision makers.

The purpose and intent of the Precinct Advisory Committees is to build stronger and more resilient towns and villages, by enhancing the volunteer experience, providing more opportunity for community members to be involved in local and regional strategic issues and removing the governance burden on individual committee members.

Objectives

- (i) Provide enhanced opportunities for connection with Councillors via a public forum where any community members may have a voice;
- (ii) Enhance the volunteer experience for all and any community member who wishes to participate;
- (iii) Identify community needs and priorities, and investigate funding opportunities;
- (iv) Engage with local communities in the development of Council's Strategic Plans and Regional Resilience Plans; and
- (v) Provide Councillor advocates for the local community.

Committee members are encouraged to participate in the Precinct Committee as a partnership and provide advice or make recommendations in the best interests of their community.

Terms of Membership

Membership

The Tamworth Regional Precinct Advisory Committees shall comprise the following membership:

- Tamworth Regional Council:
 - A maximum of two (2) Councillors;
 - One (1) Place Manager;
 - Volunteer Services Officer; and
- up to eight (8) community members.

Appointment

Representation by members of the Tamworth regional community is encouraged.

Membership by community representatives will be coordinated by inviting 'Expressions of Interest' from the community on a bi-annual basis consistent with the rotation of Councillor representatives. Members may stand for re-appointment for one consecutive additional term.

Council reserves the right to remove a member from a committee at any time due to misconduct or other circumstances.

Term of Appointment

Committee members will be appointed for a term of two (2) years consistent with the rotation of Councillor representatives.

Selection Criteria

Ideally community representatives will have:

- demonstrated links to the community;
- demonstrated ability to represent the community in a fair and unbiased manner;
- demonstrated ability to consult the community and when requested put forward points on behalf of a community member;
- demonstrated strong interest in community progress and sustainability;
- demonstrated capacity to provide strategic advice to Council on matters relating to issues and challenges facing regional communities;
- demonstrated ability to work as part of a team; and
- demonstrated understanding of meeting process.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of Interest must be declared and managed in accordance with the Code of Conduct. A record of the declared conflict of interest in the minutes of each Committee is sufficient.

Pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflicts of interests must be managed by the member by excluding themselves from the meeting during the discussion of the relevant agenda item. Such exclusion will be recorded in the minutes of the Committee.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is to be maintained by all members of Committees where indicated by the Chairperson or with respect to confidential matters listed in the meeting agenda. where a Council resolution is required.

In circumstances where a Council resolution is required to confirm a Committee recommendation, discussions within the Committee shall be treated as confidential until the Committee Minutes are reported to Council, or where agreed, for release to the media.

Media

The Chairperson, (Committee Chair), and Councillor representative are authorised to represent and speak on behalf of the Committees in any media discussions.

Meetings

Chairperson

The Tamworth Regional Precinct Advisory Committees will be chaired by an elected Councillor of Tamworth Regional Council to be determined by the elected Councillor members on a bi-annual basis.

Meeting Frequency

Meetings of the Tamworth Regional Precinct Advisory Committees will be held quarterly, noting meetings in the middle of winter will be avoided due to WH&S concerns.

Quorum

In order to form a quorum for a meeting to proceed, at least half of the Committee members plus one, (i.e., a majority of the members), must be present. Of this number at least one Councillor is required to be present.

Meeting Attendance

Attendance at meetings is expected from all Members. During a period of twelve months, an unexcused absence of more than three (3) occasions may be deemed a reason for dismissal unless reasonable explanation is provided.

Delegation

The Committees will have no delegated authority from the Council to make decisions. Recommendations of the Committees will be reported to a subsequent Council meeting for determination under the Management Accountability of the Director Liveable Communities.

Co-Opting

The Precinct Advisory Committees have the authority, where necessary, to seek the expert advice of individuals and groups when particular community skills, experience or input will improve the outcomes delivered by the group.

Administrative Matters

Business Support

Council shall provide administrative support to the Committees, plus professional advice/input where required, including attendance at meetings and follow up of recommendations and actions.

Meeting Notice

Written notice will be distributed to the members of the scheduled meetings via email (with as much notice as practically possible to be given). Public Community notices will be distributed no less than two (2) weeks in advance of the scheduled meeting.

Venue

Council will provide suitable facilities for the conduct of meetings of the Committees. Dependent upon the availability of suitable venues, meetings will be rotated within the specific regional area to enable broader community participation.

Review

The Terms of Reference for the Tamworth Regional Precinct Advisory Committees will be reviewed prior to the recruitment of new members on a bi-annual basis.